

Parental and Teacher Influence on Psychological Adjustment of Pupils with Learning Disabilities in Inclusive Primary Schools in Kenya

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Abstract

Learning disabilities (LDs) encompass a very extensive range of academic problems which can give rise to social and psychological problems. Apart from experiencing academic problems, pupils with LDs experience strong feelings of frustrations, sadness and shame as a result of repeated failure and this can lead to psychological difficulties. These psychological problems are experienced at home and at school and if not addressed, they add to the burden of the condition and could find their way into adulthood. The study was guided by the following objectives; to determine the influence of parent child relationships on pupils' psychological adjustment and to examine the influence of teacher pupil relationships on psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs. Mixed methods research design was used. Saturated and purposive sampling techniques were used to select participants. The sample size was 116 which comprised of 96 pupils, 10 parents and 10 special education teachers. Parent child relationships were found to be positively correlated with psychological adjustment with a Pearson of 0.375** with parents explaining 14.1 % of the relationship. Teacher pupil relationships were found to have influence on psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs with a Pearson of 0.571** with teachers explaining 32.6 % of the relationship. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education mandate School Guidance and Counselling departments to develop programs to help pupils with LDs cope with the demands of life. Peer counselling should be introduced and strengthened in inclusive primary schools to supplement the teacher counsellors' efforts.

Keywords: Learning Disabilities; Kenya; Psychological Adjustment; Inclusive Primary Schools; Pupils; Special Education Teachers, Parental Influence, Teacher Influence.

INTRODUCTION

A growing body of research increasingly recognises the importance of addressing influence of school and family environment on academic development [1, 2, 3, 4 & 5]. On the other hand, parent child relationship and teacher pupil relationship have been shown to have important impact on psychological adjustment of typical learning pupils [6, 7]. Few studies have investigated the influence of these variables on psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs. An understanding of the role of these variables in a LDs population may have significant implication for psychological interventions. Parent child relationship and teacher pupil relationship are likely to be useful targets for programs aimed at enhancing psychological adjustment among pupils with LDs. However, prior to the utilization of these variables in such interventions, increased knowledge on their impact on psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs is needed.

Psychological adjustment is defined as the general feelings of well-being and satisfaction an individual comes to experience because of reduction of the

stress in their everyday lives [8]. According to [9] psychological adjustment is defined in terms of emotional and affective outcomes. It has a number of mental health outcomes such as depressive symptoms, mood disturbances, general well-being and satisfaction with life. In assessing psychological adjustment among pupils with LDs, four indicators namely depressive symptoms, self-esteem, anxiety and anger were used in this study.

This study therefore seeks to investigate the contextual influence of parent child and teacher pupil relationships on psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs in inclusive schools in Kisumu East Sub County, Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

Children with LDs recognise the importance of school and often desire to be successful, making their frequent difficulties and feelings of failure all the more stressful and damaging. Further, when expectations from both the individuals and important people in their lives are high, feelings of inadequate performance can be experienced as stressful. The

increase in demand to focus on academic achievement leaves little room for time or resources to be allocated to other aspects of the child's life. While all challenges faced by children are stressful, feelings of failure and inadequacy that stem from poor academic performance may have the greatest impact on their psychological adjustment. Children with LDs are a vulnerable population both inside and outside of the school environment, and it is essential to understand their experiences in order to provide them with the level of support that they need. This study therefore sought to establish the contextual influence of parents and teachers on psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs in inclusive primary schools in Kisumu East Sub County, Kenya.

Objectives of Study

The specific objectives of the study were as follows;

- I) To determine the influence of parent child relationship on psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs.
- II) To examine the influence of special education teachers on psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs in inclusive primary schools.

Influence of Parent-Child Relationship on Pupil's Psychological Adjustment

Parent-child relationships are generally believed to play a crucial role in shaping children's development and adjustment. Parental involvement and affection is a major factor in the emotional and social development of the child, which in turn affects the psychological self-assessment of the child. In relation to child development, it is important that children are raised in a supportive environment, with appropriate parenting and social support from others. The parent-child relationship can be viewed as being positive or conflictual [10]. Positive parent-child relationships are characterized by responsiveness, sensitivity, and availability. On the other hand, parents' conflictual relationships with their children are marked by low levels of sensitivity and availability. Parents' responsiveness consists of warm, accepting and affectionate behavior [11,12].

Social scientists in general and psychologists in particular, largely agree that parent-child relationships play a crucial role in shaping children's development and adjustment. Research literature shows evidence that the quality of both mother and father and child relationships remains the most reliable predictor of individual differences in psychological, social and cognitive adjustment in children [13,14]. Parent-child relationships are significantly related to both children's and adolescents' levels of externalizing and internalizing behaviors. Specifically, children and adolescents with good parent-child relationships experience lower levels of depression [15].

In addition, close parent-child relationships increased children's and adolescents' self-esteem [16]. Other studies show that family conflicts, hostility, and rejection have all been linked to a later diagnosis of depression, while deficits in family communication were also related to substance use, suicidality, depression, low self-esteem, and maladaptive eating patterns [17]. [18] found that parental warmth, emotional support and autonomy granting reduce the risk of depression and anxiety. Thus targeting specific risk and protective factors that are within parents' control is likely to be effective in preventing depression and anxiety in children.

While recognising that both parents play significant roles in the nurturing and the raising of their children, there are conflicting findings on effects of mother child and father child relationships on the development and adjustment of children. Some studies have shown that mothers' relationships with children are more closely linked to children's mental health than relationships with fathers [19, 20]. [21] reported significant findings regarding the parent-child relationship and depression. indicated that relationship quality with mothers was a predictor of more depressive symptoms reported in adolescents. Relationship quality with fathers also predicted depressive symptoms, but only for boys. On the other hand, recent research suggests father-child relationships areas influential on children's and adolescents' mental health as mother-child relationships [22;19;23]. These studies were carried out on normally achieving and typically developing children. The current study focused on parental relationships with children with LD.

Several studies [24, 25] indicate that mothers and fathers of school-age children with disabilities experience greater and more frequent stress because of their parenting demands than parents of children without disabilities. LD, a hidden and unexpected handicap in a child with normal intelligence, presents a great parental stress and creates difficulties in the relationship between parents and children [26]. Once a child has been diagnosed with LD, the parents' main concern is usually on how to help the child improve in his/her academic performance. It appears that relentless focus on the child's academic failures can undermine family relationships and impact on the quality of the parent interactions with the child. [27] suggests some parents may place such value on achievement that they are unable to accept the existence, extent of, or implications of their children's LD. Even though they provide support for learning, their children may experience high levels of anxiety because they can never measure up to their parent's expectations.

Researches on parenting children with disabilities have focused on remediation programs, little research has focused on parent child relationships in relation to psychological wellbeing. The psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs is an important aspect of the pupils' development and the effects of poor psychological adjustment could have more devastating effects than academic failures. This study therefore focused on how parent-child relationship influenced psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs.

Children with LD need support as they come to terms with their disability. The value of parental support for children with LD may lie in the quality of emotional support rather than practical support. [22] examined the role of parental support on depressive feelings and social and academic self-efficacy. Data were collected from a sample of 1118 Italian students, aged 14 to 18 years, living in intact families, using a self-report questionnaire and ANOVAs were performed. Results indicated that high levels of perceived support from both parents were related to lower levels of depressive feelings and higher levels of social and academic self-efficacy. In another study, self-esteem was associated with family characteristics and routines as well as parent-child relationship quality. Thus children who perceive the presence of supportive family have high self-esteem and that an increase in the quality of parent child relationship is always paired with higher self-esteem among children [28]. The above studies were carried out in Italy and Malaysia respectively. It was therefore necessary to carry out a study in Kisumu East Sub County, Kenya so as to ascertain whether cultural differences have influences on the findings. This makes it possible to generalize the findings to other Sub Counties in Kisumu County.

[29] studied the impact of quality social relationships on self-esteem of children with dyslexia. Dyslexia is a specific learning disability. The data analysis identified a positive correlation between healthy parent-child relationship and high level of self-esteem in dyslexic children. Strong self-esteem is related to good psychological health. Dyslexia has a negative effect on self-esteem, but this effect depends on support levels at home and/or school. Those with dyslexia have a low self-esteem and try to protect or restore their vulnerable self-esteem in different ways, mostly by hiding, working hard, fighting back, or explaining their difficulties [30]. [29] and [30] focused on self esteem and dyslexia which is a specific LD. The current study focused on depression, self esteem, anxiety and anger because conceptualizing psychological adjustment requires more than one dimension.

Open parent-child communication is one aspect of good parent-child relationships that plays a critical

role in maintaining the healthy function of the family system and children's development. [31] found a link between open communication between parents and children's positive family self-concept, which in turn related to a positive academic self-concept. [32] found that parents would continue to influence children's psychological adjustment through their continuous interactions and quality of communication. The findings thus show that open communication with parents protects children from experiencing school adjustment problems, low self esteem and depression.

A study was conducted by [33] to investigate whether family functioning can predict the self-concept and self-esteem of normally achieving and at risk for LD students in Oman regardless of parent education level and gender status. A total of 259 elementary school students were selected which included 78 with LD and normally achieving students 181. In addition, demographic data on parents' education levels (PEL) and gender were collected. The study specifically investigated whether family functioning dimensions of communication, cohesion, conflict, and social/recreational orientation can predict the self-concept and self-esteem of children regardless of PEL and gender status. Results showed that family functioning was a strong contributory factor of self-concept for both children with and without LD although the two groups differed in terms of the significant family functioning predictors. Family functioning was a weak contributory factor of self-esteem in children with and without LD. The study by [33] investigated both normally achieving pupils and pupils at risk of LD and looked at four dimensions of family functioning. The current study focused on pupils with LD and looked at dimensions of parental support which is missing in the above study and communication which though covered in the previous study focused on normally achieving pupils and those at risk for LD.

Another study by [34] revealed there is significant impact of parental support on the academic achievement as well as on the development of self-concept of the children. This study examines the impact of educational support given by the parents on the academic achievement and on the self-concept of grade 4 public school students. The data regarding parental support, its effects on the academic achievement and self-concept were collected from a sample of grade 4 students in the urban primary and elementary public schools. The sampled students who have or do not have parental support were compared on two measures, namely the annual school result report and the self-concept scale. For the study of self-concept of the students, Beck Youth inventory for self-concept (BSCI-Y) was adapted. The Beck Youth Inventories of Emotional and Social Impairment includes five self-report inventories used

to assess anxiety, depression, anger, disruptive behavior, and self-concepts in children between the ages of 7 and 14 years old. The findings of this study revealed the significant impact of parental support on the academic achievement as well as on the development of self-concept of the children. The foregoing study collected from grade 4 pupils and looked at educational support from parents. The current study focused on pupils with LDs from class four to class eight. It also focused on parental support and communication.

The findings of the study by [35] are in agreement with the study conducted by [6] who found that there were significant associations between all sources of support with depressive symptoms, anxiety, self-esteem, and academic adjustment with parental support as a robust unique predictor of adjustment for both boys and girls. Moreover, [35] in their study among Mexican American college students found that parental support and active coping buffered the effects of high acculturative stress on anxiety symptoms and depressive symptoms.

Despite the many studies done on parent child relationships and psychological adjustment, there remains need to investigate this area as most of the studies have been carried out in Europe and America. The current study was carried out in Kenya and parent child relationship was conceptualized in terms of single and intact families comprising of parental support and parent child communication.

Influence of Special Education Teachers on Psychological Adjustment

Literature examining pupil-teacher relationships consistently points to a positive association between good pupil-teacher relationships and pupils' academic, social-emotional, and mental health outcomes [36; 37; & 38]. This has been demonstrated in both regular and special education classes in community settings throughout the developmental stages. For example, pupils' relationships with their kindergarten teachers predict grades and standardized-test scores through fourth grade, and positive pupil-teacher relationships are associated with fewer disciplinary actions and increased work habits through middle school [37]. In middle school, pupils' perceived teacher support has corresponded to increases in self-esteem and decreases in depressive symptoms [38] and teachers' ratings of relationship quality has been linked to student risky behavior [39]. In high school, feelings of relatedness with teachers are associated with positive school attitudes, including motivation, success expectations, and interest in school [40;41], as well as improved achievement and self-esteem [42] and fewer depressive symptoms [43]. Teachers have significant lifelong impact on all their students. The impact not only involves academic skill but also in fostering

psychological well being. Therefore, the influence of teacher pupil relationship on psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs was an important element of this study.

As children enter formal school settings, relationships with teachers provide the foundation for successful adaptation to the social and academic environment. From the first day of school, young children must rely on teachers to provide them with the understanding and support that will allow them to get the most out of their daily interactions in the classroom. Children who form close relationships with teachers enjoy school more and get along better with peers. Positive relationships with teachers can also serve as a secure base for young children; they are better able to play and work on their own because they know that if things get difficult or if they are upset, they can count on their teacher to recognize and respond to these problems [37].

Pupils' relationships with their teachers have shown to be important predictors of adjustment. Indeed, schools are interpersonal settings, in which relationships influence pupils' motivation, academic performance, and teach psychosocial adjustment. Relationships with teachers can be particularly important to learners with LD, who are often undergoing profound shifts in their sense of self and are struggling to negotiate changing relationships with their parents and peers. An increasingly large number of theorists and specialists acknowledge the therapeutic role of the educator in dealing with children with serious problems or difficulties [44,45].

In the past, many studies have explored the influence of the teacher-student relationship quality on the adequate development of typically developing students [46;47]. At the same time, few studies investigated the role of teacher-student relationships among school pupils with disabilities [48]. The few existing studies on close relationships with teachers of pupils with disabilities revealed the role of these relationships as a protective factor for the children's social and emotional adaptive functioning [49; 50].

Most of the existing studies indicate that, compared to teacher-student relationships of typically developing pupils, those of pupils with disabilities are characterized by a higher level of rejection and dissatisfaction, and lower levels of acceptance and closeness. Moreover, teachers in general have difficulty establishing optimal relationships with students with disabilities [51]. [52] found that teacher acceptance is associated with student psychological adjustment in both boys and girls and has protective roles against depressive symptoms, behavioural problems and promotes resilience and academic achievement. This corroborates with a study carried out earlier by [53], which was a cross-cultural meta-

analysis that tested the contribution of teachers' and parents' acceptance to youth's psychological adjustment and school conduct. It was based on nine studies involving 2,422 school-going youth in 12 nations. Results showed that both parental and teacher acceptance correlate significantly in all countries with psychological adjustment and school conduct of children, regardless of gender differences. Given that youths spend a good deal of their lives at school, it seems reasonable that supportive relationships with teachers could benefit their emotional well-being. Reddy and colleagues found that changes in perceptions of teachers' support reliably predicted changes in self-esteem and depression in both boys and girls. A five years longitudinal study on the associations between teacher emotional support and depressive symptoms in Australian adolescents found that students of both sexes with average and high numbers of stressful events benefit from teacher support [44]. Teachers undoubtedly play a substantial role in taking action to prevent pupils from developing further psychological problems. Of course teachers are not trained to be experts in psychological difficulties and interventions; however they are often involved in intense interaction with their students; as they spend a substantial amount of time with them, teachers can provide vital information regarding their behaviour and functioning and help professionals in designing appropriate interventions [54].

Majority of studies on teacher pupil relationship have focused on typically developing and normally achieving children. The results from these studies have shown that teacher pupils' relationships are associated with increased motivation and learning. The current study examined the teacher pupil relationship between special education teachers and pupils with LDs. The focus was on how this relationship influenced psychological adjustment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Mixed method research approach was used for this study. Mixed method research is a research design whose central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems.

Research Area

The study was conducted in Kisumu East Sub County which is one of the seven Sub Counties in Kisumu County. It covers a total of 135.90 square kilometers. According to the national census of 2009, the population of the Sub County is 150, 124 [55]. Leonard Cheshire Disability (LCD) has been implementing inclusive education in Kisumu East Sub County and this is one of the reasons as to why the study was carried out in the Sub County. Another reason for the choice of this area for the study is that

it has relatively higher number of inclusive schools compared to other Sub Counties in the county (Educational Assessment and Resource Centre [56].

Instruments

Questionnaire

The questionnaire had two parts.

Part 1: Demographic form. It had five items on demographic information of the participants namely age, gender, class levels and family status.

Part 2: Psychological adjustment scale. It was divided into three sections with 64 items:

Section A: 39 items addressing levels of psychological adjustment of pupils' with LDs.

Section B: Had eight items concentrating on pupils with LDs relationship with parents.

Section C: Had seven items focusing on pupils with LDs relationship with teachers.

Interview Schedule

The interview schedule was structured and based on predetermined questions. Face to face interview was used for the study where the interviewer asked the interviewees oral questions with regard to the objectives of the study. This was mainly used to get more information regarding the topic of the study and cross check questionnaire responses to enhance reliability of data collected.

Validity and Reliability

The researcher subjected the instruments to content validity. Cronbach's alpha coefficient analysis was used to measure the internal consistency of the instruments, because it is the most consistent test of inter-item consistency reliability for Likert scaled or rating scaled questionnaires. The reliability for multi-item opinion items were computed separately for all the subscales in the students' questionnaires and the coefficient alpha of these variables were reported. All the sub-scales met the required level of internal consistency of reliability, with the following Cronbach's alpha values of 0.65 for psychological adjustment, parent child relationship 0.72 (parent-child and teacher- child relationship 0.66.

Data Collection Procedure

Permission to conduct the main study was first sought from the National Council for Science and Technology through the School of Graduate Studies of Maseno University, and subsequently from Kisumu East Sub County Education office, as well as the participating inclusive primary school administrators. Upon receipt of relevant authorization documents including introductory letter from the school of graduate studies of Maseno University, the researcher sought the indulgence of the teachers on the logistics of carrying out the research especially in regard to identification of the parents and pupils with LDs. Thereafter the researcher went to the selected schools to embark on collecting data from the pupils

and teachers during games time. The parents were accessed during their weekly support group meetings. The purpose of the research was explained adequately to the respondents, and sufficient clarification made where concerns arose. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the pupils and conducted face to face interviews with the special education teachers and parents. Each questionnaire took 10 minutes to complete while each interview lasted 20 minutes.

RESULTS

Demographics

The respondents were distributed as follows:- 45.8% were in the 13-14 years age bracket. The participants of 12 years and below age bracket constituted 32.3%, while 21.9% of the study population was made up of 15 years and above bracket. The distribution shows that 46.6% of the respondents lived with the mothers only, 35.4% with both parents and 17.7% lived with fathers alone.

Findings of the study show that pupils with both parents have a healthier relationship with their parents (mean =28.50; SD=6.32) than pupils with single parents. However, the findings of the study revealed that psychological adjustment of pupils with mothers (mean=26.98; SD = 7.03) is much better than that of the pupils with fathers only. (Mean = 25.29 ; SD 9.24.) This finding suggests that children brought up with both parents enjoy a healthy parent-child relationship which leads to positive outcomes for the children and the family. These findings concur with studies that reveal that mothers’ relationships with children are more closely linked to children’s mental health than relationships with fathers [19; 20].

Furthermore, [21] indicated that relationship quality with mothers was a predictor of more depressive symptoms reported in adolescents. Therefore, family structure is an important aspect in psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs. The parent child relationship was conceptualized by the level of communication and support between the parents and their children with LDs. In the study it was found that

pupils who enjoyed supportive relationships and open communication with their parents were better adjusted. In other words they had low scores on depression, self-esteem, anxiety and anger. In concurrence, [34] revealed there is significant impact of parental support on the children. Supportive relationships may involve checking on the child’s progress in school, helping with the homework and showing concern for the pupils’ wellbeing. Open communication encourages the pupil to share concerns with the parent. This in turn makes the pupil feel valued and cared for leading to positive psychological adjustment. The findings were further supported by the views of the parents who were interviewed.

10 parents were interviewed on their relationship with their children with LDs. Most of the parents (7 out of 10) who were interviewed said that relationships with their children were good. Below are some verbatim from some of them:

P6: “Relationship with my son is good; I was taught how to relate with him by the British group. We communicate very well; he is free with me and shares most of his concerns with me”.

However, 3 parents had different perspectives on relationships with their children with LDs. *P5: “I have two daughters with LDs, and my relationship with them is not good. At times I don’t even want to talk to them”.*

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed, with overall scores on indicators of parent child relationship as independent variable and psychological adjustment among the pupils with LDs as dependent variable. Average score were calculated for each sub-scale so that high scores indicate high levels of relationships and high levels of psychological adjustment. The scores of the variables were computed from frequency of responses and converted into continuous data by computing mean responses per respondents. The p-value was set at .05. The results of correlation analysis are shown on Table 1 below.

Table 1: Relationship with Parents and Psychological Adjustment

		Psychological Adjustment	Relationship with parents
Psychological Adjustment	Pearson Correlation	1	.375**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	96	96
Relationship with Parents	Pearson Correlation	.375**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	96	96

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The finding of the study showed that there was a positive correlation ($r=.375$, $n=96$, $p<.05$) between relationship with parents and psychological adjustment. It was therefore concluded that pupils with LDs adjust better when they have a strong positive relationship with the parents.

To estimate the level of influence of parent child relationship on overall psychological adjustment, a coefficient of determination was computed. This was done using regression analysis and the result was as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Model Summary on Regression Analysis of Influence of Parent Child Relationship on Psychological Adjustment

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.375 ^a	.141	.132	.06732

a. Predictors: (Constant), Relationship with parents

The model shows that parent child relationship accounted for 14.1%, as signified by coefficient $R^2 = .141$, of the variation in psychological adjustment among learners with LDs. This finding implies that about 14% of variability in psychological adjustment among learners with LDs is explained by parent-child relationship alone.

Further, a regression model on the association between parent-child relationships and psychological adjustment of pupils was developed. Table 4 shows the coefficient value of the model.

Table 3: Coefficient Output: Parent-Child Relationships on Psychological Adjustment

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	2.673	.269		9.948	.000	2.139	3.206
Relationship with parent	.300	.076	.375	3.926	.000	.148	.451

a. Dependent Variable: Psychological Adjustment

From the model, the unstandardized coefficient which is equal to .300 means that for each one unit improvement in parent-child relationship, there is an increase in psychological adjustment of .300 units.

Findings on the influence of parent child relationship on psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs show that there was positive relationship between general parent child relationship and psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs. That means that positive parent child relationship is associated with overall psychological adjustment. LDs diagnosis causes stress and anxiety to parents and this can in turn cause parent child relationships to be strained.

In concurrence with the current study, [18] found that emotional support from parents may reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety in children. Another study by [28] also found that children who perceive the presence of supportive family possess high self-esteem and that an increase in the quality of family functioning is always paired with higher self-esteem among children. This is important for parents because they can improve their relationships with their children with LDs by being supportive.

The findings of the current study also concur with that of [8] who found that there were significant associations between all sources of support with depressive symptoms, anxiety, self-esteem and academic adjustment with parental support as a robust unique predictor of adjustment for both boys and girls. Thus, providing children with LDs with social support may be a useful intervention strategy in order to increase self-esteem of these children. Communication is an important aspect of parent child relationship.

A study by [32] found that both perceived maternal and paternal communication significantly predicted children's well-being as measured by self-reported scores of depression, school adjustment, substance use and self-esteem. This study specifically studied parent child communication. Although a study by [21] established gender differences on the effect of parent-child communication, present findings are in agreement with [32] that parent child communication is not influenced by the gender of the parent. Nevertheless, paternal and maternal communication influences children's well-being.

In this regard, [19] and [20] linked mothers' relationships to children's mental health and depressive symptoms than relationships with fathers

education teacher relationship as independent variable and psychological adjustment among the pupils with LDs as dependent variable. Table 4 shows the correlation analysis results.

Influence of Special Education Teachers on Psychological Adjustment of Pupils with LD in Inclusive Primary Schools

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was computed, with overall scores on indicators of special

Table 4: Relationship with Teacher and Psychological Adjustment

		Psychological Adjustment	Relationship with teachers
Psychological Adjustment	Pearson Correlation	1	.571**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	96	96
Relationship with teachers	Pearson Correlation	.571**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	96	96

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The finding of the study indicates that there was a statistically significant positive correlation ($r=.571$, $n=96$, $p<.05$) between teacher pupil relationship and psychological adjustment. This implies that pupils with LDs adjust better when they have a strong positive relationship with their teachers. This suggests that teachers play an important role in the psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs. This could be explained by [10] while referring to the psychological needs in the Self Determination theory

suggested that teacher student relationships are the media through which these psychological needs are met. [52] in agreement noted that teacher acceptance is associated with student psychological adjustment.

To estimate the level of influence of teacher relationship on overall psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs, a coefficient of determination was computed. This was done using regression analysis and the result was as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Model Summary on Regression Analysis of Influence of Teacher Relationship on Psychological Adjustment

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.571 ^a	.326	.319	.05964

a. Predictors: (Constant), Relationship with teachers

The model summary shows that teacher relationship accounted for 32.6% ($R^2 = .326$) of the variation in psychological adjustment among learners with LD. The implication of this is that, teacher-pupil relationship explains about 33% of the variability of psychological adjustment among pupils with LD, meaning that in about one out of every three of pupils

with LD their level of psychological adjustment is influenced by their relationship with their teacher.

Further, a regression model on the relationship between teacher relationships and psychological adjustment of pupils was developed. **Table 6** shows the coefficient value of the model.

Table 6: Coefficient Output: Teacher Relationships on Psychological Adjustment of Pupils with LDs

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	1 (Constant)	1.581	.319				4.953
Relationship with Teachers	.530	.079	.571	6.739	.000	.374	.687

a. Dependent Variable: Psychological Adjustment

From the model, the unstandardized coefficient which is equal to .530 means that for each one unit improvement in teacher-child relationship, there is an increase in psychological adjustment of .530 units. This implies that more improvement in teacher pupil relationship results to an improved pupil psychological adjustment.

The teacher pupil relationship is important because it mediates the parent child relationship and the peer pupil relationships. The teacher pupil relationship can be seen as an extension of the parent child relationship, while the peer pupil relationship may be influenced by the pupil's perception of the teacher's relationship with other pupils. Thus pupils who experience positive relationships with teachers are more likely to have positive relationship with peers. The possible explanation for the trust that pupils place on their teachers can influence other relationships in their lives. It is hypothesized that teacher family communication that promotes student's sense of competence and enhances feelings of relatedness to the teacher or school can foster high levels of motivation [14].

The finding that pupil teacher relationship influences psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs is consistent with research findings by [47] who found that overall teacher student relationships are significantly positively related to psychological adjustment of adolescents. This implies that teacher acceptance and supportive relationships provide some psychological cushion against maladjustment in school. This is supported by [52] and [53] who found that teacher acceptance and supportive relationships were associated with student psychological adjustment in both boys and girls and have protective roles against depressive symptoms.

Teacher pupil relationship is important especially in inclusive schools because of the stigma and frustrations pupils with LDs suffer when they compare themselves to the typical learners. [45] postulated that teachers play a therapeutic role in dealing with children with difficulties. Relationships with teachers can be particularly important to pupils with LDs, who are often undergoing profound shifts in their sense of self and are struggling to negotiate changing relationships with their parents and peers. Schools are interpersonal settings, in which relationships influence pupils' motivation, academic performance, and teach psychosocial adjustment. This may be explained by theory of Self determination by [57] which postulates that the support pupils receive from the socializing environment promote or undermine the pupils' intrinsic motivation towards psychological growth and development. That means teacher pupil relationship is characterized by acceptance and

support is important for the psychological wellbeing of pupils with LDs.

To get the views of the special education teachers, the researcher conducted a face to face interview with 10 special education teachers. They were asked to describe their relationship with pupils with LD. The responses given were; try to be close and friendly to the pupils, paying keen interest and making follow up on the pupils. The interviewees were asked to share on how they showed support and acceptance to pupils with LD. Some of their responses are as stated below; T3: *"I sensitize other learners to accept and give them support. I offer them support by breaking class work into manageable units and giving them extra time to complete their work"*. Another teacher had the following to say;

T8: *"I give them activities according to their abilities and give them more attention"*.

The findings from both the analysis and interviews reveal that special education teachers in the inclusive schools under study had a positive relationship with the pupils with LD. This is evident from the responses they gave on how they related with the pupils.

It is thus important for teachers to engage in positive relationships with their pupils in school. One way this has been achieved in Kisumu East Sub County is through the programs by Leonard Cheshire Disability Organization, which provides teachers with training on how to foster positive relationships with their pupils.

CONCLUSION

From the findings on the influence of parent child relationship on psychological adjustment of pupils with LDs, it was concluded that pupils with both parents have a healthier relationship with their parents than pupils with single parents. It was also concluded that pupils with mothers alone psychologically adjust better than pupils with fathers alone. However, it was generally concluded that strong parental relationship with a child with LDs always results into overall psychological adjustment irrespective of the gender of the parent; that is, pupils with LDs adjust better when they have a strong positive relationship with the parents.

On the relationship with teachers and psychological adjustment, it was concluded that with improved cordial teacher pupil relationship there is an increase in overall psychological adjustment. This was concluded to mean that pupils with LDs adjust better when they have a strong positive relationship with their teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given that parent child relationship has an influence on psychological adjustment, it is recommended that

awareness creation and sensitization on prevalence and manifestations of LDs be encouraged so that more parents can take their children for assessment and develop positive relationships with them.

Even though special education teachers seem to be offering support to the pupils with LDs, the study recommends that the government trains and posts more special education teachers to the inclusive schools for pupils with LDs to benefit more.

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