

This was a study of the peer-acceptance of the visually impaired child within the integrated class. The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not the visually handicapped child is socially accepted by his/her sighted peers within the integrated classroom. The study also sought to find out if there were any gender and age differences in peer-acceptance and also whether the teachers' attitudes towards the visually handicapped and integration, academic achievement of the visually handicapped child and degree of disability were related to peer-acceptance.

The sample for this study was drawn from schools under the Nairobi Kilimani Integrated programme for the Visually Handicapped (NKIPVH). Random sampling was used to pick a sample of 15 visually handicapped children: 11 were partially sighted and 4 were totally blind. Sighted pupils in each of the 15 visually handicapped children's class and the class teacher were included to make up a sample of 565 pupils and 13 teachers.

Three instruments were used. A sociometric test and the teachers' rating scale were used to measure peer-acceptance. A likert-type scale was used to measure teachers' attitudes

The results of the study indicated that:

- i) There was a significant difference between peer acceptance of the totally blind and the partially sighted. The partially sighted were better accepted than the totally blind.
- ii) There was a significant difference between younger and older children in peer acceptance of the visually handicapped. Older children accepted their visually handicapped peers more than younger children.
- iii) There was a significant difference between peer acceptance of the visually handicapped by girls and by boys.
- (iv) There is a significant relationship between teacher assigned class positions and peer acceptance of the Visually Handicapped.

There were however no significant differences between:-

- i) Peer acceptance of visually handicapped and the sighted by the sighted
- ii) The level of peer acceptance of visually handicapped children in classes having teachers with highly positive attitudes towards both the visually handicapped and the integration of the visually handicapped as compared to those having teachers with moderate positive attitude.

This study concluded that the visually handicapped children integrated within the regular class under the NKIPVH are accepted by their sighted peers.