

Influence of Teaching Methods and Learning Resources on the Acquisition of Adaptive Skills among Learners with Moderate Intellectual Disability in Special Units in Murang'a County

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Abstract: - The main aim of this study was to examine the influence of teaching methods and learning resources on the acquisition of adaptive skills among learners with moderate intellectual disability in special units, Murang'a County. The research adopted a descriptive survey. The study applied a mixed methods design. The target population was 51 teachers from 17 special units in Mathioya Sub-county in Murang'a County. The sample size was 15 primary school head teachers and 30 teachers in the special units. A total of 45 respondents were purposively selected to participate in the study. The instruments of the research were questionnaires for both primary school head teachers and teachers in special units for intellectual challenged learners, interview schedules, observation checklist. A pilot study was conducted in a special unit at Njumbi primary school in Mathioya Sub-county which was not included in the final study. Test-retest was used to estimate reliability of questionnaires. Validity of the instruments was determined by a team of three experts in the Department of Special Needs of Kenyatta University. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Quantitative data was edited, labeled, categorized based on research objectives, entered into a computer and analyzed using SPSS version 21.0. The data was presented using descriptive statistics in form of percentages and frequency tables. The findings revealed that majority of teachers in the special units majorly used question and answer method to impart adaptive skills among children with moderate intellectual disabilities. The study findings further showed that head teachers were not able to appropriately identify and select materials for acquisition of adaptive skills among the children with intellectual disability. Lack of the suitable materials made learners with ID remain dependent to their guardians. The study concluded that most teachers did not apply the correct methods for teaching adaptive skills to learners with ID. The study recommended that schools with special units should be headed by teachers who are trained in mental retardation and have knowledge and skills. The government, through the Ministry Education, should purchase enough materials suitable for teaching/learning of learners with special needs.

Keywords: Teaching Methods, Learning Resources, Intellectual Disability (ID), Acquisition, Adaptive Skills

I. INTRODUCTION

Intellectual disability is a term applied when a person has certain challenges in mental functioning and in skills such

as communication, taking care of one-self and social skills. Severe Intellectual Disability (ID) manifests as major delays in development and individuals often have the capability to understand speech but otherwise have limited communications. Despite the fact that they are able to learn simple daily routines and engage in simple self-care, individuals with severe ID require supervision in social settings and usually need family care to live in a supervised environment such as group home (Papazoglou, Jaconson, McCabe, Kaufmann & Zabel, 2014).

Learners with scholarly difficulties are discovered everywhere throughout the world (Friend, 2008). Quoting US bureau of training (2004), in America, amid 2002-2003 school years, 0.88% of all youngsters matured 6-12 (580,375 learners) got custom curriculum in light of the fact that they were recognized as having scholarly difficulties. The major challenge with learners with ID is acquisition of adaptive skills. A study in Kenya, Kinuthia (2011) revealed that teachers factors like poor teaching strategies were found to affect acquisition of adaptive behavior skills negatively. However, teacher factors like level of training were not related to acquisition of adaptive skills among learners which the current study sought to identify.

The Kenya Government is focused on provision of equivalent access to quality and applicable instruction and preparing to all learners, incorporating those with ID (Government of Kenya, 2005). To accomplish this, the Government set up the Kenya Institute of Special Education (K.I.S.E) in 1986 to take care of the demand for Special Needs Education (SNE) teachers, National Action arrangement (2003-2015). There are different establishments that prepare SNE teachers, for example, Kenyatta University, Moi University and Kenya Methodist University. The government has likewise received comprehensive instruction for a specialized curriculum in accordance with worldwide advancement (GOK, 2010).

The government under the Free Primary Education Program is encouraging procurement of extra capitation awards to encourage execution of comprehensive instruction. The funds are given to learners uncommon needs enlisted in both special

education schools and units joined to normal schools. However, the program did not offer resources that are unique for children with moderate intellectual disabilities. The CDF in most constituencies in Kenya has helped to set up uncommon schools and units for learners with scholarly difficulties. However, Muranga County is common as of now there are mentally impeded units connected to public primary schools. In this regard, the proposed study was designed to examine the influence of teaching and learning factors on acquisition of adaptive skills among children with moderate intellectual disabilities in special units in Murang’a County, Kenya

1.1 Purpose of the Study

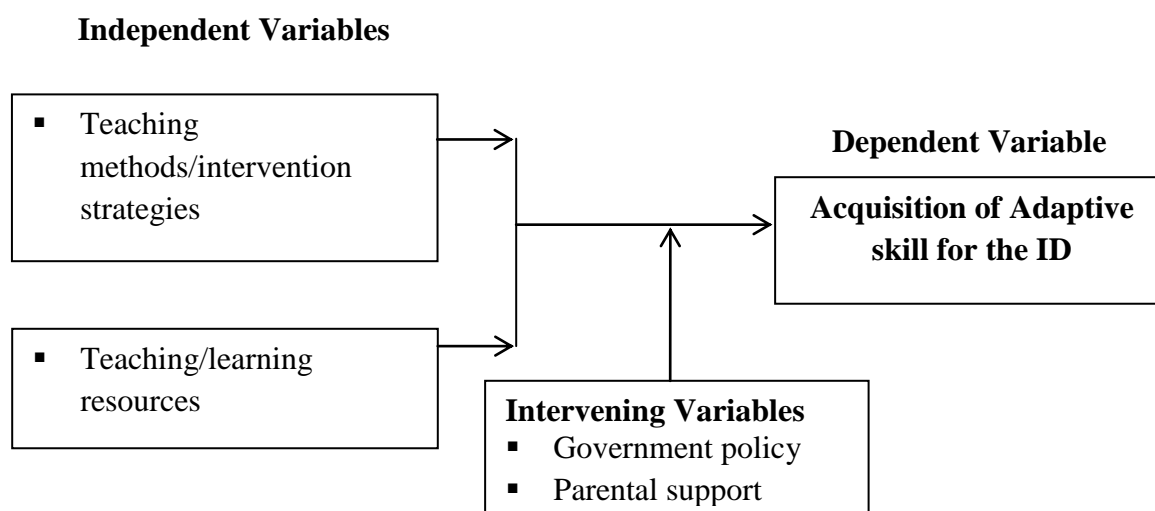
The purpose of this study was to establish the influence of teaching methods and learning resources on the acquisition of

adaptive skills among learners with moderate intellectual disability in special units, Murang’a County.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

- i. Establish the influence of teaching methods on acquisition of adaptive skills among children with ID in special units in Muranga County.
- ii. Examine the influence of teaching and learning resources on acquisition of adaptive skills among learners with ID in special units in Muranga County.

1.3 Conceptual Framework



II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Teaching Methods and Teaching adaptive skills Among Learners with ID

Activities for Daily living are home and commonly living techniques that allow individuals to deal with current and future day to day demands and responsibilities. They include personal care and hygiene, clothing, dressing, eating, money, home and kitchen management, time management, leisure and recreation (Friend, 2008). Teaching the activities for daily living to learners with intellectual disabilities, are aimed at helping them acquire independence. Some of the methods used in teaching these activities include team teaching, interactive teaching, direct teaching, cooperative teaching, group teaching and peer tutoring.

Most students with intellectual disabilities do not learn incidentally but require direct explicit and intensive instruction. This approach leaves little to chance; the curriculum and the tasks to be learned are carefully analyzed

and then taught in sequence. Teachers state and explain clearly what is being taught and how it is to be done. Direct instruction provides opportunities to record success, which in turn motivates pupils and helps to keep on the task. Systematic instruction, which is derived from the principles of applied behavior analysis, has a strong evidence base spanning more than 60 years supporting the teaching of community and daily living skills (Spooner, Browder & Mims, 2011).

Modeling is learning by observation and imitation. Modeling is also referred to as observation, learning, copying or even role playing. It incorporates such process as attention phase, retention phase, reproduction phase and motivation phase. Applied behavior analysis is an intervention strategy used by teacher to increase occurrence of desired behaviors in all learning situation. This method relies on the direct, repeated, measurement and recording observable behaviors targeted for change. This helps the teacher to remain focused and work on the targeted skills only (Reynold&Zupanic, 2011).

According to the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD, 2008) intellectual disability is a disability that is characterized by significant limitations both in intelligence and adaptive behavior expressed in conceptual, social and practical adaptive skills. The disability originates before the age of 18 years. The diagnostic criteria for intellectual disability identifies a learner with intellectual disability as having a significantly sub-average intellectual functioning with an intelligent quotient (IQ) of approximately 70 or below on an individually administered IQ test. The ID also show concurrent deficits or impairment in present adaptive functioning, that is the person's effectiveness in meeting the standards expected for his or her age or by his her cultural group.

The onset of ID is before 18 years of age and the code used to diagnose learners with ID is based on degree of severity reflecting level of intellectual impairment, mild IDs have an IQ of 50-55 to approximately 70. The moderately ID have an IQ level of 35-40 to 50-55. The severely ID have an IQ level of 20-25 to 35-40 while the profoundly ID have an IQ level of below 20-25. Those with ID severity unspecified is when there is a strong presumption of ID but the person intelligence is unstable by standard tests (Tasse, 2013). In Kenya, an intellectually disabled child is one with a limited level of intelligence and deficits in adaptive behavior (Ministry of Education, 2016).

In Kenya, Ruteere (2009) conducted a study on 'effectiveness of teaching methods for daily living skills to learners with intellectual challenges in special units in public schools Kasarani sub-county'. She found that using right methods, though at a slower pace, learners with intellectual disabilities are able to learn. She also found out that some teachers were using abstract methods to teach DLS; that some teachers do not use correct strategies to enhance teaching methods. She asserts that many head teachers in these schools are not even aware of what is taught in DLS. She recommends that a learner with ID requires a specialist in the area of her needs to acquire DLS. Ruteere's conclusion was that 90% of teachers and head teachers in the units are not aware of the correct methods to teach DLS and as a result the learners in the units are not taught effectively and recommends that schools with units should be headed by teachers who have trained in SNE and have a child at heart. This study also attempted to conduct a similar study in Murang'a to ascertain whether the situation is different in a different unit setting.

Makumi (2010) also talks about learning ability of the learners by stating that, while teaching, the teacher should start slightly below the child's level. The researcher concurs with Makumi but argues that she should have mentioned about teaching of adaptive behavior skills, which is the main area of concern for learners with intellectual disabilities. This study sought to establish the influence of teaching methods on acquisition of adaptive skills among children with ID in special units in Muranga County.

2.2 Learning Resources and Teaching of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities

In any education process, a curriculum is rendered void of practical meaning without supportive materials such as textbooks, visual aids, writing materials among others. This corroborates with Makumi's (2010) that equipment and supplies for any schools must be up to date. ICT training for teachers in some developing countries is based on developing computer literacy, which is a vital component for integrating ICT in education; however it is noteworthy that effective training should not stop at computer literacy but should model effective teaching practices. Nevertheless, there are many other countries that provide little or negligible teacher training related to ICT in education.

Phinias, Jeriphanos and Kudakwashe (2013) argue that although children with severe intellectual disability enjoy the same rights as other children, they need learning resources different from others in the main stream. However, it was felt that these children require more resources than their counterparts. Their abnormalities require more learning resources in order to realize their full human potential. They should learn at their own pace and the curriculum should be modified to suit them. Because of these challenges respondents felt that inclusion can only be effective when these challenges are overcome. Teaching and learning materials cultivate motivation in the learners and make them active participants in the learning process. Teaching and learning materials capture and maintain learners' attention, help them to understand what is being taught, and learn new skills (Ministry of Education, 2009).

Some learners with ID may be slower in writing assignment and need more time (Heller, Forney, Alberto, Best & Schwartzman, 2009). Allowance may need to be made for large and poorly coordinated handwriting. Some may need keyboard to type or word process their assignments. For some, adapted devices such as pencil grips and page turners may be required. Papers may need to be taped firmly to the desktop. For individuals who have trouble grasping a pencil, pencil grips or larger writing utensils (fat mechanical pencils or pencils wrapped in pipe insulation) may provide an easier grasping surface.

In Kenya, learners with ID require materials over and above what is already being provided by the school. In most of the units, teaching/learning materials are lacking which implies that training of ID is threatened. Educational resources are a broad term focusing all factors outside and within classroom that makes teaching and learning experience more effective. They also include human resources where human support in learning process. They participate and contribute to meet learning needs for learners. They cultivate motivation in learners and make them active participants in the learning process (Government of Kenya, 2010).

Friend (2008) asserts that selection; adaptation and development of learning materials for learners within intellectual disabilities should be guided by ability level of the learner's age, educational needs, interest activity to be done and objective activity. Moreover, it is important to note that all learners especially those with ID need materials which they can touch, feel, see and even play with. They need concrete materials for concept formation. The materials should reflect their functional curriculum and therefore, such themes as personal care, feeding, care of the home, food selection and preparation, safety and security, recreation and leisure, money, health and HIV and AIDS require concrete and situational materials (MoE, 2009).

Makumi (2010) conducted a study on challenges facing teachers in learning resources management in Primary Schools and units for intellectually challenged learners in Kiambu District. She revealed that the equipment and supplies should be adequate and available to enable teachers and pupils achieve success in the teaching and learning process. Lack of resources, both human and material, is a major constraint in curriculum implementation. When resources are scarce human resources development becomes poor (Makumi, 2010). There is inadequate provision of appropriate teaching/learning material for special needs education because most of the materials available in the market are mainly developed for regular curricular and regular learners. There is limited availability of curriculum support material which limits the ability of teachers in SNE to employ a variety of content, teaching/learning activities for effective curriculum delivery. Learners with specific disabilities and special needs require specialized educational resources at individual school level depending on nature and extent of disability (Kimeu, 2012). The current study sought to examine the influence of teaching/learning resources on acquisition of adaptive skills among learners with ID in special units in Muranga County.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Target Population

This study employed a mixed methodology approach and a descriptive survey research design. Both qualitative and quantitative procedures were utilized. Qualitative information portrayed the influence of teachers' factors on the securing of adaptive skills among learners with scholarly difficulties in special units in Muranga County, Kenya. The target population of this study comprised of 34 teachers in the special units and 17 head teachers from 17 primary schools with intellectually disabled units in Mathioya Sub-County leading to a total population of 51 respondents.

3.2 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The study used purposive sampling technique where elements were chosen because they suit specific criteria that the study sought to explore. The sample size representative of the respondents in this study was determined based on the Krejcie and Morgan's sample size calculations. According to Kothari

(2004), for a target population of 51, the recommended sample size is 45 respondents.

3.3 Research Instruments

Interview schedules for head teachers, observation checklist, and questionnaires for both primary school headteachers and teachers in special units for learners with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) were used in the study.

3.4 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in Njumbi primary school in Mathioya Sub-county to test the instruments if they were ambiguous or not and the school was not included in the final study. To enhance validity of the instruments, expert advice was sought from three Lecturers in the area of Special Needs Education from the School of Education of Kenyatta University. Pearson product' moment correlation was used and reliability coefficient of 0.73 was realized for both questionnaires and 0.76 for the observation checklist.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Prior to the main study, the researcher visited the selected schools to collect data and made a rapport with the school administrators. Respondents selected for the study were given questionnaires to fill, which were collected immediately after completion. The respondents were given adequate explanation before responding to the items. The researcher made all possible attempts to ensure that the data attained from questionnaires and observation checklists was valid and reliable. The researcher filled the checklist through class observation. The researcher used a checklist with each learner as they carried out the activities. A mark was put against the activity a learner was able to carry successfully and no tick was put against an activity a learner failed to perform. An interview between the researcher and the head of schools was later conducted and data was recorded in notebook

3.6 Data Processing and Analysis

After data collection, the questionnaires were checked for completeness. The incomplete ones were discarded. Quantitative data was edited, categorized based on research objectives, coded, entered into a computer and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 21). The data was presented using descriptive statistics in form of percentages, frequency tables and graphs. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically as per the objectives. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically according to the research objectives.

IV. STUDY RESULTS

This section presents the data collected from the field and its analysis based on the achievement of the study objective. The results were presented in two sections: section one discusses the findings on the influence of teaching methods on acquisition of adaptive skills among children with ID in special units from teachers in special units. While, section two

discusses findings on the influence of teaching and learning resources on acquisition of adaptive skills among learners with ID in special units in Muranga County.

4.1.1 Methods Used to Teach Adaptive Skills

Teachers were required to give the teaching methods they employed on acquisition of adaptive skills among children with ID in special units. Their responses were tabulated in Table 1.

Table 1: Methods used for teaching adaptive skills as reported by teachers

Methods	Freq	%
Individualized instructor programme	10	33.4
Use of sound-producing objects	4	13.3
Direct teaching	18	60.0
Grouping method	5	16.7
Observation	21	70.0
Peer teaching	9	30.0
Role play	16	53.3
Miming	13	43.3
Question and answer method	29	96.6
Story telling	7	23.3

n=30

Table 1 indicates that majority of teachers in the special units majorly used question and answer method to impart adaptive skills among children with moderate intellectual disabilities. Observation was cited by 21(70.0%) and direct teaching or teacher-centered mentioned by 18(60.0%) of the teachers. On the contrary, such significant methods as use of sound-producing objects, grouping, peer-teaching, role play, miming, and storytelling were not sufficiently employed to teach adaptive skills. Question and answer, observation and other teacher-centered methods are grossly unsuitable for teaching adaptive skills to learners with intellectual disabled since they are more abstract than practical. This implies that most teachers did not apply the correct methods for teaching adaptive skills to learners with ID. This clearly showed that most teachers were not aware of the best teaching methods such as peer-teaching (30%), team teaching or group teaching (16.7%), use of objects which create interactive environment and role play (53.3%). Effective ways of teaching are essential for learning of adaptive skills. Teaching adaptive skills using only few inappropriate methods was not adequate in assisting children acquire self-independence.

These findings agree with Davis and Florrian (2004) who assert that a combination of teaching strategies and approaches yield more powerful effect than a single-strategy method. Kamuri (2005, cited in Ruteere, 2009) also established that learners with ID need environment which is well organized and with abundant opportunities for achievement. Nevertheless, majority of learners with ID had

not acquired adaptive skills because most teachers did not use the right methods of teaching.

4.1.2 Application of Teaching Methods

Teachers were further asked to provide teaching strategies they used in improving the teaching methods and facilitating effective learning among the learners with ID. Table 4.8 shows the teaching strategies cited by the teachers which they employed to enhance teaching methods.

Table 2: Intervention Strategies applied to Ensure Learning Takes Place as Reported by Teachers

Intervention Strategy	Freq	%
Involving parents	21	70
Proper use of instructional materials	27	90
Offering incentives/rewards	18	60
Guidance and counseling	16	53.3
Dealing with individual learners	9	30
Identifying each learner's needs and attending to it	8	26.7

N=30

The study findings in Table 2 show that many intervention strategies were applied by teachers in special units to ensure learning takes place effectively. These include: proper use of instructional materials, followed by parental involvement; offering incentives; guidance and counseling. Also dealing with individual learners and identifying each learner's needs and attending to it were also some strategies used by a few teachers.

These findings clearly show that majority of teachers were not well conversant with the appropriate strategies for enhancing teaching such as modeling and task analysis, applied behavior and IEP; yet they are supposed to implement the curriculum in their schools. The findings indicate that lack of training in the area of ID made teachers unable to effectively identify each learner's needs and attend to the personal challenges faced by the learners with respect to acquisition of the adaptive skills. It can be deemed that learners with ID who are under the care of teachers in special units may remain dependent since they are unlikely to acquire essential adaptive skills that are basic in their daily lives in the community.

The findings concur with those of Westwood (2007) who argues that various approaches may be adopted to boost attention, memory, and retrieval of information. Some of the include using visual imagery, mnemonic devices, rehearsal strategies, advanced organizers, attentions cues, prior knowledge activation strategies and other learning and metacognitive strategies. Learners with ID require more time to learn to attend to the relevant dimensions of a task. Generally, it has been observed that learners with considerable ID are less liable than typical learners to perceive, select and group relevant stimuli and discard irrelevant stimuli.

4.1.3 Acquisition of Adaptive by Classroom Observation Checklist

The study inquired from the teachers if the learners acquired adaptive skills when appropriate methods were employed. All teachers agreed that learners acquired the skills if the correct methods were used. Two teacher's lessons were observed from each of the 15 primary schools. Findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Acquisition of Adaptive Skills by Class-Observation Checklist

Item	Able		Not Able	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Personal care				
Buttoning, unbuttoning, zipping	16	53.3	12	46.7
Brushing teeth	12	46.7	16	53.3
Washing hands	17	56.7	13	43.7
Oiling and combing the hair	8	26.7	22	73.3
Use handkerchief correctly	4	13.3	26	86.7
Feeding				
Identify plate, spoon	13	43.7	17	56.7
Tell their uses	2	6.7	28	93.3
Name different types of fruits	1	3.3	29	96.7
Social and communication skills				
Name friends in the class	14	46.7	16	13.7
Tell the name of the teacher	10	33.3	20	66.7
Name different types of food	2	6.7	28	93.3
Name sources of food	3	10.0	27	90.0
Time management				
Name days of the week	5	6.7	25	83.3
Name some activities they do at home	11	36.7	19	63.3

n=30

From Table 3, under feeding, majority 29(96.7%) of the learners could not name different types of fruits and 28(93.3%) could not tell the uses of spoons and plates even after naming them. The findings further showed that 26(86.7%) of the learners could not use handkerchief correctly under personal care and name different types of food and give the sources of such food respectively under social and communication skills. Based on time management skills, 25(83.3%) of the learners were not able to name days of the week. These findings depicts that learners with ID did not acquire adaptive skills as should be when taught by teachers who lack special knowledge in ID. This implies that teachers in the units did not possess the specialized capability to train the children with ID to acquire basic adaptive skills such as buttoning, unbuttoning, zipping, brushing teeth, washing hands, oiling and combing the hair and using handkerchief correctly.

The findings also show that teachers use a lot of theory-based teaching methods which are not only unsuitable for learners with ID but also bring more dilution since they lack practical skills which can enhance learning of adaptive skills. The situation may improve when proper teaching methods, tangible learning materials, and trained and specialized teachers are applied and implemented. The findings of this study are in disagreement with Winter (2006) who asserts that teacher training is of paramount importance it plays

significant role in fostering positive attitude towards the children diverse abilities which is important for running inclusive programs.

4.2 Learning Resources and Acquisition of Adaptive Skills

4.2.1 Provision and Use of Teaching and Learning Materials

Teachers in the units were required to tell whether they used teaching and learning materials to teach adaptive skills. Remarkably, all the teachers agreed that the utilized teaching and learning materials in teaching adaptive skills among children with ID. The head teachers were also required to indicate whether they provided teaching/learning materials for adaptive skills. All head teachers reported that facilities used by children with moderate intellectual disabilities were not adequate despite the high number of trained personnel to handle children with moderate intellectual disabilities in the special units under study. Headteachers were further asked to list the materials they provide to their teachers. The response from the head teachers were tabulated and presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Provision and use of Teaching/Learning Materials as Reported by p

Teaching and learning materials provided	Freq	%
Pictures	6	40
Charts	4	26.7
Play equipment	2	13.3
Stationeries	3	20
Total	15	100

The findings in Table 4 indicate that 6(40%) of the head teachers provided pictures to their teachers as instructional materials in acquisition of adaptive skills among children with ID. These may include images of maps and physical human body parts. The findings further indicate that a few head teacher said that they provided charts, stationeries and play equipment. It is evident from the findings of the study that most of the materials for teaching adaptive skills such as toileting, leisure time, culturally made sticks and dressing were ignored. This implies that most head teachers were not aware of all the adaptive skills for independent living. Such situation was attributed by lack of specialization and proper training in special need education. This also implied that curriculum was not fully implemented which rendered learners with ID to continue depending on others. These findings concur with Friend (2008) who argues that tangible and appropriate materials are essential for concept formation as far as teaching adaptive skills is concerned.

4.2.2 Role Played by Teaching and Learning Materials in Teaching Adaptive Skills

The study sought to assess from the head teachers the importance of teaching and learning materials in teaching

adaptive skills to learners with ID. The responses are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Significance of Teaching and Learning Materials in Acquisition of Adaptive Skills

Teaching and learning materials provided	Freq	%
Helps relate materials and skills	2	13.3
Improve learning and performance	2	13.3
Making T/L more concrete	7	46.6
Enhances the ability to recall the learned concepts	3	23.3
Creates practical environment	1	6.7
Total	15	100

The findings in Table 5 show that 7(46.6%) of head teachers believed that use of teaching/learning materials assisted to bring teaching/learning more concrete. The findings further indicated that 3(23.3%) head teachers said that teaching/learning materials enhanced the ability to recall the learned concepts among learners. The findings further indicated that 2(13.3%) head teachers reported that teaching/learning materials helped learners relate materials and with the skills taught, improved learning and performance, and created practical environment for the learned skills and concepts. The findings further revealed that despite of knowing the importance of teaching/learning materials, head teachers still lacked the essential knowledge about effective selection and adaptation of teaching/learning materials since knowing the importance of such materials does not mean using them effectively to help the learners acquire adaptive skills.

V. CONCLUSION

The following conclusions were made based on study findings:

- The researcher concluded that most teachers did not apply the correct methods for teaching adaptive skills to learners with ID. During the class observation it was found that most learners with ID could not perform reasonably. Therefore learners in the units were not taught adaptive skills effectively and therefore little acquisition of adaptive skills by the learners. The improper use of teaching methods by teachers translated to the situation where learners with ID remained dependent since they did not acquire the appropriate skills to enable them adapt and become independent.
- It was evident that the teaching/learning materials provided by the head teachers were not suitable for acquisition of adaptive skills among learners with ID hence the learners did not fully gain sufficient adaptive skills for self-regulating life.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools with special units should be headed by teachers who are trained in mental retardation and have knowledge and skills, and also have learners with MR at heart. Such head teachers would advise their special unit teachers on the correct methods while considering learners abilities and interests in teaching learners with ID

The government, through the Ministry Education, should purchase enough materials suitable for teaching/learning of learners with special needs.

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