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**CHALLENGES FACING THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS WITH PHYSICAL
DISABILITIES: A CASE OF JOYTOWN SECONDARY SCHOOL IN THIKA
MUNICIPALITY.**

MUIGAI, WANJIKU NANCY

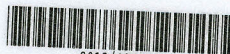
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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF DEGREE OF
MASTER OF EDUCATION (SPECIAL EDUCATION) IN THE SCHOOL OF
EDUCATION, KENYATTA UNIVERSITY.**

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Muigai, W.
*Challenges facing the
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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.



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This thesis has been forwarded with our approval as university supervisors.

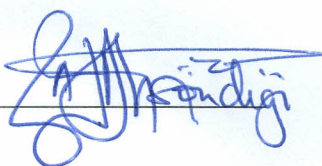


Date 05/06/2012

PROF. GEOFFREY KARUGU

Department of Special Needs Education

Kenyatta University



Date 05/06/2012

DR. SAMSON ONDIGI

Senior Lecturer

Department of Educational Communication and Technology

Kenyatta University

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my children Mark and Ashley; who gave me a reason to live, read and write.

I am indebted to my parents Mr. and Mrs. [Name] for their unwavering support and encouragement. It was a great boost to the successful completion of this project. My deep appreciation goes to my children Ashley and Mark, who gave me a reason to live, read and write.

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I sincerely thank my Creator, the Almighty God, who gave me the physical, mental strength and good health to undertake and accomplish this work. I indeed enjoyed a lot of support, co-operation and contributions from my supervisors Prof. Geoffrey K. and Dr. Samson O. who patiently guided me to the end.

I am indebted to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Muigai for their encouragement and moral support. It was a great boost to the successful completion of this project. My deep appreciation goes to my children Ashley and Mark, who gave me a reason to live, read and write.

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God bless you all.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAUW	American Association of University Women
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
EFA	Education for All
KSPH	Kenya Society for the Physically Handicapped
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
UNESCO	United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

ABSTRACT

Gender studies and programmes in various colleges and universities have not been able to bring out the plight of girls with disabilities. As a result, the unique needs and challenges of girls with disabilities have largely been ignored. Although the Kenyan government is committed to increasing school enrolment for all children, girls with disabilities continue to face numerous challenges that affect their participation in education. This study therefore sought to examine the challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities. The study was guided by the following research objectives: to establish socio-cultural challenges encountered by girls with physical disabilities; to investigate school-related challenges faced by girls with physical disabilities; to determine socio-economic challenges encountered by girls with disabilities and to establish policy-related factors affecting the education of students with physical disabilities. The study adapted a descriptive survey design targeting 174 students, 24 teachers and the headteacher drawn from Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped. Simple random sampling was used to select 10 girls from form one, two and three classes to participate in the study. Three class teachers and the headteacher were purposively selected. The instruments used for data collection included an interview guide for teachers and headteachers, a guide for the focus group and an observation checklist. A pilot study was conducted in the same school to ascertain the validity and reliability of the research instruments. The data collected was analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis approach. The study established that discrimination and isolation impede education of girls with physical disabilities; lack of conducive school environment and structures discourage girls with physical disabilities from continuing schooling; lack of policies that encompass all the people including those with physical disabilities, to make them self reliant and economically viable, endanger education of girls with physical disabilities and lack of sponsorship limit girls with physical handicap from furthering their education. The study recommends that the government should establish a kitty for the disabled people who cannot earn a living because of their disabilities, and make policies that govern even the disabled and their rights; the community should be more accommodating towards the girls with disabilities, and always be ready to give them a lending hand when they need help. They should not be treated differently because of their disabilities; Parents with disabled children should treat their children the same way as they treat the other children to help them build confidence in themselves. They should also treat these children as human beings and teach them to appreciate themselves as they are.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In Kenya, there are secondary schools for various categories of learners with special needs. They include: hearing impairment, visual impairment and physical impairment. In these schools, the physical environment and educational resources are modified to suit the needs of a specific group of learners (MOEST, 2003). This chapter focused on background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, theoretical framework, conceptual framework an operational definition of terms.

1.1 Background to the study

Mainstreaming gender in the education sector is a theme that has dominated both local and international forums. These international forums include Jomtien Conference in 1990 on “Education for All”, the World Conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca, Spain in 1994 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 adapted at the United Nations World Summit on sustainable development. All these conventions recognize the importance of education and in particular education for girls in accelerating social, economic, and political development. UNICEF, (2004) places girls’ education at the center of global efforts to meet the MDGs. All the MDGs focus on development in the wider sense and in achieving them, literacy is paramount. Although several goals crucial to development were passed, two of them - universal education, and gender equality and empowering women - are considered central to all others.

Despite thousands of successful projects in countries around the globe, gender parity in education, access, achievement and completion - is as elusive as ever. Rousso (2003) says that girls with disabilities are a large, heterogeneous, diverse group. It is difficult to determine the percentage of girls with disabilities, in part because there are many definitions of disability, not only across the countries but also within the same country. The definitions demonstrate that disability is a social construct, as much rooted in cultural, social, political, legal and economic factors as in biology. However, this proposed study limited itself to those girls with physical impairments although there are other types of disabilities, for example: those with visual, hearing, intellectual, learning, health, communication or other disabilities that may be visible or invisible, stable or progressive (UNICEF, 2003).

Given the diversity of the definitions, there are no clear global statistics on the number or percentage of girls with disabilities. UNESCO (2003) estimates that the number of children with disabilities under the age of 18 around the world varies from 120 to 150 million. Even assuming that girls make up somewhat less than half of all children with disabilities, as some research suggests (Groce, 1999), the number of girls with disabilities world wide is likely to be substantial. Available data, mostly focused on literacy, indicate that women and girls with disabilities fare less well in the education arena than either the disabled male or non-disabled female counterparts. For example, in terms of enrolment, UNESCO (2004) suggests that only two percent of children with disabilities are in school, with disabled girls even more underserved. The Koech commission (1999) gives insight on the status of special education in Kenya; however, the commission does not indicate the total number of girls with disabilities who are enrolled in institutions of learning.

For girls with disabilities, additional safeguards and precautions may be necessary to ensure that their unique needs are not overlooked. In Kenya, efforts have been made to improve girls' access to education and thereby increase their enrolment rates and educational benefits. However, although more girls are being educated than before, they still face numerous stereotypic gender biases in the society, which impede their learning and sustain their under- education (KSPH, 2001). Although the Persons with Disability Act, 2003 has been enactment in Kenya, it is not gender specific. The United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, summarized the need and importance of investing in girl's education when he said:

“...there is no tool for development more effective than the education of girls” (UNICEF, 2004). It was against this background that the researcher wanted to find out the challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities in Joytown secondary school for the physically challenged.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Gender studies and programmes in various colleges and universities have not been able to bring out the plight of girls with disabilities (Wamahiu & Njau, 1995; Ambajo, 1995; Eshiwani, 1993). As a result, the unique needs and challenges of girls with disabilities have largely been ignored. Although the Kenyan government is committed to increasing school enrolment for all children, girls with disabilities continue to face numerous challenges that affect their participation in education. Statistics by UNESCO (2004) show that in terms of enrolment more than 90 percent of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school. In Kenya, available literature (Karugu, 1995; Sinyo, 1998; Were, 2008) indicate that girls with disabilities are under enrolled in most institutions of learning and this further necessitated the designing of this study. According to Were (2008), only 26,000 or 1.7% of the

estimated 1.5million children with disabilities in Kenya have real access to some form of education. This means that close to 1.47 million children with disabilities are not receiving any educational support. In view of this, the researcher sought to investigate the challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities in Joytown School for the Physically Handicapped.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The researcher sought to find out challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities in Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study has the following objectives:

- a) To establish socio-cultural challenges encountered by girls with physical disabilities.
- b) Investigate school-related challenges faced by girls with physical disabilities.
- c) To determine socio-economic challenges encountered by girls with physical disabilities.
- d) To establish policy-related factors affecting the education of girls with physical disabilities.

1.5 Research questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- a) What are the socio-cultural challenges faced by girls with physical disabilities in Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped?
- b) What are the school's related challenges encountered by girls with physical disabilities?
- c) What economic related challenges do girls with physical disabilities face?

- d) What are the policy-related factors affecting the education of girls with physical disabilities?

1.6 Significance of the study

1. The results of the study could help the society to appreciate girls with physical disabilities.
2. It could help sweep away the barriers of ignorance and misunderstanding that keeps handicapped people and non-handicapped people apart.
3. The study will also help the society to know the educational challenges faced by girls with physical disabilities and how to solve some of these challenges.
4. The study could be useful to the policy makers from the institution who will be guided by the results of this study in budgeting for the change and also start marketing education for learners with physical disabilities to organizations that fund and support education in this country.
5. Parents and teachers need to have a positive attitude towards education for children with physical disabilities.

1.7 Limitation and delimitation of the study

Among other limitations, data collected did not involve or include secondary schools for learners with other categories of disabilities. The study was restricted to Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped and not other institutions of learning like primary schools, vocational training centers and higher education level. Also, there is a dearth of literature in the libraries on girls with disabilities because few studies related to girls with disabilities have been carried out.

1.8 Assumptions

The study was carried out with the following assumptions.

- i. Respondents would be sincere in responding to the questionnaire.
- ii. The headteacher and teachers would be co-operative enough to enable the researcher carry out the study in their institution.

In the proposed study, the following assumptions were made: that girls with physical disabilities face challenges, which affect their education and respondents were cooperative and provided honest answers. The school administration was committed in addressing the challenges facing education of girls with disabilities.

1.9 Theoretical framework

The study was based on Maslow's theory of human needs of 1954. Maslow asserts that there is hierarchical structure of human needs and that satisfaction of one need triggers the next. According to this theory, human beings have similar needs. According to Maslow, if a child is not shown love, concern and recognition, he cannot move to the next level. Parents and family members play a crucial role in building or damaging a child's self image. If a girl with disabilities is provided for all her basic needs, accepted and treated like the other siblings, she will grow up with positive self image regardless of physical disability and is likely to participate and perform in education. If the school creates a safe and secure environment for girls with physical disabilities, such girls are likely to have higher aspirations and goals in education. The self-esteem of such girls is high; hence they become easily integrated in the wider community leading to active participation in national development. Such a girl can therefore achieve the highest level of Maslow's need of self- actualization. A self-

actualized person is confident, independent has self pride and is self reliant which means she can face challenges in the society.

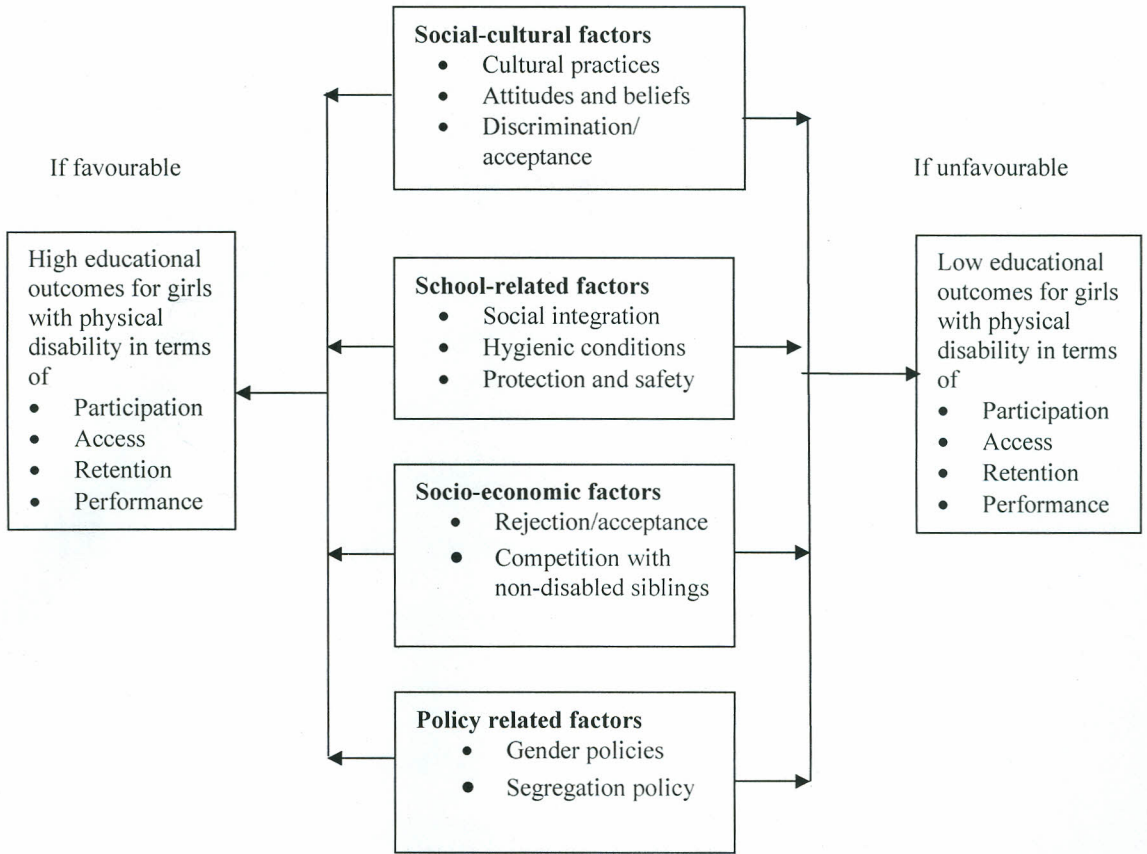


1.9.1 Conceptual Framework

As shown in the conceptual framework, there are four main stakeholders that face the situation of girls with physical disabilities. These stakeholders are: the government, the school, the organization and harmful cultural practices. The government faces competition with non-disabled girls. The school faces the issue of access, participation, religion, and segregation. The organization faces the issue of self-actualization, self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-reliance. The harmful cultural practices are expected to have a negative impact on the outcomes for girls with physical disabilities. The outcomes are: self-actualization, self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-reliance.

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Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework



1.9.1 Conceptual Framework

As shown in the conceptual framework, there are a number of challenges that face the education of girls with physical disabilities. These include socio-cultural factors like discrimination, stigmatization and harmful cultural practices; school related factors such as rejection, competition with non-disabled siblings and policy-related like inadequate gender policies and segregation policies. These are the independent variables of the study. These factors are expected to influence schooling outcomes for girls with physical disabilities in terms of access, retention, performance and participation rates. If these factors are addressed at home, community, school and articulated in government policies, then there will be increased access, retention,

performance and participation of girl with physical disabilities in secondary schools. However, if the reverse occurs, access, retention, performance and participation will decrease.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Past studies related to needs and challenges of girls with disabilities and the numerous barriers they encounter in society, home and at school are revised in this chapter. Literature has been reviewed under the following sub-headings: socio-cultural challenges, school related challenges, socio-economic conditions, policies and enrolment trends. It should be noted that some of these factors are not completely different in kind for boys and girls with disabilities, but the magnitude of their effects are larger in the case of girls with disabilities (Wachira, 2001).

2.1 Socio-cultural challenges

Persistence of certain cultural barriers makes girls with disabilities victims of two-fold discrimination. That is sex and disability. These are two separate factors which when combined in the same person usually reinforce each other and compound prejudices for example, for many girls; issues include safety and cultural prohibitions against females travelling unescorted (Boylan, 1991). Underlying the double discrimination is negative attitudes about women compounded by negative attitudes that often cut across culture and level of development. For girls with disabilities, the barriers may be intensified. In some areas, the only schools, which serve students with disabilities, are segregated special schools often located in urban centers. Students with disabilities from rural regions must travel to attend school, and often live at the school. Cultural expectations that girls stay close to home may prohibit participation of girls with disabilities (Fahd, Marji, Myfti, Masri, & Makaran, 1997).

Rousso (2003) states that cultural bias against women, preference for boys and allocation of resources and opportunities to male children at expense of girls with disabilities greatly impede their access to education. Education is considered less important for girls with disabilities who cannot perform the traditional roles allocated to women of providing home labor, and being wives. The cultural practice of keeping girls at home to provide cheap labor is even worse for the girl-child with disabilities who cannot perform the roles allocated to her. As a result, girls with disabilities do not fit in the cultural framework of traditional roles for girls (KSPH, 2001).

Wamahi and Njau (1995) also argue that girls' education is given little or no attention while that of boys is highly valued because they are expected to be the breadwinners, and future leaders of the society. While some scholars view gender bias as the major barrier (Fahd, et al (1997), many others believe that disability bias limits disabled girls opportunities still further. Families often assume that a girl with disability will not marry which may add to her devaluation, since in most cultures, the prospect of a good marriage is the primary value given to girls.

While there are many ways in which discrimination against girls with disabilities manifests itself, one key result is that women with disabilities are significantly poorer than men with disabilities and women without disabilities (Onsando, 2005). This is due to the belief that girls with disabilities are not capable of performing tasks such as, engaging in schooling, employment and performing various traditional roles assigned to them. For example, carrying water, fetching firewood, rearing children, providing free labor in the farms of the clan, and entertaining and making their husbands happy. As a result, women with disabilities in traditional societies are not recognized as women. A father feels that a girl with disabilities will not be married

and therefore will not bring wealth into the home (KSPH, 2001). Instead girls with disabilities are viewed as objects of pity, mere recipients of charity. As a result of these biased attitudes, there is skewed representation of girls with disabilities in formal institutions of learning and for those already in schools, low expectations limit their learning, yet most of them are capable of excelling in education.

In some cultures, disability is a source of social stigma. Because of norms of female beauty, and her role in the family, a disabled girl is seen as a failure on several counts. She is perceived to drain family resources, which may be scarce, with no hope of marriage or social mobility. It is quite usual for a disabled girl to be hidden by her family (Atshan, 1997). Onsando (2005) argues that this isolation and exclusion of women with disabilities based on culture and traditions often have greater effect on women with disabilities more than men with disabilities. This isolation leads to low self-esteem, negative feelings and increases the invisibility of girls with disabilities. Isolation and invisibility of girls with disabilities may indicate that discrimination does not exist, but it may also point to the permissive societal attitudes that allow such discrimination to continue.

Muigai (1998) has aptly depicted the plight of women with disabilities. She argues that physical abuse of disabled women or absence of girls with disabilities in social gatherings promotes their invisibility. She observes with concern that one can hardly see women with disabilities in weddings, funerals, political meetings, workshops, seminars or conferences. She bitterly comments that in all these fora the women with disabilities are either underrepresented, represented as a token or completely absent. She concludes by arguing that the public's negative attitude towards women with disabilities is a consequence of constant bombardment of images of the commercialised ideal of womanhood-young, beautiful, active and physically perfect.

This therefore makes it important for the researcher to find out to which extent socio-cultural challenges influence education of girls with disabilities in the secondary school under study.

2.2 School related challenges

Research on the impact of school-based factors towards education of girls with disabilities provides insight into the way schools perpetuate the gender gap in education (Rousso, 2003; AAUW, 1993; and Stein 1993). Rousso (2003) says that the architectural inaccessibility of the school buildings, including stairs, narrow corridors, inaccessible desks, equipment and bathrooms are often a major barrier for girls with disabilities. As with getting to and from schools, differences in male and female socialization may enable boys to more readily ask for help from friends, because the male friends may be better able to help. Also, boys with disabilities are more likely to "tough it" or take risks to get over barriers such as, flinging themselves up and down the stairs. The distance to school constitutes an educational barrier; inaccessible toilets as well as the nature of some disabilities might mean that a girl with disabilities would need help with toileting since many cultures emphasize modesty and privacy. The need for such personal assistance can be highly problematic and can also intensify safety concerns.

Menstruation, which some disabled girls may need assistance to manage, can be a compounding factor particularly when the bathrooms are inaccessible or unsanitary. Menstruation can trigger fear for some parents of disabled daughters, underscoring for their budding sexuality and sexual vulnerability. The absence of provisions at schools enabling the girls to manage their periods in safe ways can intensify parental fears and further discourage school attendance (Rousso, 2003). She concludes by stating that,

schools may lack the resources or willingness to provide personal assistance and disabled girls' need for help in such personal tasks can reinforce stereotypes about their potential and raise staff anxieties around sexuality.

Research shows that curriculum is a focal point of discrimination against girls (Odaga and Heveld, 1995). Stereotypes in the textbooks and other educational materials discourage their active participation and limit their aspirations. Study by Obura (1991) states that images that textbooks portray are very powerful in shaping young minds, as they are key to academic stimuli. Whereas the above is true for girls without disabilities, studies of gender bias in educational materials and resources used by students with disabilities are highly limited, even less is known about disability bias and its intersection with gender bias may be a significant issue for disabled girls (Greenberg and Shaffer, 1990). In the United States, studies of education materials used by students receiving special education services showed either a stereotypical representation or under representation of women and girls with disabilities (Women with Disability Awareness Project, 1984). The impact of such bias may be compounded by the relative absence of disabled women educators in most school systems including those in developed countries (Magrab, 2000) and by widespread invisibility of disabled women in the media (Rousso, 2003). All these factors contribute to lack of positive role models for girls with disabilities and their parents, as is the assumption of this study.

Sexual harassment and violence is recognized as a widespread problem for non-disabled girls (AAUW, 1993; Stein, 1993). The limited data available, mainly pilot studies from the US that focus on sexual harassment for students/girls with disabilities, suggest that students with disabilities face higher rates of harassment than

non-disabled students, and disabled girls face higher rates of harassment than disabled boys or non-disabled girls. Girls with multiple disabilities are at particularly higher risks (Rousso, 2003). Harassment by teachers and other adults may be particularly widespread and severe in residential schools. Possible reasons include unrealistic views of residential settings as havens; administrative procedures that encourage and condone abuse, dehumanization detachment that often go on in the institutions, and a subculture that supports abuse (Rousso 2003; Sobsey 1994 and Groce 1997). The risk and realities of sexual abuse limits the educational opportunities for girls with disabilities in a variety of ways. According to KSPH (2001) parents are usually reluctant to send their disabled daughters to school especially when the school is a distance away. Also, the risks of violence may reinforce the stereotypical views held by some parents that disabled girls are helpless and in need of protection, which translates into keeping these girls not only "safe", but also isolated at home. As a result, this over-protectiveness by parents' acts as barriers for girls with disabilities attending schools, thus discouraging the girls from preparing their own economic and social independence and this necessitated the designing of this study.

Reports from varied countries, including United States (Wehmeyer, 2002), and Australia (Tomas, 1991)) suggest that vocational courses and counseling for student with disabilities, to the extent they exist are gender stereotyped, tracking girls with disabilities to lower paying jobs and traditional female roles with fewer opportunities for advancement. Vocational expectations of teachers and parents for disabled girls, and the girls' own expectations for their vocational future tend to be grounded in gender stereotypes. In the United States, the lack of adequate vocational training helps to explain the high rates of unemployment for disabled girls upon leaving school (Groce, 1997). In secondary schools, students with disabilities often feel pressure

from those same counselors to pursue a career in disability related fields such as social work, rehabilitation, counseling or special education.

In Kenya, a research indicates that sexual, physical, cultural and psychological violence seems to be part and parcel of the life of women with disabilities (KSPH, 2001). The intensity of this violence is varied, for example, where disabled women received education, training and had some source of income, they experienced minimal violence in comparison to those who are illiterate and dependent. Onsando (2005) observes that thousands of women with disabilities and children are exposed to physical and sexual violence everyday. She argues that their unique circumstances make them vulnerable to more violence than the general population. She notes that a culture of silence surrounds violence against persons with disabilities. She points out that, cases of sexual violence against women with disabilities are considered as taboo. This kind of violence may lead to low self-esteem.

The World Disability Report (1999) reports that over 50% of women with disabilities report some forms of sexual abuse during childhood. Sexual and physical abuses take place usually in the home or safe institutions. Kasante (1996) recommends that school-based challenges require more investigations in order to give a clear picture of variables that can be manipulated to rectify gender imbalances in education. In line with this background, the researcher intends to establish whether and to what extent these school-based challenges influence education of girls with physical disabilities in the secondary school under study.

2.3 Socio-economic conditions

Demand for education is governed by a number of social-economic factors within the family. Literature reveals that the family characteristics greatly determine their

children's' participation in education especially for girls. A number of factors can be used to gauge the above. For instance, it is widely acknowledged that better educated parents appreciate the value of education more than the illiterate ones. In this case, educated parents are able to assist their children progress in education both materially and morally. Abagi, Owino and Wamahiu (1995), Appleton (1995), argue that parental education enhanced their contributions towards their children progress in school equally for sons and daughters. Ambajo (1997) also states that the combination of low parental levels of education, low incomes and large family sizes catalyzed low participation in schools among pupils and girls in particular. Abagi (1995) further contends that girls from households headed by parents with low education and limited resources are more disadvantaged than boys from the same background. In such cases, parents often prioritise basic needs and boys education rather than that of girls. This may lead to a conclusion that parents with higher levels of education, better paying occupations and larger amounts of resources are more willing and able to ensure that male and female children are schooled. On the other hand, illiterate, uneducated parents are often disadvantaged and least able to appreciate and support their children's education, especially that of girls. Whereas the above cases apply to households of girls without disabilities, the situation is worse for girls with disabilities. Poverty at the household and community level compounds the effects of a disability and create a handicap for persons with disabilities (UNICEF, 2003). There is a circular relationship between poverty and disability, which also accentuates gender bias. Child labor and maltreatment can lead to mental illness, physical and psychological disabilities. Women and girls, in the face of limited resources, are more likely than their male counterparts to be deprived of basic necessities such as food and medicine (Groce, 1997).

On the other hand, disability can also contribute to poverty because of the additional expenses that it entails and because of the difficulties facing disabled income earners. Disabled children from impoverished areas are greatly disadvantaged since their families are usually not able to provide for these children in terms of medical and education services. This is because of added expenses or they do not see why they should spend the money on those services when there is not even enough money for food or education for the "normal" children (MOEST, 2003).

Onsando (2005) observes that difficulties faced by girls with disabilities are even more severe in the rural areas. In rural areas, there is inadequate or complete lack of access to information, health care and rehabilitation services. These problems are further compounded by a great deal of high illiteracy rates, longer distances to services and amenities, if they exist at all, and more harsh situations of poverty than in urban areas. She concludes that traditions and prejudices that discriminate against women are more likely to be widely experienced in the rural setting. Thus, girls with disabilities are more likely to grow up in poor families, a reality that places them at further educational disadvantage. This increases and compounds the chances and consequences of discrimination and guarantees joblessness and economic reliance. Excluded from opportunities, disabled women are on the whole desperately poor.

While poverty is a result of discrimination, it is also a cause of further discrimination. Poverty is the lack of resources: not just money, but also skills, knowledge, and social connections. Without those resources, disabled women have very limited access to institutions, services and employment. Consequently, the extensive discrimination against women with disabilities violates the principle of equality of rights and their human dignity (KSPH 2001). They are denied equal opportunities in social, economic, and political lives. The especially difficult situation of women with

disabilities has been recognized nationally and internationally. However, there is as yet not enough action or results, at least to the extent that women with disabilities everywhere are able to experience a tangible improvement in their lives (AAUW, 2003).

2.4 Policies

To lay the background for change, it is necessary to look at the existing laws that have been enacted to ensure equal opportunities, irrespective of gender and disability. Female illiteracy is a draw-back to agreed policies on provision of education services and contravenes the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) of which Kenya is a signatory (Abdi, 2003). Under CEDAW, member states have an obligation to remove discrimination and take affirmative action within their governmental structures through which the realisation of women's rights can take place. It also requires member states to go beyond mere policy statements and to put in place the necessary implementing machinery for ensuring women's equality. In this process, respect for religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and philosophical convictions of individuals and their communities should contribute to the full enjoyment of women's human rights, rather than be an obstacle (UN, 1991).

In Kenya, the government is striving to realize the rights of children with disabilities as defined by the Disability Act (2003). The Disability Act is the key piece of national legislation that articulates the rights of people with disabilities and the responsibilities of the state, parents and the society to help people with disabilities realize their rights. Progress towards realizing these rights will also result in the achievement of the MDGs especially the ones that call for gender equity and empowerment of women,

attaining Universal Primary Education and eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, especially amongst people with disabilities. However, although the Disability Act of 2003 has produced a range of efforts to promote educational equity for disabled children, there is nothing specific about girls with disabilities in secondary schools for learners with disabilities. That is; it has not included gender specific components to address the unique barriers facing girls with disabilities particularly in secondary schools as is the assumption of this study.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 guarantees equal opportunities to people with disabilities. It also outlaws discrimination based on gender within all education programmes or activities. However it is unfortunate that, it has not eliminated the negative attitudes that continue to interfere with equality of opportunity in education. More so, attitudinal and physical barriers still keep females with disabilities from reaping benefits of excellent education. It is therefore significant to establish the extent to which legislation affects the education of girls with physical disabilities in the I secondary school under study.

2.5 Enrolment trends

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997 gave public schools in United States a high bar for accountability in order to demonstrate they are serving all students equally. The underlying presumption, however, is that IDEA funds and standards adequately serve the right students. AAUW (2003) is concerned that many girls with disabilities may not qualify for IDEA services- not because they do not need special education - but because of potentially inadequate assessment of disability status.

Do special education needs vary from boys to girls? The reality is, there is very little research on sex and disability. It is documented that far fewer girls than boys receive special education services. According to the United States Department of Education (1998), boys comprise about two thirds of all students receiving special education. For years, the assumption has been that girls simply do not have special education needs at the same level or rate as boys. It is not known, however, whether or not the difference in special education enrolment is truly due to different prevalence rates or to other eligibility factors.

According to the United States Department of Education (1998), women with disabilities are five times as likely as women without disabilities to have less than eight years of formal education. Only 16 percent of all women with disabilities are likely to have any college education compared to 31 percent of non-disabled women and 28 percent of men with disabilities. According to UNESCO (2004) in terms of enrolment more than 90 percent of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school. In Kenya, available literature (Karugu, 1995; Sinyo, 1998) indicate that girls with disabilities are under enrolled in most institutions of learning and this further necessitated the designing of this study.

Table 2.1: Number of Children Receiving Special Education as of 1994 by category

Disability	No. of S. Sch	No. of Pry Sch.	No. of Integrated Schools	No. of Units	Enrolment		Total
					M	F	
Visually Impaired	1	9	20	3	1251	957	2208
Hearing Impaired	2	18	56	12	1246	1080	2327
Physically Handicapped	3	10	56	11	1300	694	1995
Mentally retarded	0	27	77	190	3163	1515	4678
Multiply Handicapped	0	4	2	1	120	45	165
Learning Disabilities	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Total	6	68	211	218	7080	4193	11373

Source: Karugu, (1995)

Sinyo (1998), a former Member of Parliament who is visually impaired, noted that whereas enrolment in regular schools for non-disabled children was estimated at 90 percent, that of children with disabilities was below 5 percent. The Government Master plan of Education and Training 1999-2010 points out that persons with disabilities are grossly under enrolled in schools (Master plan, 1998). The Koech report (1999) does not indicate the total number of disabled girls who are enrolled in schools, vocational centres, colleges and universities. There are seven segregated secondary schools for learners with special needs education (one of the secondary school is for the visually impaired, three for the hearing impaired three for the physically and neurologically handicapped special needs education learners). These segregated secondary special schools had an enrolment of 1,195 in 2001. However, this figure is not conclusive because these secondary schools also admit non-disabled students and have also been included.

2.6 Summary of the literature reviewed

The literature reviewed in this chapter has explored the complex interrelationship of parents, schools and community agencies that have traditionally stood in the way of equal participation for girls with disabilities in the education arena. It would seem that community, economic and school-based factors are all interrelated and play diversified roles, which can either hinder or facilitate access and retention of girls with disabilities in school. When these factors act as hindrances to education of girls with disabilities, these girls are systematically programmed out of the after-school experiences essential to later jobs, careers and education. It is in view of these gaps that the present study is designed to find out challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities in Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This study sought to investigate challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities in Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped. This chapter focused on study design, study setting, the population and sample selection, research instruments, the data collection techniques, piloting, data analysis techniques and the logistical and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research design

This study adapted a descriptive survey design utilizing qualitative approach. Gay (1992) notes that descriptive survey research method of study is used to investigate educational problems and to determine and report the way things are or were. Similarly according to Lockesh (1984), descriptive survey research studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of phenomenon and wherever possible to draw valid general conclusions from the facts obtained. For this study, descriptive research was appropriate because it sought to find the factors associated with a certain occurrence. This is in line with the purpose of the study, which led to the investigation of challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities in Joytown. As the researcher did not study the whole population, this method was therefore suitable for this study. This method was also used to explain educational phenomena in terms of the conditions for relationships that exist, opinions that are held by the students, teachers and experts, processes that are going on, and effects that are evident or that are developing (Hult, 1996).

3.1.1 Variables

In this research design, the independent variables were: policy, community, economic and school-based challenges that influence education of girls with physical disabilities in secondary school under study. The dependant variable is education.

3.2 Location of the study

The study was carried out in Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped in Thika Municipality. Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped was started in 1980 in collaboration with the Salvation Army church and the Ministry of Education. Joytown Secondary School was selected for the study because it is the only school for physically handicapped in Central Province. It lies between latitudes $3^{\circ} 53'$ and $1^{\circ} 45'$ S of equator and longitudes $36^{\circ} 35'$ and $37^{\circ} 25'$ E. It borders Nairobi City to the South, Kiambu district to the West, Maragua district to the North and Machakos district to the East. Thika Municipality is about 40 Km from Nairobi.

3.3 Target population

The target population of the study was 174 students, 24 teachers and the headteacher drawn from Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped. Out of the 24 teachers, 9 were male and 15 were females. Thirteen teachers were trained in special needs education. Out of the 174 students, there were 69 girls and 105 boys.

3.4 Sample and sampling procedures

3.4.1 Sampling procedures

(a). The sample size comprised a total of 30 girls with physical disabilities from form one to three. Simple random sampling was used to select ten girls from each class.

This was done by writing numbers on pieces of papers, putting them in a container and shaking them thoroughly. The girls were then told to pick. Those who picked number one to ten from each of the three classes were selected to participate in the study. It was assumed that girls in different forms have undergone different experiences at home and at school therefore every subject is given equal chances. Form three girls were considered to have stayed in school for a longer time compared to form one and two girls and could therefore be relied on in giving information about their school. The form one and two girls were not very familiar with the secondary school environment but could give adequate information about primary school, home and community environment. Therefore taking a cross section enabled the researcher to get diversified information on school based, socio-economic and socio-cultural challenges. Purposive sampling was used to select three class teachers. The principal was picked since she is the administrator of the school and is considered to be conversant with issues related to policies and education of girls with disabilities.

3.4.2 Sample size

The sample size comprised the following respondents:

- a) Thirty students drawn from forms one to three. This number represents 60% of the total number of girls with physical disabilities in the school, which is adequate to constitute a sample in a study of this nature (Gay, 1992).
- b) Three class teachers of forms one, two and three.
- c) One headteacher.

Table 3.1: Sampling Grid

	Form1	Form2	Form3	Teachers	Headteacher	Total
Population	47	44	41	24	1	157
Sample	10	10	10	3	1	34

3.5 Research instruments

The study utilized a combination of instruments as suggested by Kane (1995). Use of complimentary methods reveals discrepancies that a single method cannot. Methods included focus group discussions, observation checklist and an interview schedule each was organized and described below.

3.5.1 Focus Group Discussion Guide

Focus group discussion is a process of collecting data through interviews with a group people, typically four to six. The researcher asks a small number of general questions and elicits responses from all individuals in the group. Focus groups are advantageous when the interaction among the interviewees is similar to and cooperative with each other. They are also useful when the time to collect information is limited (Frankel & Wallen, 2000). The girls sampled to take part in the focus group discussions sat in a group in a classroom and engaged in a discussion. The researcher started by asking broad questions followed by probing notes and eliciting responses from the groups. The responses were then recorded. The focus group discussion guide comprised five broad questions each with probing notes which addressed research objectives.

3.5.2 Observation Checklist

Observations with a checklist were carried out as the researcher visited the selected school to administer interviews to the respondents. Observation is a method of collecting data in which a researcher notes things or occurrences as they naturally occur (Orodho, 2004). The researcher went round the school with the help of the teacher on duty and observed the key facilities in the school like the sanitary facilities, architectural structures, equipment and desks. These were recorded on the checklist. This enabled the researcher to make conclusions on the observable school factors that

could reinforce the information obtained from the focus group discussions on the school-based challenges and how they influence education of girls with physical disabilities in the secondary school under study.

3.5.3 Interview Guide

The interview guide was used to conduct face-to-face interviews that were held with the headteacher in relation to government policies, attendance, drop-out by gender and various challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities. The interview guide comprised of items addressing the objectives of the study.

3.6 Pilot study

Piloting was done in the same school to validate the research instruments and ascertain their reliability. Piloting was done in the same school under study since there is no other high school with similar characteristics in the study district. Those who participated in piloting process did not take part in main study. Four girls with physical disabilities were selected using simple random sampling. One form four class teacher was purposively sampled to take part in piloting. Researchers agree that the random sample for piloting instruments should depend on the size of the sample ranging from 1% to 10% (Sommer & Sommer, 1991). The purpose of the pilot study was to test the validity and reliability of the instrument, help identify any items in the instruments that were ambiguous or unclear to the respondents and change them effectively, and enable the researcher to be familiar with administration of the instrument.

3.6.1 Validity

Validity is the degree to which the sample of test items represents the content the test is designed to measure. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) contend that the usual

procedure in assessing the content validity of a measure is to use a professional or expert in a particular field. To establish the validity of the research instrument the researcher sought opinions from peers and experts in the field of study especially the two researcher's supervisors and other experts from the Department. Peer review was also used to correct inconsistencies and helped check on the content validity in the interview schedule and focus group discussions. This facilitated the necessary revision and modification of the research instrument thereby enhancing validity

3.6.2 Reliability

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results after repeated measurements are taken of the same subjects under similar conditions (Gay, 1992). In this study, reliability of the research instrument was enhanced through a pilot study that was done in Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped. The pilot study was done in the same school since it is the only such school in the study district. However, the students used in the pilot study did not take part in the actual study. Test-retest method was employed. This was done by having the focus group discussions and also interviews for the headteachers and teachers; then after two weeks, having the same discussions with the same participants. The responses were then compared for consistency. The pilot data was not included in the actual study.

3.7 Data collection procedures

Upon getting a research permit from the MOE, the researcher visited Joytown Secondary School to familiarize herself and to seek permission from the headteacher. In this initial visit, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and made appointments. On the agreed dates, the researcher visited the school with the

appropriate instruments to collect data. The girls sampled to take part in the focus group discussions sat in a group in a classroom and engaged in a discussion as the researcher took notes. The researcher also had a sitting with the headteacher in her office where she conducted a face-to-face interview on matters relating to government policies, attendance, drop-out by gender and various challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities. The researcher also conducted the interviews with the class teachers and recorded their responses. The researcher with the help of the teacher on duty went round the school and observed the key facilities in the school that were available.

3.8 Data analysis

Data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; that is making sense of the data in terms of respondents' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Gay 1992).

Qualitative data was first converted into a write up using pre-determined coding categories related to the research questions. To add to the above, field notes from the interviews were read carefully paying particular attention to comments, ideas and concerns from the respondents. The field notes were edited, coded and written based on the themes. The data was organized into themes such as community, economic, policy and school-based challenges that face education of girls with physical disabilities. Data was then presented in a narrative form.

3.9 Logistical and ethical considerations

Before data collection exercise commenced, it was important for the researcher to obtain permission from the permanent secretary, Ministry of Education. Once the permit was given, the Provincial Director of education, the District Education Officer

and the headteachers of the school under study were then informed by the researcher on her intention to carry out the study.

The following issues were considered throughout the study:

1. All data was treated with utmost confidentiality.
2. Responses to the focus group discussions were purely voluntary. All the 30 girls participated willingly.

The findings of the research are presented in the four main chapters related below:

- a) What are the socio-cultural challenges faced by girls with physical disabilities in Kisumu Secondary School?
- b) What are the school-related challenges faced by girls with physical disabilities in Kisumu Secondary School?
- c) What are the policy-related factors affecting the education of girls with physical disabilities?

The study participants included 30 girls with physical disabilities, 3 teachers, 3 class teachers and 1 headteacher. The study was organized into five sub-chapters as follows: the introduction, 4.2 covers the socio-cultural challenges faced by girls with physical disabilities, 4.3 covers the school-related challenges encountered by girls with disabilities, 4.4 covers the policy-related challenges encountered by girls with physical disabilities while 4.5 covers the policy related factors affecting the education of girls with physical disabilities. Below are the findings of the

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis and discussion of the study findings. The general objective of the study was to find out challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities in Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped. The findings of the research are presented based on the four research questions restated below:

- a) What are the socio-cultural challenges faced by girls with physical disabilities in Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped?
- b) What are the schools related challenges encountered by girls with disabilities?
- c) What economic related challenges do girls with physical disabilities face?
- d) Are there policy related factors affecting the education of girls with physical disabilities?
- e) What are the policy-related factors affecting the education of students with physical disabilities?

The study participants included 30 girls with physical disabilities from form one to three, 3 class teachers and 1 headteacher. This chapter is divided into five sub-headings. 4.1 is the introduction, 4.2 covers the community-related challenges faced by girls with physical disabilities, 4.3 covers the school-related challenges encountered by girls with disabilities, 4.4 covers economic related challenges encountered by girls with disabilities while 4.5 covers the policy related factors affecting the education of girls with disabilities. Given below are the findings of the study.

4.2 Socio-cultural challenges faced by girls with physical disabilities

The first research question sought to determine the socio-cultural challenges faced by girls with physical disabilities in Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped. The thirty girls who took part in the focus group discussion were asked to indicate the limitations that they encountered at home, to which they responded as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 limitations encountered by girls at home

Limitations	No. of respondents	Percent
Socialization is a problem	22	73.3
Looked down upon	14	46.7
Rejection by relatives	9	30.0
Given a lot of work	5	16.7

As presented in table 4.1, the main challenge faced by girls with physical disabilities at home was poor socialization as reported by 22 (73.3%) of the girls. The girls gave the example that if there is a social gathering such as a wedding; they are left at home while their brothers and sisters are allowed to attend. The girls also reported that they are looked down upon 14 (46.7%), while others reported being rejected by their relatives 9 (30 %). Others reported that they are given a lot of work at home 5 (16.7%), which they find unfair considering their physical limitations. One girl reported: "I do not even know my neighbors and some of my cousins." These results imply that the disabled girls encounter challenges at home, which may hinder them from pursuing their education as needed.

The results are in agreement with a study done by Abagi (1995), who commented that girls from households headed by parents with low education and limited resources are more disadvantaged than boys from the same background. In such cases, parents often

prioritize basic needs and boys' education rather than that of girls. This may lead to a conclusion that parents with higher levels of education, better paying occupations and larger amounts of resources are more willing and able to ensure that male and female children are schooled.

The girls were asked to comment on the treatment that they received within the community. In response, here is what some said that: villagers stare at me with a lot of sympathy yet I do not deserve any sympathy; others even offer me money; some children at home try to imitate the way I walk, and this sometimes makes me hate myself; I would like to go to a regular school but it would be difficult to cope with my disability as I will feel left out when they engage in activities like games, dancing, and swimming and public transport vehicles refuse to carry me with my wheel chair and at times they ask me to pay for the wheel chair. These results imply that people in the community disregard the girls with disabilities and treat them as lesser beings. This may affect their esteem and their outlook towards life, especially their education. They are faced with social stigma which may affect them throughout their lives.

In agreement with this, Onsando, (2005) stipulates that while there are many ways in which discrimination against girls with disabilities manifests itself, one key result is that women with disabilities are significantly poorer than men with disabilities and women without disabilities. This is due to the belief that girls with disabilities are not capable of performing tasks such as, engaging in schooling, employment and performing various traditional roles assigned to them. For example carrying water, fetching firewood, rearing children, providing free labor in the farms of the clan and entertaining and making their husbands happy. As a result, women with disabilities in traditional societies are not recognized as women. A father feels that a girl with disabilities will not be married and therefore will not bring wealth into the home

(KSPH, 2001). Instead girls with disabilities are viewed as objects of pity, mere recipients of charity. As a result of these biased attitudes, there is skewed representation of girls with disabilities in formal institutions of learning and for those already in schools, low expectations limit their learning, yet most of them are capable of excelling in education.

4.3 School-related challenges encountered by girls with disabilities

The second research question sought to determine the school-related challenges encountered by girls with disabilities. To address this objective, the girls were asked to give their views on whether the school has resources to respond to their needs as girls with physical disabilities. Their responses are summarized in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Students’ opinions on the school-related challenges

School-related challenges	No. of respondents	Percent
Classes are congested and this hinders movement	27	90.0
Dorms are squeezed, movement hindered	23	76.6
Inadequate learning materials	25	83.3
Some school buildings are not built to cater for disabilities	19	63.3
Lack of security	12	40.0

As shown in Table 4.2, 27 (90%) of the girls were of the opinion that although teachers were enough, classes are congested and this hinders movement. In addition, 23 (76.6%) of the girls noted that dormitories are squeezed, and thus movement is hindered. Concerning learning materials, 25 (83.3%) of the girls reported that textbooks are few, with one book shared among five students. It also emerged that some pavements in the school are steep and some students will need friends to assist them in navigating them. The girls also raised concerns about security, noting that the watchmen employed are very few (2 – 3) at night. One girl stated: “If I’d want to

sneak out of school I would do it because no one will see me". The girls indicated that sometimes they live in fear, for instance when the students hear police sirens outside in the neighborhood, they fear those thieves may run to seek shelter in the school, and this is worsened by the fact that doors are wooden.

The teachers were also asked to give the main challenges facing girls with disabilities in school. All the three teachers who participated in the study reported that classes and dormitories are congested; the school environment is not friendly, learning /teaching resources are inadequate and biased representation of girls with physical disabilities in text books. In addition the teachers indicated that the institution lacked adequate security measures to safeguard the welfare of girls with disabilities.

Rouso (2003) says that the architectural inaccessibility of the school buildings, including stairs, narrow corridors, inaccessible desks, equipment and bathrooms are often a major barrier for girls with disabilities. As with getting to and from schools, differences in male and female socialization may enable boys to more readily ask for help from friends, because the male friends may be better able to help. Also, boys with disabilities are more likely to "tough it" or take risks to get over barriers such as, flinging themselves up and down the stairs. The distance to school constitutes an educational barrier, inaccessible toilets as well as the nature of some disabilities might mean that a girl with disabilities would need help with toileting since many cultures emphasize modesty and privacy. The need for such personal assistance can be highly problematic and can also intensify safety concerns.

Some of the students raised issues concerning their aspirations and the fact that in most of the fields they wanted to pursue, there were no role models who were disabled, so this caused them to lose heart in following their dreams. Others

mentioned that in text book illustrations, there were none that featured the girls with disabilities and even the examples given. They reported that the media also did not consider the girls with disabilities because the advertisements did not capture girls with disabilities.

In the United States, studies of education materials used by students receiving special education services showed either a stereotypical representation or under representation of women and girls with disabilities (Women with Disability Awareness Project, 1984). The impact of such bias may be compounded by the relative absence of disabled women educators in most school systems including those in developed countries (Magrab, 2000) and by widespread invisibility of disabled women in the media (Rousso, 2003). All these factors contribute to lack of positive role models for girls with disabilities and their parents, as is the assumption of this study.

4.4 Economic related challenges encountered by girls with physical disabilities

The third research question of the study sought to establish the economic related challenges encountered by girls with physical disabilities. To find this out, the headteachers and teachers gave some economic challenges faced by disabled students. Their responses are recorded in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Economic challenges faced by girls with disabilities

Economic challenges	No. of respondents	Percent
Lack of money for school materials	4	100.0
Lack of money to buy wheelchairs/crutches	4	100.0
Lack of money for boarding fees	3	75.0
Lack of money for medical attention	3	75.0
Lack of money for personal effects	2	50.0

Table 4.3 shows that the headteachers and all class teachers reported that the disabled girls lacked money to buy wheelchairs and crutches, and also money for buying school materials. They also reported that the disabled girls lacked money for medical attention for those who constantly needed it. 3 (75%) of them reported that the students lacked money to buy wheelchairs/crutches and therefore had a difficult time navigating around, and they also lacked money for personal effects and school materials. This implies that the students were not able to learn properly due to poverty.

A study by Groce, (1997) stipulates that there is a circular relationship between poverty and disability, which also accentuates gender bias. Child labor and maltreatment can lead to mental illness, physical and psychological disabilities. Women and girls, in the face of limited resources, are more likely than their male counterparts to be deprived of basic necessities such as food and medicine.

4.5 Policy related factors affecting the education of girls with physical disabilities

The fourth research question sought to find out the policy-related challenges encountered by girls with disabilities. To address this, the students, teachers and headteachers gave some policies that posed challenges to students with disabilities.

Some teachers mentioned that some religious values hinder the disabled girls from realizing their full potential. Some of the disabled girls reported that their religion did not allow them to associate freely with others because they were seen as outcasts in the society and that their parents had committed some sort of sin for them to be disabled.

This is in violation with a policy under CEDAW, which stipulates that member states have an obligation to remove discrimination and take affirmative action within their governmental structures through which the realization of women's rights can take place. It also requires member states to go beyond mere policy statements and to put in place the necessary implementing machinery for ensuring women's equality. In this process, respect for religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and philosophical convictions of individuals and their communities should contribute to the full enjoyment of women's human rights, rather than be an obstacle (UN, 1991).

Some cultures were biased against girls with disabilities as they are not allowed to marry and have normal lives. They are seen as people who cannot carry their own weight. Some cultures also have a preference of educating boys instead of girls, and more so if the girls are disabled, they are seen as good for nothing so they should not even be educated. Other people hold strong convictions that only men are superior so girls and women are worthless. This denies the girls a chance in life and makes them feel unwanted and unappreciated, as if being handicapped was their fault.

Some of the teachers indicated that although the Disability Act of 2003 has produced a range of efforts to promote educational equity for disabled children, there is nothing specific about girls with disabilities in secondary schools for learners with disabilities.

That is; it has not included gender specific components to address the unique barriers facing girls with disabilities particularly in secondary schools.

In order to address the policy-related challenges, the class teachers and headteachers gave some suggestions of what measures could be taken to make students with disabilities more comfortable. Their responses are shown in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Measures to be taken to ensure students with disabilities are helped

Measures	Frequency	Percent
Sponsoring disabled girl students to finish their education	4	100.0
Provide opportunities for self-expression to students with disabilities to share their challenges	4	100.0
Inviting successful disabled women to encourage the students through talks	3	75.0
Establishing guidance and counseling classes	3	75.0
Provision of facilities like wheelchairs/crutches	3	75.0
Making the school environment conducive to the students	3	75.0
Establishing a government kitty for disabled people, especially girls	3	75.0
Making policies that encompass all the people, including the disabled to be self-reliant economically	3	75.0
Giving the students spiritual guidance	2	50.0

As shown in Table 4.4, all the teachers 3 (100%) and the headteacher 1 (100%) reported that students with disabilities could be helped by sponsoring them to finish their education and providing them with opportunities for self-expression to share their challenges. 75% of them reported that the government should establish a kitty for the disabled, school heads should make schools conducive for the disabled by making ramps where possible, provide enough facilities for them, establish guidance and counseling classes to help the students appreciate themselves and also invite successful people with disabilities to encourage the students.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1: Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations arrived at. It also gives suggestions for further studies.

5.2: Summary

The purpose of this study was to find out challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities in Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped. The study participants included 30 girls with physical disabilities from form one to three, 3 class teachers and 1 headteacher. Given below is a summary of the main study findings.

5.2.1: Socio-cultural challenges encountered by girls with physical disabilities

The study established that that the disabled girls in Joytown Secondary School for the Physically Handicapped faced various challenges from the community, their schools, economically and also existing policies were against people with disabilities. The study established that the challenges faced by disabled girls from the community included being looked down upon, rejection and unfair treatment. Some students also faced problems in their homes like being given a lot of chores to do despite their disabilities.

5.2.2: School -related challenges encountered by girls with physical disabilities

In their schools, the girls faced problems of lacking space to maneuver around, lack of textbooks, role models and security. Teachers also expressed difficulties in dealing with disabled pupils due to lack of adequate skills to guide them in their studies and lack of adequate material. For learners with hearing impairment, for example, the

teachers indicated that they did not know sign language and also finger spelling, both of which are essential in the teaching of children with hearing disabilities.

5.2.3 Socio-Economic challenges encountered by girls with physical disabilities

On the economic front, the girls lacked finances for boarding facilities, text books, personal effects, wheelchairs and crutches.

5.3.4: Policy-related factors encountered by girls with physical disabilities

The policies that were found to be of disadvantage to the disabled included: The Disabilities Act of 2003, cultural backgrounds, religious values and philosophical convictions.

5.3: Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that:

1. Discrimination and isolation at home and within the larger community impede education of girls with physical disabilities
2. Lack of conducive school environment and structures discourage girls with physical disabilities from continuing schooling.
3. Lack of policies that encompass all the people including those with physical disabilities, to make them self reliant and economically viable, endanger education of girls with physical disabilities.
4. Lack of sponsorship limit girls with physical disabilities from furthering their education

5.4: Recommendations

1. The government should make policies that address the needs of girls with physical disabilities. This will ensure that girls with physical disabilities do not drop out of school to ensure retention.

2. The school head and other stakeholders of Joytown secondary school should ensure that the school facilities accommodate students with physical disabilities to facilitate their mobility, safety and learning as well.
3. The community should be more accommodating towards the girls with disabilities, and always be ready to give them the necessary support when they need it. They should not be treated differently because of their disabilities. This will enhance their integration within the community.
4. Family members should treat all their children equally regardless of their unique and individual differences. This will allow acceptance and integration of girls with physical disabilities within their family set-up.

5.5: Areas for Further Research

1. A study on challenges facing children with physical disabilities in an inclusive setting.
2. A study on challenges faced in the implementation of special education for children with physical disabilities in schools.

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World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons. Paragraph 163 and 166.

APPENDIX A

GUIDE FOR THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION FOR STUDENTS

Probing notes

1. Does the school have resources to respond to your needs as girls with physical disabilities?
 - (a) Human resource
 - Teachers
 - Supportive staff
 - (b) Learning materials
 - Adaptations and availability
 - (c) Security
 - (d) Gender related policies
 - (e) Social isolation
 - (f) Sanitary hygiene
2. Comment on limitations that you encounter at home
 - (a) Attention
 - (b) Rejection
 - (c) Competition with non-disabled siblings
 - (d) Expenses
3. Treatment received within the community in school?
 - (a) Double discrimination
 - (b) Attitudes, belief practices
 - (c) Isolation and exclusion
 - (d) Cultural practices
4. How do you perceive yourself compared to non-disabled girls?
 - (a) self -esteem?
 - (b) Self-concept
 - (c) Aspirations
5. What would you like the government to do for girls with physical disabilities?
 - (a) gender based policies
 - (b) Segregation policy
 - (c) Affirmative action

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CLASS TEACHERS

- | | Probe Notes |
|--|--|
| 1. Which is your class? | (a) How many boys? Girls
(b) Any difference in performance?
(c) Any drop outs? Why?
(d) Absenteeism |
| 2. What are the parents attitude towards their girls with disabilities? | (a) How often do they consult you?

(b) Do they pay school fees? |
| 3. What challenges do you encounter when dealing with girls with disabilities? | (a) Attitude issues
(b) Low self-esteem? |
| 4. What have you noted as the main challenges facing girls with disabilities in school? | (a) Inadequate facilities?
(b) Discrimination & Isolation
(c) Female role models |
| 5. What measures does the school undertake to ensure girls with disabilities participation in education? | (a) Counseling
(b) Who does it?
(c) Affirmative action? |
| 6. Do text books and/or any other learning materials reflect any bias or stereotypes in their portrayal of females or males? | (a) through visual representation |
| 7. Suggest ways in which community can ensure that girls with disabilities get education. | (a) Sponsoring |

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE HEADTEACHERS

1. Briefly explain the history of the school in terms of enrolment criterion and teacher establishment by gender.
- 2) What assistance do you think girls with physical disabilities in your school require?
- 3) In your opinion, what has:
 - a) The administration,
 - b) The community and
 - c) The government done to assist girls with disabilities?
- 4) What can the school board of governors, of which you are the secretary, help girls with physical disabilities?

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX D

Observation checklist for identifying school-based factors that may pose as challenges for girls with disabilities in Joytown secondary schools for learners with physical disabilities.

Key: **E:** Excellent **G:** Good **A:** Average **P:** Poor

Scale : 80% & above – Excellent 79 – 60% Good 59 - 40 Average 39 and below poor

Conditions	E	G	A	P
Security:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security men • Lockable doors • Gate 				
School environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavements • Field • Ground 				
Classrooms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequacy of room • Barrier free • Free movement • Doors • Accessibility to learning assistive devices 				
Availability of care-giving facilities and services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheel chairs • Occupational therapy, physiotherapy facilities • Medical • House mothers: how many per dormitory 				
Dormitories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of beds in each dorm • Adequacy of room to fit mobility devices 				
Toilets and bathrooms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy • Assistive devices • Wide doors • Number of toilets and bathrooms 				

APPENDIX E
RESEARCH PERMIT



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Date: 18th October 2010

Ms. Nancy Wanjiku Muigai
Kenyatta University
P. O. Box 43844
NAIROBI

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities: A case of Joytown secondary school in Thika District*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Thika District for a period ending 31st December 2010.

You are advised to report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer, Thika District before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit two copies of the research report/thesis to our office.


P. N. NYAKUNDI
FOR: SECRETARY/CEO

Copy to:

The District Commissioner
Thika District

The District Education Officer
Thika District