The effect of teacher attitude on the acquisition of reading skills among intellectually challenged learners in foundation level in Baringo County, Kenya

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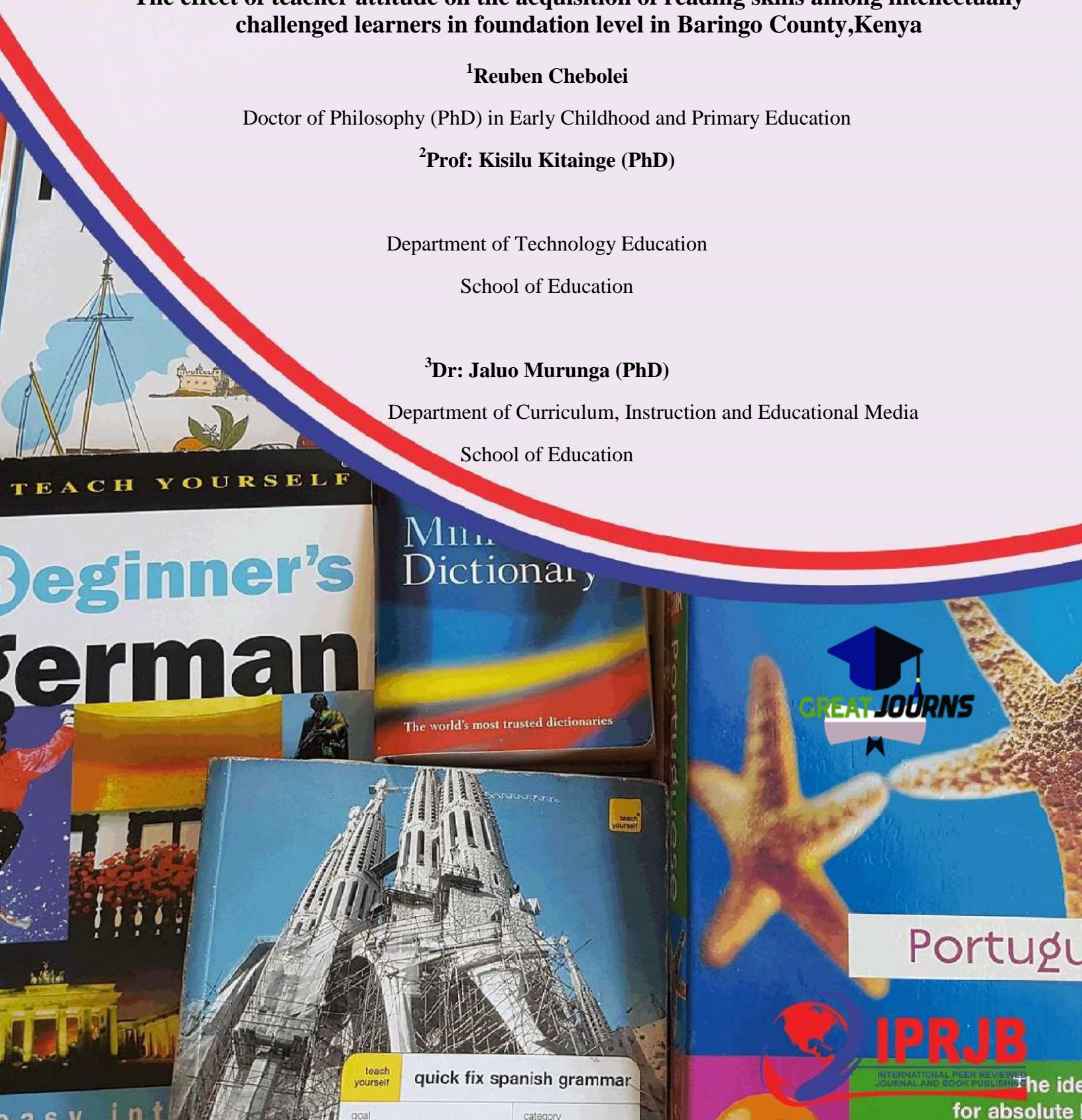
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ABSTRACT

The acquisition of reading skills is a crucial milestone in early education, especially for learners with intellectual challenges who require additional support to grasp fundamental literacy concepts. In foundation-level education, teacher attitude plays a significant role in shaping learning outcomes and facilitating an inclusive environment that fosters skill acquisition. Positive teacher attitudes can enhance learners' motivation, self-confidence, and persistence, while negative attitudes may impede their progress and reinforce barriers to learning. In Baringo County, Kenya, understanding how teacher attitudes impact the development of reading skills among intellectually challenged learners is essential to improving educational outcomes for this group. This study seeks to explore the influence of teacher attitudes on reading skill acquisition, focusing on the challenges and strategies unique to foundation-level education. Insights from this research may inform interventions that support teachers and enhance learning experiences for intellectually challenged students, contributing to a more equitable and inclusive education system in Kenya.The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of teacher competencies on the acquisition of reading skills among intellectually challenged learners in foundation level in Baringo County, Kenya.The study employed qualitative and quantitative approaches of data generation borrowed from descriptive survey design. Random sampling was used to select 116 teachers and purposive sampling was used to select 16 headteachers. The target population for the research involved 116 teachers and 16 headteachers in the sixteen special schools making 132 respondents. Data was collected using self-made questionnaire, interview schedule, observation chalkiest and document analysis. The Cronbach's Alpha correlation coefficient was calculated to test the reliability of the instruments and where a coefficient Alpha of 0.70 implied that the research instruments were reliable and therefore the researcher would adopt. The data obtained was analyzed using inferential statistics whereas descriptive statistics was used to organize and summarize data. Percentages, frequencies tables and means scores of variables were calculated. The data analysis was done with the aid of a computer program of SPSS. The validity of the instruments were ensured by consulting the supervisors and discussing with other research experts in the department of curriculum and instruction in the school of education, while reliability of the tools were determined through test re-test method. The instruments were piloted in one of the special school outside the study county. The findings of this study revealed that study concludes that Teacher attitude plays a great role in the success of teaching intellectually challenged learners in acquiring reading skills. The study thus concluded that it is important for the teachers to develop positive attitudes towards teaching of intellectually challenged learners and ensure they obtain the reading skill. The teachers in the study have demonstrated that positive attitude towards teaching of intellectually challenged learners was important by involving the learners with special needs to participate in class activities would encourage them and allow them to interact freely with their peers also agreeing that it is not a waste of time to educate learners with mental disability. They study also concludes that it is never difficult to adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of children with special needs. Teaching intellectually challenged learners depends on the passion the teacher has for the learners. The study further recommends that the Kenyan government and the schools management should appreciate the teachers teaching learners with intellectual disability by rewarding them adequately with Materials awards and remunerations. This will motivate them in

teaching the learners and a feeling of being appreciated also encourages new comers to join the profession.

Key Words: *Teacher attitude, acquisition of reading skills, intellectually challenged learners*

INTRODUCTION

The acquisition of reading skills is a fundamental aspect of early education, serving as the foundation for future learning and overall cognitive development. For intellectually challenged learners, especially at the foundation level, developing these skills can be a considerable challenge due to cognitive, emotional, and adaptive limitations. In this context, teacher attitudes play a crucial role, as they significantly influence the instructional approaches, expectations, and classroom environment that intellectually challenged learners experience. Positive attitudes from teachers can foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment, employing patience and adaptive methods that cater to the specific needs of these learners. Conversely, negative attitudes or low expectations can hinder learners' progress by limiting engagement, discouraging participation, and reducing teachers' motivation to employ specialized teaching strategies.In Baringo County, Kenya, where educational resources for learners with intellectual disabilities are often limited, understanding the impact of teacher attitudes on reading skill acquisition becomes particularly critical. Research has shown that teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities are influenced by a range of factors, including training, societal norms, and personal beliefs about inclusive education. In settings with limited support for special education, teacher attitudes may be one of the most powerful determinants of whether intellectually challenged learners achieve reading proficiency (Ngeno, 2019).

II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Attitude is one of the most important variables in the education of children most especially children with special needs. A teacher's attitude plays a major role in motivation (Mwamwenda, 2015). According to Gross (2015) attitudes have the power to influence the teachers' professional behaviour. Many studies have emphasized the importance of positive attitudes of educators towards inclusion (Kala 2016). Ringlake and Prince (2019) suggest that teacher beliefs and attitudes underlay the philosophy of inclusive education and are therefore important predictors of the outcomes. A number of researchers have stressed the importance of understanding teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards inclusion (Bain & Dolbel, 2018). It was therefore important to investigate teachers' attitudes towards inclusion.

The European Agency on the Development of Special Needs Education (2016) reports that dealing with differences and diversity continues is one of the biggest problems faced by schools across Europe. The Agency points out that one of the problems encountered in creating schools for all are beliefs by some people that education is a privilege and not a right that should be available to all (Rouse, 2018).

The enactment of Law 26.206, which mandates inclusive education, has established a strong framework for integrating students with disabilities into mainstream classrooms. This legislation

emphasizes not only the rights of students with disabilities but also the responsibilities of educational institutions to provide appropriate support (González & Pérez, 2019). Consequently, many teachers report feeling positively about the principles of inclusion, understanding its importance in promoting equality and social integration for intellectually challenged learners.

Gap between policy and practice remains a significant concern. While teachers are often motivated by Argentina's commitment to inclusivity, they face several practical barriers in implementing effective reading programs. A key challenge lies in the limited availability of specialized training programs that focus on teaching reading to students with intellectual disabilities. Many teachers report that they lack the necessary skills and techniques to tailor reading instruction to meet these students' unique needs, resulting in feelings of inadequacy and mixed attitudes toward their own effectiveness (Martínez & Juárez, 2021). Furthermore, the scarcity of classroom resources—such as adaptive reading materials, assistive technologies, and support from special education professionals—has been identified as a barrier that hinders teachers' ability to deliver inclusive education effectively.

A study by Fernández et al. (2020) highlights that while Argentine teachers are generally supportive of inclusive education in principle, their attitudes are often influenced by the availability (or lack) of institutional support. Many teachers express frustration that they are expected to accommodate diverse learning needs without adequate training, resources, or collaborative support. This lack of support can lead to burnout and, in some cases, a shift toward negative attitudes, especially when teachers feel unprepared to address the complex needs of intellectually challenged students within standard classrooms. Teachers indicate that small class sizes and access to instructional aids would significantly enhance their ability to provide individualized reading instruction and foster a more inclusive learning environment.

Recent efforts to address these challenges include professional development programs aimed at equipping teachers with specialized skills for teaching reading to intellectually challenged learners. However, participation in these programs remains inconsistent, as access is often limited to urban centers, leaving rural teachers with fewer resources and training opportunities (Rodríguez & Sanchez, 2022). Additionally, the role of collaborative support structures, such as teacher networks and partnerships with special education experts, has been emphasized in recent literature as a means to improve teachers' attitudes and confidence in implementing inclusive practices (Mendez & Alvarez, 2023). Enhancing these support systems is seen as essential not only for maintaining positive teacher attitudes but also for creating a sustainable framework that can support the reading skill acquisition of intellectually challenged learners.

In Benin, teachers' attitudes towards teaching reading skills to intellectually challenged students reveal a blend of enthusiasm for inclusive education and concerns about practical implementation. Recent educational reforms have aimed to integrate students with intellectual disabilities into mainstream classrooms, fostering a more inclusive environment. While these initiatives are gradually reshaping teachers' perceptions, many educators still face challenges in meeting the unique needs of these learners effectively. Adégbidi and Dossou (2018) highlight that while a large proportion of teachers understand the importance of inclusive education and

are willing to adapt their practices, their confidence is often hampered by limited specialized training in techniques for teaching reading to students with intellectual disabilities.

One of the significant obstacles in Benin is the scarcity of specialized instructional resources. Many teachers report that they lack adaptive reading materials, assistive devices, and classroom supports that would enable them to modify instruction to better meet the diverse needs of intellectually challenged students (Houngbedji et al., 2020). This lack of resources contributes to the difficulty in adapting reading instruction methods, leaving teachers to rely on general approaches that may not effectively support reading skill acquisition in students with intellectual challenges. Teachers also express concerns over classroom management, as intellectually challenged students may require additional support, leading to increased demands on teachers' time and attention.

Professional development programs, although limited, are beginning to address these challenges by providing teachers with workshops and training sessions focused on inclusive education strategies. Togbe and Johnson (2021) report that these programs, although still in the early stages, have been beneficial in improving teachers' confidence and competence. Teachers who have participated in these workshops report feeling better equipped to address the diverse needs of their students, which has positively influenced their attitudes toward supporting intellectually challenged students in literacy. Additionally, some schools have introduced peer support groups where teachers can share experiences and strategies for managing inclusive classrooms, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose among educators.

There is still a need for sustained investment in specialized resources and ongoing professional development to fully realize inclusive education goals in Benin. Teachers note that regular access to specialized workshops and access to educational psychologists and special education experts would further enhance their ability to support students with intellectual disabilities effectively. Continued focus on policy reforms that prioritize inclusive education, coupled with a stronger infrastructure for special education training, could further improve teachers' attitudes and efficacy in teaching reading skills to intellectually challenged learners.

Finland's inclusive education system is considered one of the most advanced in the world, and Finnish teachers generally exhibit highly positive attitudes toward facilitating reading skills among intellectually challenged learners. This supportive attitude stems from the country's well-established inclusive educational framework, which emphasizes individualized instruction, equality, and collaborative professional practices. Finland's educational policies, particularly those focused on special education and inclusive teaching, promote an educational environment where teachers are confident and motivated to support students with intellectual disabilities in acquiring essential skills such as reading. Finnish teachers are equipped with a variety of support systems, including specialized resources, training, and access to a wide range of special education professionals, all of which contribute to their positive attitudes and effective teaching practices (Laakso & Saarinen, 2019).

A cornerstone of Finland's inclusive education strategy is its emphasis on individualized learning plans (ILPs). These ILPs provide teachers with a framework to customize reading instruction to fit the unique needs and abilities of each student. This personalized approach ensures that students with intellectual disabilities are not only included in the general classroom environment but also receive the specific attention they require to develop their reading skills. Teachers use these plans to tailor their methods, adjusting the pace and content of lessons to ensure that each learner can achieve success. According to Heikkinen et al. (2020), this emphasis on tailored instruction is integral to Finland's success in supporting intellectually challenged learners, as it ensures that students are provided with the right level of challenge and support to foster their literacy development. The ability to adapt the curriculum in such a flexible manner enhances the teacher's confidence and ensures that they can meet the diverse needs of their students effectively.

This collaborative environment allows for the exchange of ideas, resources, and strategies, which in turn improves the overall quality of instruction. Teachers are not isolated in their efforts; instead, they are part of a supportive network that works together to ensure the success of all students, including those with intellectual disabilities. This system fosters an environment of shared responsibility, where all educators are invested in the progress and well-being of each student. As Ojala and Ahonen (2022) suggest, professional collaboration is a key factor in the positive teacher attitudes toward inclusive education in Finland. Teachers have access to the expertise and insights of their colleagues, which helps them develop more effective teaching strategies and further strengthens their commitment to inclusive practices.

This commitment is deeply embedded in the country's educational philosophy, which holds that all students, regardless of their intellectual abilities, should have access to high-quality education. Finland's inclusive education model ensures that students with intellectual disabilities are integrated into general education classrooms and given the same opportunities to succeed as their peers. The government's strong support for inclusive education, along with significant investments in resources and teacher training, ensures that teachers have the tools they need to help students with intellectual disabilities thrive in the classroom. As a result, Finnish teachers view inclusive education not only as a professional obligation but also as a moral imperative. The focus on educational equality inspires teachers to foster an inclusive classroom environment, where all students are given the support and encouragement they need to develop essential skills, including reading (Laakso & Saarinen, 2019).

Teacher preparation programs in Finland are rigorous and include extensive coursework and practical experience in special education. Teachers are trained to work with diverse student populations and are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to teach students with a wide range of abilities, including those with intellectual disabilities. This comprehensive training not only prepares teachers to address the specific needs of intellectually challenged learners but also helps them develop a strong sense of confidence in their ability to provide effective instruction. According to Heikkinen et al. (2020), this extensive training and preparation ensure that teachers feel capable of supporting the literacy development of intellectually challenged students and have the expertise to implement effective reading strategies.

Teachers recognize that fostering the acquisition of reading skills is not just about teaching technical aspects of reading but also about creating a supportive, inclusive, and nurturing classroom environment. By integrating students with intellectual disabilities into the general education classroom, Finnish teachers provide them with the social and emotional support they need to thrive academically. Teachers actively promote a sense of belonging and self-worth, which is essential for the development of reading skills, as students who feel valued are more likely to engage in learning and make progress (Ojala & Ahonen, 2022).

Finland's inclusive education model, which includes individualized learning plans, professional collaboration, a commitment to equality, and comprehensive teacher training, contributes significantly to the positive attitudes of teachers toward the acquisition of reading skills among intellectually challenged learners. Finnish teachers benefit from a strong support system and a culture of professional cooperation that empowers them to effectively meet the needs of their students. This system of support ensures that intellectually challenged learners in Finland receive the education they deserve, including the opportunity to develop vital literacy skills. Finland's success in inclusive education serves as a model for other countries striving to support intellectually challenged learners in acquiring reading skills and achieving academic success.

The Colombian Ministry of Education has made inclusion a national priority, mandating that schools provide accessible and equitable learning environments for students with disabilities (García & Pardo, 2019). This policy shift has prompted a cultural change, fostering an environment in which teachers are more receptive to supporting intellectually challenged learners in their academic development. The inclusive education framework, which aligns with global standards and frameworks like the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, emphasizes equal access to education for all students, including those with intellectual disabilities. Teachers, therefore, are increasingly viewed as key actors in ensuring that students with intellectual disabilities receive the support necessary to thrive in mainstream classrooms, including the development of reading skills.

Despite the positive outlook, significant challenges remain in the implementation of these policies. Research indicates that while teachers in Colombia are generally supportive of inclusive education, they frequently express concerns about their ability to effectively teach reading to intellectually challenged learners due to inadequate training in special education techniques and the lack of specialized resources in classrooms (Rodríguez et al., 2021). Many teachers report feeling underprepared to meet the diverse needs of students with intellectual disabilities, especially when it comes to adapting reading instruction to accommodate individual learning differences. This sense of being overburdened can lead to stress, frustration, and occasional negative attitudes toward inclusive education practices. In particular, teachers note the challenge of working with large, diverse classrooms where students' needs vary greatly, making it difficult to tailor reading instruction effectively without additional support and resources (Pérez et al., 2020). These barriers often contribute to a disconnect between the country's inclusive education policies and the on-the-ground realities faced by educators.

There are numerous initiatives aimed at addressing these challenges and reinforcing the positive attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education. Recent studies have highlighted the role of community-based programs and collaborations with special education specialists in building teachers' capacity and improving instructional strategies. Hernández and Salazar (2023) note that such programs often provide teachers with specialized knowledge, instructional materials, and practical strategies to enhance the teaching of reading for intellectually challenged learners. These initiatives offer valuable professional development opportunities, increasing teachers' confidence and helping them implement more effective teaching practices in their classrooms. Moreover, many schools in Colombia have initiated partnerships with local universities and organizations to develop teacher training programs focused on special education. These training programs not only provide teachers with specific strategies for supporting intellectually challenged learners but also aim to shift their attitudes towards inclusion, emphasizing the importance of adaptability, creativity, and perseverance in working with students who face significant learning challenges.

According to Rodríguez et al. (2021), the concept of "co-teaching," where general education teachers collaborate with special education specialists in the same classroom, has been increasingly adopted in Colombian schools. This model has been shown to have a positive impact on teachers' attitudes, as it allows them to share responsibility for supporting students with intellectual disabilities, thereby reducing individual teacher burdens. Co-teaching also provides a platform for teachers to learn from one another, exchange ideas, and implement new strategies in real-time, improving the overall quality of education for students with disabilities. Furthermore, this collaborative approach enhances teachers' perceptions of their ability to meet the academic needs of all students, including those with intellectual disabilities, leading to greater job satisfaction and a more positive view of inclusive education.

The importance of ongoing professional development and peer collaboration in supporting inclusive education policies cannot be overstated. Teachers in Colombia who participate in regular training programs and collaborative professional networks are more likely to report positive attitudes toward teaching intellectually challenged learners, particularly in the context of reading instruction (García & Pardo, 2019). In particular, professional learning communities (PLCs), which allow teachers to meet regularly to discuss challenges, share resources, and evaluate teaching strategies, have been identified as an effective way to improve teachers' attitudes and instructional practices. These communities provide an avenue for teachers to support one another and learn best practices for teaching students with intellectual disabilities, leading to better outcomes for these learners.

One of the belief is that "some children are 'worthy' of help but others are 'unworthy' because their difficulties are their own (or their parents) faults". Such negative beliefs can cause negative attitudes towards children with special needs (Tuchura, 2016). Sadly there are teachers who believe that some children will never be able to learn. Further, there are those who do not believe that they have the skills to make a difference, perhaps because they have not received any training in this area, and they lack the required confidence (Rouse, 2018). Therefore it is

important to consider how it might be possible for teachers to develop new ways of believing that all children can learn and that such work is their responsibility.

It has been found that staff development programmes are usually unsuccessful in bringing about attitude and belief change (Villa *et al.,* 1996). Findings from a growing body of research indicate that professional development initiatives need to take teachers' beliefs into consideration (Munby 2014). This is supported by the notion that teachers' beliefs influence their perceptions and judgments and therefore their behaviour in the classroom (Munby 2017).

A study carried out in Tanzania found that while some teachers enjoyed teaching, there were those who were in school because they lacked a viable alternative to the job (Lema, 2018). Towse, Kent, Osaki and Kirua (2012) found that none of the Grade a Certificate teacher trainee in two Teacher's Colleges had aspired to be teachers. They had wanted to join other professions but were unable to get them. Such teachers may have a low status and negative attitudes towards teaching and this can affect their effectiveness in motivating children to learn. It may be difficult for a teacher who despises teaching profession to detach from her/his negative attitude so as to create an environment conducive to children's learning (Lema, 1998).

In this research, the attitudes of teachers towards quality intellectual disability teaching were investigated and interventions explored. Research has also shown that there is a correlation between positive attitudes of teachers to mainstreaming of learners with special needs and the support they receive from management as well as other technical variables (Talmor, Reiter & Feigin, 2015). These variables include having more resources, small classes, more time available to design teaching material and opportunities for personal development gained from further learning (Talmor et al, 2005).

Woodcock and Vialle (2015) conducted a study with a purpose to examine the perception of pre-service teachers towards learners with SLDs by analyzing their attribution responses to hypothetical learners. The study concluded that one of the most significant factors in the successful inclusion of learners with SLD in mainstream classrooms is the teacher. Even though there is a strong support for mainstream education, teachers still depict mixed reactions to the inclusion of certain learners in the classrooms. Moreover, their perception towards mainstream education seems to be developed during the inception of their initial training. Participants included 205 pre-service teachers, and the outcome showed that the pre- service teachers' attribution reactions conflicted according to whether or not the hypothetical teachers had a SLD (Odongo & Davidson, 2016). Their attribution responses were likely to have an unintended negative influence on teachers' acknowledgement, incentives, as well as self-efficacy. Among the ramifications of these findings was that there is need of pre-service teacher-training to include a focus on teachers' perceptions and behaviours in mainstream classrooms This study analyzes the perception of teachers towards learners with special learning disabilities but did not look at the teachers attitude in teaching learners with intellectual disability hence the study was general not as this study is specific.

Odongo and Davidson (2016) examined the attitudes and concerns of the Kenyan teachers toward the mainstreaming of learners with SLD in the mainstream education classroom through a mixed methods study. The sub-county in Western Kenya deliberately selected from schools identified as actively implementing inclusive education programs. The overall findings indicate that teachers have a positive perception of mainstreaming of learners with SLD in regular classrooms. Overall, the study showed that perceptions and concerns of the teachers influence their acceptance and commitment to the implementation and success of mainstream education. The teacher classroom interaction is to aid learners learning which may be complex process that depends on interpersonal and pedagogical awareness (Bachman and Connor (2005). The teacher pedagogy, classroom strategy and interaction with learners at classroom level determine how much is learnt.

With the enactment of the Persons with Disabilities Act (2003) and the subsequent policy frameworks promoting inclusive education, Kenya has made significant strides in creating an inclusive educational environment. The Kenyan Ministry of Education has emphasized the importance of ensuring that children with disabilities, including those with intellectual challenges, have equal access to quality education. Teachers are generally supportive of inclusive education policies, with many showing a willingness to engage with intellectually challenged students and adapt their teaching methods to meet these students' needs (Kiplangat, 2021). This positive shift is also reflected in the increased awareness of the importance of early reading interventions for learners with intellectual disabilities, which is seen as critical for fostering academic success.

One of the primary challenges reported by teachers is the lack of specialized training in teaching students with intellectual disabilities. A study by Kiplagat and Ngugi (2020) found that while many teachers in Kenyan schools are eager to adopt inclusive practices, they often feel underprepared to effectively support students with intellectual disabilities due to the lack of targeted professional development in special education. Teachers have also expressed concerns about the shortage of appropriate teaching materials, such as adapted reading resources, which are crucial for the development of reading skills in intellectually challenged learners. According to Kiamah and Ndungu (2021), the scarcity of specialized resources in many Kenyan schools further exacerbates the difficulties teachers face in delivering effective reading instruction to students with intellectual disabilities.

The lack of adequate support staff, such as special education teachers or teaching assistants, further hinders the ability of general education teachers to meet the specific needs of intellectually challenged learners. This can lead to frustration and negatively affect teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. Research by Mwangi and Kimani (2022) emphasizes that while teachers generally support inclusive education, the practical realities of overcrowded classrooms and the absence of additional resources often result in a diminished capacity to implement inclusive practices effectively.

One of the most significant advancements has been the establishment of special education training programs and workshops that focus on inclusive teaching strategies. These programs

aim to equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to address the diverse learning needs of intellectually challenged students. For example, the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE) offers specialized training for teachers in various aspects of special education, including the development of reading skills for students with intellectual disabilities (Mwangi & Kimani, 2022). Such professional development opportunities have been shown to improve teachers' confidence in their ability to teach intellectually challenged learners, which in turn leads to more positive attitudes towards inclusive education.

In addition to formal training programs, Kenya has seen the growth of teacher collaboration networks, where educators share resources, teaching strategies, and experiences in supporting students with intellectual disabilities. According to Muriuki and Odhiambo (2020), these networks play a crucial role in fostering a supportive community of teachers who can learn from one another's successes and challenges. By exchanging best practices and providing mutual support, teachers are better equipped to implement effective reading interventions for intellectually challenged learners. Furthermore, these collaborative efforts have helped to shift teachers' perceptions of inclusive education from a challenging task to an opportunity for professional growth and development.

Community-based initiatives and partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also contributed to enhancing the quality of education for intellectually challenged learners in Kenya. NGOs such as the Kenya Society for the Mentally Handicapped (KSMH) have been instrumental in providing specialized training, resources, and support to teachers working with intellectually challenged students (Kiamah & Ndungu, 2021). These partnerships have helped to improve the availability of learning materials, such as tactile books and other adapted resources, that are critical for the acquisition of reading skills in students with intellectual disabilities.

Kenya's education system is increasingly emphasizing the importance of early intervention for students with disabilities. Teachers are now more aware of the critical role early identification and support play in the academic success of intellectually challenged learners, particularly in the area of reading development. Studies by Kiplagat and Ngugi (2020) suggest that early identification of reading difficulties and the implementation of targeted reading programs have a significant impact on the literacy outcomes of students with intellectual disabilities. Teachers who have received training in early intervention strategies report higher levels of confidence in their ability to support reading development among intellectually challenged learners, leading to more positive attitudes towards inclusive education.

Villa et al., (1996) cited in Odongo and Davidson, (2016) found that administrative support and collaboration were indicators of positive teacher's perception of mainstreaming. The role of school head teachers can promote mainstreaming practices in schools, foster new meanings about diversity and build relationships between schools and community, promote dialogue, adopt mainstreaming policy and incorporate whole school approaches and cultures. The study focused on teachers perception and did not look at other attributes affecting acquisition of reading skills among learners especially those who are mentally impaired hence this study intends to bridge the gap by carrying out this study.

III: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1: Research Design

The study utilized descriptive survey design Cohen Manion and marrison (2000), asserts that survey explores and describes characteristics of the universe. The study aimed at collecting information from respondents. The tool was employed in the initial identification process of visiting the schools. The researcher used both primary and secondary data where primary data was obtained using questionnaires and interview schedules while secondary data was obtained from internet, journals and books.

According to Orodho (2009), research design is a comprehensive plan for data collection and analysis. The research' beliefs and understanding of the world influence the research design (Creswell, 2012). The study present utilized descriptive survey design and mixed methods of qualitative and quantitative approaches of data collection as it is used in preliminary and explanatory studies to allow the researcher gather information, summaries and interpret data for the purpose of clarification (Best & Khan, 1993). Orodho (2004) It is a useful educational research method when gathering data at a specific point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions, identifying standards against which existing conditions could be measured compared and determine the relationships that exist between specific events. Manion and Marrison (2000) assert that the purpose of survey is to explore and describe the characteristics of the population and that questionnaire and interviews were used to determine the opinions, attitudes, preferences and perceptions of groups of people interested by the researcher. Kothari (2004) regard research design as an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. The design was suitable for investigation on innovations.

The design was appropriate for this study in making assessment of the selected teacher attributes that influence the acquisition of reading skills among intellectually challenged learners in foundation level in special schools. It caters for data on one shot basis and hence economical and efficient, it generates numerical data from a wide target population, manipulates key factors and variables to derive frequencies, and captures data from multiple choice, closed questions, interview schedules and observation checklists which can be processed statistically.

3.2 Philosophical Paradigm

According to Bryman (2007), paradigm refers to a cluster of beliefs and it dictates the scholars in a particular and discipline influence what should be studied, and how research should be done and be interpreted. This study adopt radical constructivism as a philosophical paradigm where it views knowledge as something a learner creates based on their own experiences and not handed over from the teacher to the learner. It encompasses the philosophy that knowledge is subjective and that every learner constructs their own knowledge based on personal perspective. It calls for teachers to offer learners more opportunities to create their knowledge and be aware of their learners different perspectives and backgrounds which informs each learner's learning process. Paradigms therefore are key theoretical constructs for illuminating fundamental assumptions about nature of reality. It offers a coherent world view anchored on stability and certainty in the real world. Jean Piagets (1896-1980) theory of constructivist learning has significantly influenced learning theories and teaching methods and a foundational concept in education.

Constructivism is often associated with pedagogic approaches that promote active learning or learning by doing, it is more of philosophical framework that describe instruction strategies. In learning constructivism is learning theory that posits that learners learn new information by building on top of a foundation of what they have already learned. It helps learners relate new concepts to their own life experiences to deepen their understanding of what they already know and increase comprehension of new information. Constructivism states that the learner learns at it's own phases.

3.3 Location of the study

The study was conducted in Baringo County which has 6 sub-counties namely; Mogotio, Koibatek, Baringo North, Baringo Central, Baringo South and Tiaty. The county has sixteen special schools where purposive sampling was used to select sixteen schools. The county is bordered by Turkana County and West Pokot County to the North, Samburu County and Laikipia County to the East, Nakuru County and Kericho County to the South, Uasin Gishu County to the South West and Elgeyo Marakwet County to the West. There are sixteen special schools and both participated in the study. This county was chosen for this study because of the availability of the special schools to carry out the study.

3.4 Population of the study

It comprised of 16 special schools, 116 teachers and 16 Headteachers

According to Patton (2002) population refers to an entire group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common. The study focused only on sixteen special schools in Baringo County. The study population comprised of 116 teachers and 16 headteachers drawn from the sixteen special schools with intellectually challenged learners in Baringo County. Data showing 132 respondents corresponding to 116 teachers and 16 headteachers who were sourced from the County Education Office.

3.5 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The study employed sampling procedure which includes; the total process of collecting, compiling, analyzing, evaluating, publishing and disseminating statistical data regarding the population and housing and their geographical location (Orodho, 2008). Population characteristics include demographic, social and economic data and are provided as of a particular date (Herzog et al. (2007), purposive sampling was used to select the respondents where 16 special schools was sampled for the study 116 teachers of English were subjected with the research questionnaire. Sampling was done it completed the enumeration of the entire population which was not practically possible due to limitation imposed by time, financial and other logistical constraints. Sampling saved times and facilitated in depth and rigorous analysis of data. The sampling design became part of the research plan that indicated how cases are to be selected for observation.

3.5.1Sampling Technique

The study adopted the purposive sampling technique to select 16 special schools, the researcher considered a minimum of 10% into the sample size. Sampling design became part of the research plan that indicated how cases are to be selected for observation.

3.5.2 Sample Size

According to Oso and Onen (2009) a sample is part of the target population that has been selected as a representative sample. Considering the population of teachers and headteachers 10% to 30% of the population was adequate sample.

The following was the sample size.

Sampling frame

Category	Target population	Target sample	Sampling procedure
Teachers of English	116	34	Random sampling
Headteachers	16	4	Purposive sampling
TOTAL	**132**	**38**	

3.6 Instrumentations of the Study

Data was collected using both qualitative and quantitative approaches of data collections techniques were used in the study because the two techniques complement each other hence contributing to a better understanding and interpretation of the general data and the ultimate findings Parton (2002). Data was collected using questionnaires, document analysis and interview schedules. Questionnaires were subjected to Pre-literacy teachers as they do not discriminate unduly on the basis of how articulate the respondents are straight forwards for computer analysis (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000). Questionnaires enabled the respondents to demonstrate its unique way of looking at the world. It catches the authenticity, richness, honesty and depth of responses which are the hallmarks of quantitative data.

An interview was used to collect responses from headteachers as it allows the respondents to demonstrate their unique way of perceiving their opinions. Further, interviews is useful in seeking attitudes, opinions and provide access to understand varied opinions of others and their preference, values and word view (Kerlinger 2000). To code the instruments, likert scale was used; this was advantageous in that it provide a range of response to a given statement. It also provides for greater subtlety of response which is built into a rating scale and renders the

instruments very attractive for the respondents (Cohen, Manion and Marrison 2000) it further gave an opportunity for flexible response with the ability to determine frequencies and other forms of quantitative analysis. It also allows the researcher to fuse measure with opinion, quantity, and quality and provide a range of response to a given question for statement. To code the instruments, likerts scale was used as it was advantageous as it provided a range of responses to the statement given and further greater subtlety of responses that was built on a rating scale and rendered the instrument attractive for the respondents. It also provided an opportunity   for flexible response with the ability to determine frequencies and other forms of quantitative analysis

3.7 Questionnaire for Pre-literacy Teachers of foundation level.

 A Questionnaire is prefer because it permits collection of data from a large population (Ogula, 2009). Questionnaire materials were administered to all the respondents. They included both open-ended and closed-ended questions (Stuckey, 2013). The open-ended questionnaire items were used to collect qualitative data while the closed-ended questionnaire items were used to collect quantitative data. Questionnaire enabled respondents to demonstrate their unique way of looking at the world (silver man, 1993).

It also catches the authenticity, richness, honest and depth of response which are all marks of quantitative data (Youngman, 1984). The teacher's questionnaires had items on how to improve their instruction (Oso & Onen, 2005). It was preferred as it gathers data quickly from geographically dispersed sample population. It was deemed appropriate since many respondents were reached. They are also economical in terms of time, effort and cost. It allows the researcher to reach large samples within a short time (Crewswell, 2009).

3.8 The interview schedule for head teachers

According to Gay, Mills and Airasian (2011) and interview is a purposeful interaction in which one person obtains information from another. Interviews are list of set questions item that are administered to respondents verbally (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008). An interview schedule was prepared for the head teachers. Interview schedules provided the researcher with greater opportunity to explain the purpose of the study (Oso and Onen 2005). Both closed and open ended items were used in the development of the schedule to avoid limiting respondent's response and to facilitate guidance and probing for further clarification (Daram, Wu, & Tang, 2014). The research used open ended questionnaires to elicit verbal responses on the selected teacher attributes influencing the acquisition of reading skills among intellectually challenged learners in foundation levels of learning in special schools in Baringo County.

Interview schedule was appropriate as it offered the responsibility of modifying ones "line of inquiry, allowing in-depth analysis and can be adapted to the ability and educational level of the respondent (Edwards & Holland, 2013). Interviews allow the respondents to demonstrate their unique way of perceiving the teacher attributes that influencing the acquisition of reading skills among intellectually challenged learners (Jamshed, 2014). Further, interviews were useful in seeking attitudes opinions and also provide access to understanding the varied opinions of

teachers and provide access to understanding the varied opinion of others and their preference, values and world view (kerlinger, 2000).

3.9 Observation Checklist for classroom instruction by the teacher

Observation checklist is a list of things that a researcher was going to look at when observing a class (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Cohen et al (2011) defines observation checklist as a form which is written to look for specific information required for a particular purpose. The study use observation checklist to find out the status of the school facilities and instructional resources. This list was prepared by the researcher. Observation checklists not only give a researcher a structure and framework for an observation but also serve as a contract of understanding with the teacher in the classroom, who may as a result be more comfortable, and will get specific feedback on aspects of the class (Baran, 2010). In this study, the researcher used observation checklist as an instrument to get the data. The researcher used observation checklist to understand the teacher attributes that influence the acquisition of reading skills among intellectually challenged learners in special schools in foundation level.

3.9.1 Document Analysis for document archives

Document Analysis is a qualitative research technique used by researchers (Labuschagne, 2003). The process involves evaluating electronic and physical documents to interpret them, gain an understanding of their meaning and develop upon the information they provide (Goldstein & Reiboldt, 2004). Document Analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; see also Rapley, 2007). Documents contain text (words) and images that have been recorded without a researcher's intervention for the purposes of the research. Atkinson and Coffey (1997) refer to the documents as 'social facts', which are produced, shared and used in socially organized ways.

3.10 Piloting of the Research Instruments

This is a preliminary study conducted on a small scale population to ascertain the effectiveness of the instruments, Khan (2008). Piloting is doing the small study in one small area like a zone, a school or a small locality, then the main full study in the County. A pretest sample was between 1% and 10% depending on the sample size (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003). In this study the researcher used pre- test sample. The piloting was done in Mindililwo special school in the neighboring County of Elgeyo Marakwet. The study took 10% of the sample to participate in the pilot process, 5 teachers and 1 headteacher participated.

Copies of questionnaire were developed and self-administered to the pre-test sample area and Cronbach coefficient was established to test its reliability. Cronbach alpha is good in measuring internal consistency of the items and suitable for non-standardized items. The acceptable threshold was 0.70 which was considered sufficient for internal consistency, (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). Piloting enabled the researcher to assess the willingness of the respondents to coorporate in the study.

3.11 Validity and Reliability

In order to lessen the danger of obtaining inaccurate answers to research questionnaires emphasis on the descriptive research design was considered: reliability and validity (Saunders et al 2007).

Reliability of an instrument would be consistent if the same technique is repeatedly which was done through pilot study school which was not in the study county. This helped to improve face validity of the instruments. Moreover the way measuring was conducted and how the information was processed affects the outcome of the research (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006).

3.11.1 Validity

Validity of an instrument is seen to be asking the right questions framed in the least ambiguous way (Agar, 1993). Validity is a matter of degree and that no data can have perfect validity (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000). To validate the study, the researcher developed research items on the basis of the objectives of the study. Appropriate instruments were developed that summarized the key areas of the study. Close ended questions which required one response (yes) or (no) were asked to facilitate consistency of responses across and to increase objectivity of the responses and reduce cases of non-response hence higher validity (Ogunnyi,1984) to assess the feelings and attitudes, open-ended questions elicited a variety of responses thus increasing the validity of the study (Kathuri and Pals,1993).

Content validity of the instruments was determined by giving them to the experts and colleagues in the school of education of University of Eldoret. Criterion validity of the instruments evaluated how accurately a test measures the outcome it was designed to measure (Denzin, 2012). Criterion validity was assessed in two ways by statistically testing as a new measurement technique against an independent criterion or standard to establish concurrent validity (Finley, 2014) and by statistically testing against a future performance to establish predictive validity. The study quantified content validity using content validity index of Gula 2009. The study selected 4 experts purposefully from the Department of curriculum and instruction on the expertise. Content validity was assessed by rating each item on a point rating scale. 1. Very good   2. Good 3. Average 4. Poor and 5 very poor the ratings were analyzed by computing an item-level.

CV1 (1-CV1) and a scale level CV1(S-CV1). The I-CVI was computed by dividing the number of experts, who rated the goodness of the item with 3,4 or 5 by the total number of experts. The following was the formula used.

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Total number of valid questions}}{\text{Total number of questions in the questionnaire}}$$

The questionnaires were piloted to check if the instrument was measuring what it was suppose to measure and determine the answers given by the respondents have any meaning.

3.11.2 Reliability

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a measuring instrument yields consistent results after repeated trials. Kothari (2005) asserts that reliability of a test instrument is a measure of consistency with which a test instrument produces the same results when administered to the group over time intervals. Reliability further refers to the degree of consistency of an instrument or whether it can be relied upon to produce the same

results each time it is applied (Scrimshow, 1990), Mannete et al, 1989, lokesh1992). The minimum requirement for an evaluation of an instrument should be that, the respondent gives the same answers to the same question under similar circumstances over time (Agar, 1993). Reliability is concerned with precision and accuracy. To increase reliability of the instruments a pilot study was done on one sampled school which was not included in the actual study county, this helped in establishing consistency of the questionnaire items. Two head teachers, five teachers participated in the pilot study. The questionnaires were checked for accuracy and consistency by using the pilot study. Internal consistency of the questionnaires were tested for reliability using Cronbach coefficient alpha to determine the internal consistency of the items. This is a method of estimating reliability of test scores by use of a single administration of a test. In this study reliability was established through the pilot test.

Reliability was estimated by comparing different versions of the same measurement. Validity was harder to assess, but it was estimated by comparing the results to other relevant data or theory. Methods of estimating reliability and validity which splinted up into two different types which were internal and external reliability. Internal reliability assesses the consistency of results across items within a test (Sekaran, 2005) while external reliability refers to the extent to which a measure varies from one use to another.

Test re-test method was employed to test the reliability of the questionnaire. Questions were given first to 5 teachers and 1 headteacher. Questions were returned (post- test) to the same number of teachers from the same number of schools after an interval of one week from the first test. After collecting the questionnaires for the first (pre-test) and the second (post-test) the Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to check the research questionnaires (items) are reliable or not. This was facilitated by coding the two sets of data in a singular file with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences Computer Software (SPSS). The two sets of scores were correlated based on the three objectives of the study. The study obtained average cronbach's Alpha value of 0.8262 making the instruments reliable. These findings were in line with the benchmark suggested by Hair etal (2010) where coefficient of 0.06 is regarded to have an average reliability while coefficient of 0.70 and above indicates that the instrument has a high reliability standard.

3.12 Data Collection Procedure

According to Kothari (2005) data collection procedure comprises of the steps and actions necessary for conducting research effectively and the desired sequencing of these steps. It can also be a way gathering information to serve or prove some facts. Both Qualitative and quantitative approaches of data collection techniques were used in this study (Fraenkel &Wallen, 2008). The two methods are complementary, each contributing to a better understanding and interpretation of the data general and to the ultimate findings.

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) suggested that a researcher requires research permit before embarking on the study. In this study the researcher sought recommendation letter from the University of Eldoret to facilitate acquisition of research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) unity of the MOE on

receiving a permit and a covering letter requesting for the respondents participation was prepared by the researcher and attached to the questionnaires. A copy of permit was forwarded to the County Director of Education and County Commissioner to be informed of the study. Headteachers of special schools were also informed about the study.

The researcher then proceeded to collect the data. Questionnaires left to the respondents to fill and picked after one week after making arrangement with the respondents on when to collect then before collecting the questionnaire, the researcher then checked these materials   to ascertain whether all were fully filled. If not, the corresponding respondent was requested to fill the gaps as the researcher awaits.

Moreover researchers prefer using methods that provide high accuracy, generalizability and explanatory power with low costs, rapid speed, maximum management demands and administrative convenience. Warwick and hanger, (1975), based on these, a combination of the following research instruments were used in the study; questionnaire, interview schedules observation checklist and document analysis. The researcher sought permission from National Council of Science Technology (NACOSTI) before conducting the research.

The County Director of Education of Baring County the sampled county of study was notified; there after the researcher then visited the sampled schools and sought permission from the head teachers. The respondents of each sampled school were given copies of questionnaire and serialized to determine those that would be returned by the respondents. Two researcher assistants were trained on data collection procedure then given these materials for distribution, a Form four and above was a requirement for one to serve as a research assistant. Then verify filled copies of questionnaire to ensure objectivity is adhered to. The respondents were informed on the confidentiality at which the results were treated.

3.13 Data Analysis

Data was analyzed from the instruments by first coding the data to allow in depth analysis, inferential and descriptive statistics which were used to analyze the frequency of each response calculated in each individual questionnaires. Key points from the questionnaires were noted and coded. Data from questionnaires and interview schedule were analyzed using the statistical procedures that produced indices that summarized data and described the sample. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and counts of the respondents were done using statistical records. The data was organized and presented inform of tables and the summary of the findings indicated after each table. Tabula layout was important to establish the distribution of respondents by performance. The use of tabular layout enabled desired figures to be located quickly and easily.

This aimed at examining what had been collected and making deductions and inferences. According to Kothari (2014) this step was essential in the scientific and social sciences research in ensuring that all relevant data is captured for making comparison and analysis. Field data for this research was analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods of research.

3.13.1 Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative methods were concerned with aggregates, general trends, averages and proportions. Qualitative data analysis endeavored to make general statements on how categories of themes of the data collected were related (Robson 2002). Quantitative research data was coded, entered and analyzed through the use of SPSS computer software program (version 22.0). Data was edited, organized in line with demographic, aspects of group and research questions and coded accordingly. Coding was to create codes and scale from the responses which would be summarized and analyzed in various ways (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Quantitative data results from closed ended questions were analyzed by use of means, frequencies, percentages and standard deviations. Data was presented using tables.

3.13.2 Qualitative analysis

Qualitative data from interview schedule was transcribed first, coded using numerals. The act of giving qualitative numbers is due to the philosophical paradigm that guides the research. Themes were merged with quantitative data as per the objectives of the study through content analysis method. Data from observation schedule was analyzed thematically. Data generated from qualitative and quantitative sources were presented as per the research objectives.

The data was first coded the data to allow for in-depth analysis. Inferential and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Frequencies each response were calculated in each individual questionnaire. The descriptive statistics like mean, mode and standard deviation were used to analyze the data. The information was presented in a tabular form to facilitate accurate interpretation.

The data collected was recorded in SPSS and each was given in-depth in relationship to the objective of the study sought to examine. The SPSS programe 24.0 version of windows was used to establish teacher attributes that influence the acquisition of reading skills among intellectually challenged learners of foundation level in Baringo County.

Data analysis proceeded in three stages. The first stage involved setting up the structure of the quantitative data. Structured quantitative data was then entered into the SPSS code book after which data was screened for errors. Stage two involved exploring data for which descriptive statistics were used in the case of quantitative data. In the case of qualitative data, exploration involved transcription of interview and focus group discussion data sets. The third stage was the analysis proper. Inferential statistics was used to analyze the quantitative aspects of the data but thematic analysis was used to extract key themes from narratives by respondents with regards to qualitative data. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings was integrated and interpreted as one.

3.14 Ethical Considerations

Ethical measures are principles which the researcher should bind himself or herself with in conducting the researcher (Schulze, 2002). According to Creswell, (2009), there are several

reasons for the adherence to ethical norms as this promotes the aim of research like knowledge, promote truth and avoid error. Ethical standards also promote the values that are essential to collaborative work. Ethical norms ensure that the researcher is held accountable to the public Khan (2008). Ethical consideration protects the rights of the participants by ensuring confidentiality. It is un ethical for the researcher to share identified information regarding test scores and school records with any one not associated with the study. This maintains the integrity of the study as well as the integrity of the researcher (Creswell 2002). The researcher sought permission from the respondents so as to get their consent for the research to be carried out.

The study presented was governed by ethical rules and principles that guide social science research. In this regard, principles such as informed consent, confidentiality, non-maleficence, beneficence and privacy were observed at all stages of the study. In this study it was bounded by:

1. **Informed Consent** - Participants were given enough information pertaining to the study before the administration of the research instrument. The possible benefits and value of the study was explained to the participants.
2. **Permission to Conduct the Research** – the researcher sought and obtained permission from the Graduate School to apply for research authority from the County Director of Education of Baringo County. An introductory letter was presented to the relevant office to be allowed to carry out the research.

3. **Confidentiality and Anonymity** - The researcher was responsible at all times and was vigilant, mindful and sensitive to human dignity. In this study, participants confidentialities were not compromised, as their identification were not required at all (Allmark et al., 2009).

IV: RESULTS
4.1 Analysis of Teacher attitude and acquisition of reading skills
Table 4.1: Analysis of Teacher attitude and acquisition of reading skills

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree		M	Std. dev
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
I do not involve learners with special needs in class participation	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	53.3	14	46.7	1.53	0.51
It's a waste of time to educate learners with special needs in foundation level	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	46.7	16	53.3	1.47	0.51
Children with special needs increases	5	16.7	22	73.3	0	0	1	3.3	2	6.7	3.90	0. 94

teachers work load.											
Class peers interact freely with children with special needs	8	26.7	14	46.7	1	3.3	5	16.7	2	6.7	3.70	1.24
It is difficult to adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of children with special needs	9	30.0	13	43.3	1	3.3	6	20.0	1	3.3	3.77	1.19
Children with special needs should learn in their own class	1	3.3	0	0	0	0	20	66.7	9	30.0	2.83	1.05

Respondents tended to disagree on most of the statements on attitude concerning academic achievement based on mean response rate scores. As shown in Table 4.11, 16(53.3%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that they do not involve learners with special needs in class participation while 14(46.7%) did strongly disagreed with the statement but none of them was in support of the statement. Most of the respondents were not in support of the statement that they do not involve learners with special needs in class participation as represented by low mean (M= 1.5333, S.D=0.50742). These findings show that teachers value the learners with special needs in allowing them participate in their classrooms with their so called normal learners counterpart's displays acceptance and positive attitude in their part. As Lieberman, James & Ludwa, (2014) suggest that successful interactions between intellectually challenged learners often do not occur naturally, and teacher must be able to facilitate interaction effectively if they want students with disabilities to engage socially with their peers. Therefore, contact intellectually challenged learners is the only effective way to help students without disabilities gain an understanding of students with disabilities there was positive results.

In that 14(46.7%) of the respondents disagreed that It's a waste of time to educate learners with special needs in foundation level as 16(53.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and none of the respondents was in support of the statement (M= 1.4667, S.D=0.50742). These findings show that the teachers are in agreement with involving in class participation that it is not a waste time to educate learners with special needs, when given a chance and supported in minimizing the challenges the learners can perform. The positive attitude displayed by the teacher can enhance learning among the learners. In support of these findings Love and Kruger (2005), states that teacher expectations and attitudes directly affect student performance. If a teacher does not believe that the students have the potential to learn then this can result in less attention to the students as well as less interest in their academic achievement. Therefore, attitude is a key aspect to inclusion of students with disabilities since it influences human behaviour towards a particular object.

On whether children with special needs in mainstream education classes increases teachers work load, majority of the respondents agreed with the statement there was a mixed response as 5(16.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed on the statement. However while 22(73.3%) agreed

and 1 (3.3%) disagreed but 2(6.7%) strongly disagreed however none of them was undecided on this statement (M= 3.9000, S.D=0. 95953). The majority of the teachers agreed that teaching of learners with disability increases more work load for teachers which can be translated into the concentration required and the more time needed for the learner to pick up in the lesson. Also the resources being used in these classrooms are not equally same as those used in classrooms with able learners. Although other teachers also believe that the work load increases. According to Kavoori (2012) in relating the success of inclusive classrooms in New Delhi stressed that it is dependent upon the number of students with disabilities in the mainstreaming classroom. The need for extra time and additional responsibilities imposed on teachers by the increase in number of students with disabilities in the classroom is expected to affect the quality of teaching processes and the teachers attitudes as well

Further findings showed that 8(26.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed that class peers interact freely with children with special needs, 14(46.7%) of them agreed, 1(3.3%) was neutral in their response while 5(16.7%) disagreed as 2(6.7%) did strongly disagreed (M= 3.7000, S.D=1.23596). These results show difference in how the learners interacted with one another which displayed the attitude the able learners showed their peers who were disabled. When the learners interact freely this enhances the growth and development of learning among the learners with special needs. In accordance with the frame-work of Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory, Brown, Odom, and Conroy (2001) suggest that positive interactions between and among students with and without disabilities determine the success of the Inclusive Education model within any given classroom. This theory supports learner active role in that learning is a social advancement that involves language, real world situations, and interaction between and collaboration among learners (Rodina, 2007).

On whether it is difficult to adapt instructional methods to the needs of children with special needs 9(30%) of the respondents were in agreement with the relevant statement, 13(43.3%) of them agreed, 1(3.3%) were neutral while 6(20%) disagreed and 1(3.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement (M= 3.7667, S.D=1.19434). The established results show that in some way adjusting to any change is challenging, adapting to any new way out of your normal conception is challenging as portrayed by the findings. In support to these findings De Boer, Pijil, and Minnaert (2011) show that teachers 'attitudes towards Inclusion are strongly influenced by the nature of the disabilities and/or educational problems being presented, the professional background of teachers, limited training for teachers to acquire integrated competencies, teachers 'lack of confidence both in their own instructional skills and in the quality of support personnel available to them.

On whether children with special needs should learn in their own special classes 3.3% of the respondents strongly agreed as 66.7% disagreed with the statement as 30% strongly disagreed but none of them agreed or was neutral (M= 2.8333, S.D=1.05318). This observation shows that most teachers are in support of inclusion model of education in a way the children with disability should not be separated from so-called normal learners. They should learn with the rest of the members as this supports their learning and development progress. When the learners are taught and trained in same environment they will develop positive attitude among the learners towards

disability. Although the findings of Hwang and Evans (2011) reveal that teachers were against inclusion as they expressed that they did not have enough time to effectively meet the needs of students with disabilities as well as those without disabilities simultaneously. Also Akap and Kazcmarek (2010) found out that teachers had difficulties controlling classrooms behavior when students with different types of disabilities were included in their classroom, especially those with multiple disabilities and behavioral problems. Therefore, teachers were generally found to be more receptive towards students with mild disabilities then those with severe disabilities in their general education classroom.

According to teachers attitude and acquisition of reading skills the findings shows that most of the teachers are positive in helping the children who are mentally impaired, although they agree that special needs increases teachers work load and could also be difficult to adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of children with special needs but it can never be waste of time to educate learners with special needs in grade one and they should never be left to learn in their own class. The findings show how teachers attitude play an important role in teaching intellectually challenged learners, this findings are in line with the views of Gross (2005) attitudes have the power to influence the teachers' professional behavior also Ringlake and Prince (2011) suggest that teacher beliefs and attitudes underlay the philosophy of inclusive education and are therefore important predictors of the outcomes. They further show that there is a correlation between positive attitudes of teachers towards mainstreaming of learners with special needs and the support they receive from management as well as other technical variables which include having more resources, small classes, more time available to design teaching material and opportunities for personal development gained from further learning (Ringlake and Prince, 2011).

IV: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Summary

The study demonstrated that Teacher -attitude plays a significant role on the acquisition of reading skills among mentally impaired learners. The teacher respondents agreed that they normally involve learners with special needs in class participation and take it that it is not a waste of time to educate learners with special needs in foundation level of education, they also believe that children with special needs do not increase teachers work load at all. The study also established that class peers interact freely with children with special needs also it is not difficult to adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of children with special needs and were not for the support of the idea that children with special needs should learn in their own class.

5.2 Conclusions
This study concludes that Teacher attitude plays a great role in the success of teaching intellectually challenged learners in acquiring reading skills. The study thus concluded that it is important for the teachers to develop positive attitudes towards teaching of intellectually challenged learners and ensure they obtain the reading skill. The teachers in the study have demonstrated that positive attitude towards teaching of intellectually challenged learners was important by involving the learners with special needs to participate in class activities would

encourage them and allow them to interact freely with their peers also agreeing that it is not a waste of time to educate learners with mental disability. They study also concludes that it is never difficult to adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of children with special needs. Teaching intellectually challenged learners depends on the passion the teacher has for the learners.

5.3 Recommendation

The study further recommends that the Kenyan government and the schools management should appreciate the teachers teaching learners with intellectual disability by rewarding them adequately with materials awards and remunerations. This will motivate them in teaching the learners and a feeling of being appreciated also encourages new comers to join the profession.

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