



East African Journal of Education Studies

eajes.eanso.org

Volume 7, Issue 4, 2024

Print ISSN: 2707-3939 | Online ISSN: 2707-3947

Title DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37284/2707-3947>

ENSO
EAST AFRICAN
NATURE &
SCIENCE
ORGANIZATION

Original Article

The Impact of Teaching Materials for Pupils with Mental Disorders in Public Primary Schools at Mvomero District Council, Tanzania

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Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.7.4.2261>

Date Published: **ABSTRACT**

01 October 2024

Keywords:

Pupils,
Mental Disorders,
Teaching,
Teaching Materials.

The study aimed to examine the impact of teaching materials for pupils with mental disorders in public primary schools. The study employed a mixed approach and a case study design, and the social cognitive theory was used as a guiding tool. A sample size of 20 respondents was drawn from 30 populations through purposive and simple sampling technique. The data collection methods were through interviews, observation and questionnaire. Descriptive statistical analysis and content analysis were used to analyze the collected data. The study revealed that, there is shortage of teaching materials like text books, game puzzles, visual aids, audio visual, video visual and building blocks as indicated in selected four public primary school at Mvomero District Council, where each learner has different level of mental disorders. The study concludes that the government should provide a sufficient fund to these public primary schools so that pupils with mental disorders get better education services and conducive environment which will facilitate all teachers and pupils to improve teaching and learning process.

APA CITATION

Mwaijande, E. & Ismail, J. H. (2024). The Impact of Teaching Materials for Pupils with Mental Disorders in Public Primary Schools at Mvomero District Council, Tanzania. *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 7(4), 172-181. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.7.4.2261>

CHICAGO CITATION

Mwaijande, Euben and Joseph Hokororo Ismail. 2024. "The Impact of Teaching Materials for Pupils with Mental Disorders in Public Primary Schools at Mvomero District Council, Tanzania". *East African Journal of Education Studies* 7 (4), 172-181. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.7.4.2261>

HARVARD CITATION

Mwaijande, E. & Ismail, J. H. (2024) "The Impact of Teaching Materials for Pupils with Mental Disorders in Public Primary Schools at Mvomero District Council, Tanzania", *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 7(4), pp. 172-181. doi: 10.37284/eajes.7.4.2261.

IEEE CITATION

E. Mwaijande & J. H. Ismail "The Impact of Teaching Materials for Pupils with Mental Disorders in Public Primary Schools at Mvomero District Council, Tanzania" *EAJES*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 172-181, Oct. 2024. doi: 10.37284/eajes.7.4.2261.

MLA CITATION

Mwaijande, Euben & Joseph Hokororo Ismail. "The Impact of Teaching Materials for Pupils with Mental Disorders in Public Primary Schools at Mvomero District Council, Tanzania". *East African Journal of Education Studies*, Vol. 7, no. 4, Oct. 2024, pp. 172-181, doi:10.37284/eajes.7.4.2261

INTRODUCTION

Human rights constitute a prominent issue in the international agreements and great initiatives are taken from the Non-governmental Organizations and governments worldwide for the protection of the rights of all the people, regardless of the specific characteristics they might possess (UNESCO, 2006). Despite of specific groups of people still experience segregation and marginalization due to their gender, socio-economic background, cultural and religion background and special physical or mental ability (Kavouni, 2016). Article 26 of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "everyone has the right to education" and "education shall be free, at least in elementary and fundamental stage". This right is also enshrined in the constitutional of all independent nations like Tanzania.

Worldwide, the history of special education shows that persons with disabilities have always been there, but they were not given education that addresses their special needs. In ancient days, persons with disabilities were rejected and isolated from other members of their communities. The concept and call to educate every child to achieve his or her greatest potential is a very unique one by estimate, 93 million children under age of 14 or 15.1% of the world's children were living with a moderate or severe disability in 2004 (Tungaraza, 2012). According to the world health survey in 14 or 15 low- or middle-income countries, disabled people of working age were about one-third less likely to have completed primary school. For example, Bangladesh, 30% of people with disability had completed primary school, compared with 48% of those with no disabilities. The corresponding shares were 43% and 57% in Zambia, 56% and 72% in Paraguay (Jstor, 2022).

In Tanzania primary education for learners with mental disorders was started by the government in 1982 at Lulindi primary school in Mtwara region. In 2009 there were five schools and 148 special education units that delivered services to learners with mental disorders. In Tanzania's 2002 National policy on Disability makes clear that educators and other service providers should be trained to identify each student's unique learning and developmental

needs and create an individualized education plan with appropriate accommodations and adaptations as necessary. The policy indicates Tanzania is committed to provide individualized, appropriate education and supports learners and other citizens with disabilities (Thompson, 2017). Morogoro is among the regions of Tanzania having several primary schools which provides special education to children with special needs. There are about 84 special education schools in Morogoro region as per information given by Rentech Digital on 9th January, 2024. Out of 84 special education primary schools, 26 schools are from Mvomero District Council (<https://rentechdigital.com>Tanzania>).

Tanzanian government has made a great progress towards achieving primary education targets and support students with disabilities. Challenges remain in monitoring and evaluation mechanism particularly in teaching and learning for learners with mental disorders. Various researchers such as Udoba (2014), Mayaru (2015), Thomson (2017), and Mutugi (2018) have conducted studies on challenges facing teachers while teaching learners with mental disorders but no research has been conducted on the impact of teaching materials to learners with mental disorders during teaching and learning process. Mvomero is among of the District in Tanzania having public primary schools which enroll pupils with mental disorders. Now it is the researcher's contention that if there is neglect on the issue of availability of teaching materials for pupils with mental disorders in public primary schools where they are normally enrolled, they will be left out in the education system in Tanzania. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the availability of teaching materials for pupils with mental disorders whether corresponds with the number of pupils in selected public primary schools at Mvomero District Council.

The findings from this study will help to inform the government and other education stakeholders to know the possible solutions for provision of enough teaching materials for pupils with mental disorders. The study also provides knowledge and skills to the researchers and other readers of the research work. Finally, it will enable educational planners and policy makers to make plans and come up with new

strategies on how to motivate teachers who teach learners with mental disorders.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Empirical review

This section reviews the related literature on the impact of teaching materials to pupils with mental disorders

Before we move the discussion further, there is a need to define the term mental disorder. Mental disorder is any illness with significance psychological or behavioral manifestations that is associated with either a painful or distressing symptom or impairment in one or more important areas of functioning (Claiborne et al., 2024). Mental disorder can also be defined as a syndrome that causes significant disturbances in behavior, emotion and cognition. These disorders usually accompanied by significant distress that affects a person's work, school, and social relationship (Cherry, 2022). Therefore, this article considers mental disorder as a human mental deviation that can affect one's ability to perform certain supposed duty as expected.

The specific symptoms for a person with mental disorder might experience depends on the nature of the mental health condition they are experiencing. Some of the symptoms that a person might experience include anxiety, changes in behavior, changes in mood, depression or feelings of sadness, fatigue or low energy, trouble concentrating, changes in appetite. Anxiety disorders are characterized by excessive fear and worry and related behavioral disturbances. Symptoms are severe enough to result in significant impairment in functioning. There are several different categories of anxiety disorders, such as: generalized anxiety disorder (characterized by excessive worry), panic disorder (characterized by panic attacks), social anxiety disorder (characterized by excessive fear and worry in social situations), separation anxiety disorder (characterized by excessive fear or anxiety about separation from those individuals to whom the person has a deep emotional bond), and others. Effective psychological treatment exists, and depending on the age and severity, medication may also be considered. Depression is different from usual mood fluctuations and short-lived emotional

responses to challenges in everyday life. During a depressive incident, the person experiences unhappy mood (feeling sad, irritable, and empty) or a loss of pleasure or interest in activities, for most of the day, nearly every day, for at least two weeks. Yet, effective psychological treatment exists, and depending on the age and severity, medication may also be considered (Felman, 2024)

The prevalence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental disorders is high in conflict-affected settings. PTSD may develop following experience to an extremely threatening or series of events. It is characterized by all of the following; re-experiencing the traumatic event or events in the present (intrusive memories, flashbacks, or nightmares); avoidance of thoughts and memories of the event(s), or avoidance of activities, situations, and persistent perceptions of discriminating current threat. These symptoms persist for at least several weeks and cause significant impairment in functioning. Effective psychological treatment exists. Neuro development disorders are behavioral and cognitive disorders that arise during the developmental period, and involve significant difficulties in the acquisition and execution of specific intellectual, motor, language, or social functions. Neuro-developmental disorders include disorders of intellectual development, autism spectrum disorder, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) amongst others. Effective treatment options exist including psychosocial interventions, behavioural interventions, occupational and speech therapy. For certain diagnoses and age groups, medication may also be considered (American Psychiatric Association, 2022)

Tumbo (2011) conducted a study on teachers' attitudes and support towards teaching pupils with intellectual impairment in Tanzania schools in Dare-es-salaam. The purpose of the study was to investigate and identify the attitudes of teachers towards pupils with intellectual impairment. The Tumbo's study revealed that, there was shortage of teaching facilities and learning facilities where it was so difficult for pupils with intellectual impairment to learn smoothly.

Godwin (2013) research work show that there is a problem in teaching learners with special needs, which is the results of different factors, including little attention of the teachers in classrooms when teaching and learning taking place, and because of this most students especially who are in need of special education get difficulties to go to schools especially in the schools which is inclusive. The Godwin's study is relevant because one among of the prevailing challenge especially in those public schools which are inclusive there is insufficient learning and teaching facilities for the pupils with mental disorders where the researcher aimed to investigate the strategies to be adopted by schools to ensure these pupils acquire the education services like other pupils with no any kind of disorders because are their human rights to acquire education regardless of their diversities.

Kavishe (2017), Asmaveedu (2018) and Rwegoshora (2016) revealed that, educational institutions required catering for the needs of all children who hail from different sections of society and include pupils from different backgrounds, with diverse interests, potential, needs and learning styles. However, there are always children among these who do not achieve as quickly as expected. These children may be considered as lazy and it is perhaps concluded by the respective establishments that it is impossible to teach them. Mvomero is among of the District in Tanzania having public primary schools which enroll pupils with mental disorders. Now it is the researcher's contention that if there is neglect on the issue of teaching materials for pupils with mental disorders in public primary schools where they are normally enrolled, they will be left out in the education system in Tanzania. Therefore, the objective of this study was to examine the impact of teaching materials for pupils with mental disorders in selected public primary schools at Mvomero District Council.

Theoretical Framework

In this study social cognitive theory was used to guide the study. The theory was developed by Albert Bandura 1986. This theory originally was known as social learning theory, then later on changed to social cognitive theory. The basic foundation of social cognitive theory is that a person's behaviors are the

consequence of three common factors. These are behaviors, personal characteristics, and the environment. Modeling, observing and copying behavior are key elements of social cognitive theory. Teachers' behavior has a very significant impact on student behavior. What teachers do is closely scrutinized by students, thus it is critical that teachers should demonstrate desired behavior. Pupils learn best through observation and imitating when there is diverse teaching materials such as text books, educational videos, and other interactive materials that demonstrate problem- solving (Ormrod, 2014).

In relation to the study, the availability of teaching materials influences not only how pupils learn but also how teachers teach. Teachers with access to a wide range of teaching materials can adapt their instructional methods to meet the diverse needs of their pupils, leading to more effective teaching and better learning outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Morogoro region, specifically at Mvomero district council. The researcher employed mixed research approach to guide the study. This approach was used because it provides in-depth information about the impact of teaching materials for pupils with mental disorder. The case study design was used in this study since the researcher used a single area (Mvomero District Council) to collect data. The study involved a sample of four public primary schools at Mvomero District council in Morogoro region. Where the choice of schools was based on the number of schools with more than 20 pupils in the class. Sampling simplifies faster data collection and reduces expenses of the study to the researcher compared if could collect data to the whole population. The sample size of this study consisted of twenty (20) respondents that means fifteen (15) were teachers, four (4) were Head Teachers, and one (1) District Education Officer for special education as calculated from Yamane formula. Where Head Teachers and District Education Officer for pupils with special needs were selected purposively while teacher who teach pupils with mental disorders were selected by simple random sampling. Data were collected through interviews with Teachers teaching pupils with mental Disorders, and questionnaire was used to

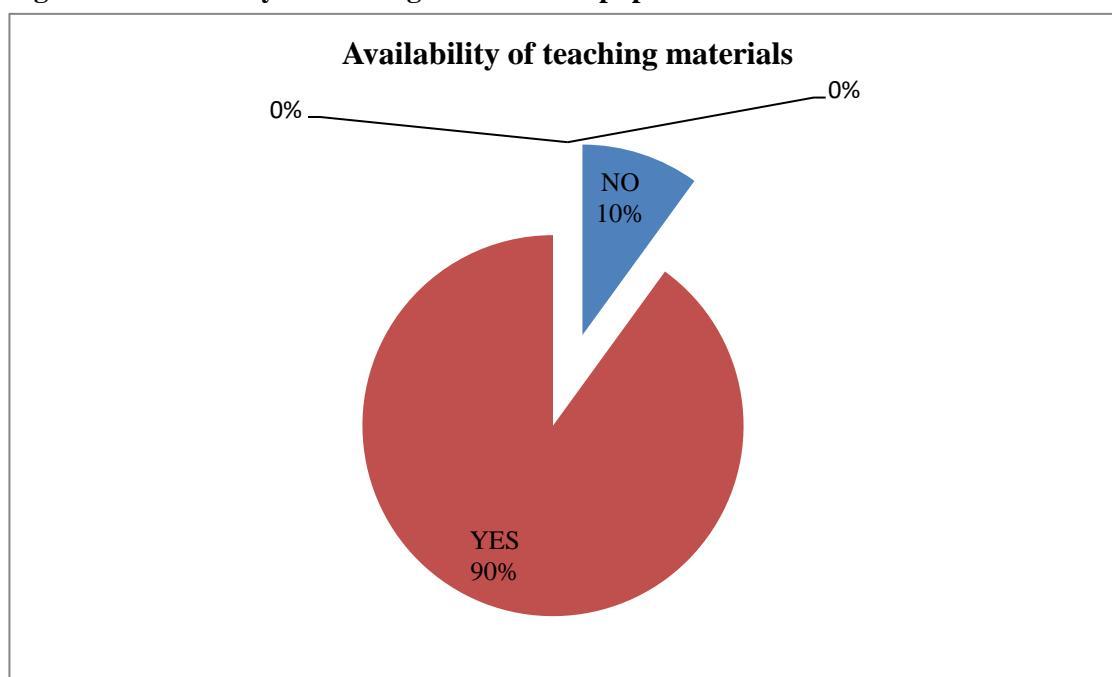
collect data from Head Teachers and District Education Officer through presenting questions. Also, observations method was done through checklist by observing the presence of correspondence work cards, pictures, audio visual aids, game puzzles, charts, picture, and visual aids in the classrooms.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This paper focused on analyzing the impact of the teaching materials for pupils with mental disorders

of which the respondents were asked whether the school has teaching materials for pupils with mental disorder. The findings from questionnaire revealed 70% of the respondents agreed that teaching materials are available and has an impact in supporting the teaching and learning process for pupils with mental disorder, as shown in figure (1) below;

Figure 1: Availability of teaching materials for pupils with mental disorder



Source: Field data, 2024

In figure (1) indicates that, there are teaching materials for pupils with mental disorders as (70%) agrees with the presence of teaching and learning materials. Let us now push the discussion by explains several teaching materials that have been considered in this paper.

Visual Aid

Visual aids are materials, such as pictures, charts; diagrams that help pupils understand and remember information shared in an oral presentation, keep an audience interested in presentation, and facilitate to retain information in long-term memory. One of the respondents from primary school “A” revealed the presence of visual aids to support teaching process

for pupils with teaching disorder where the respondent stated that;

“Ooooh, you know what? In our school we have pupils with mental disorders, so in teaching our pupils we use visual aids to smoothen the teaching process to them. The visual aids guide our pupils and increase the memory retention” (Respondent 1, 2024)

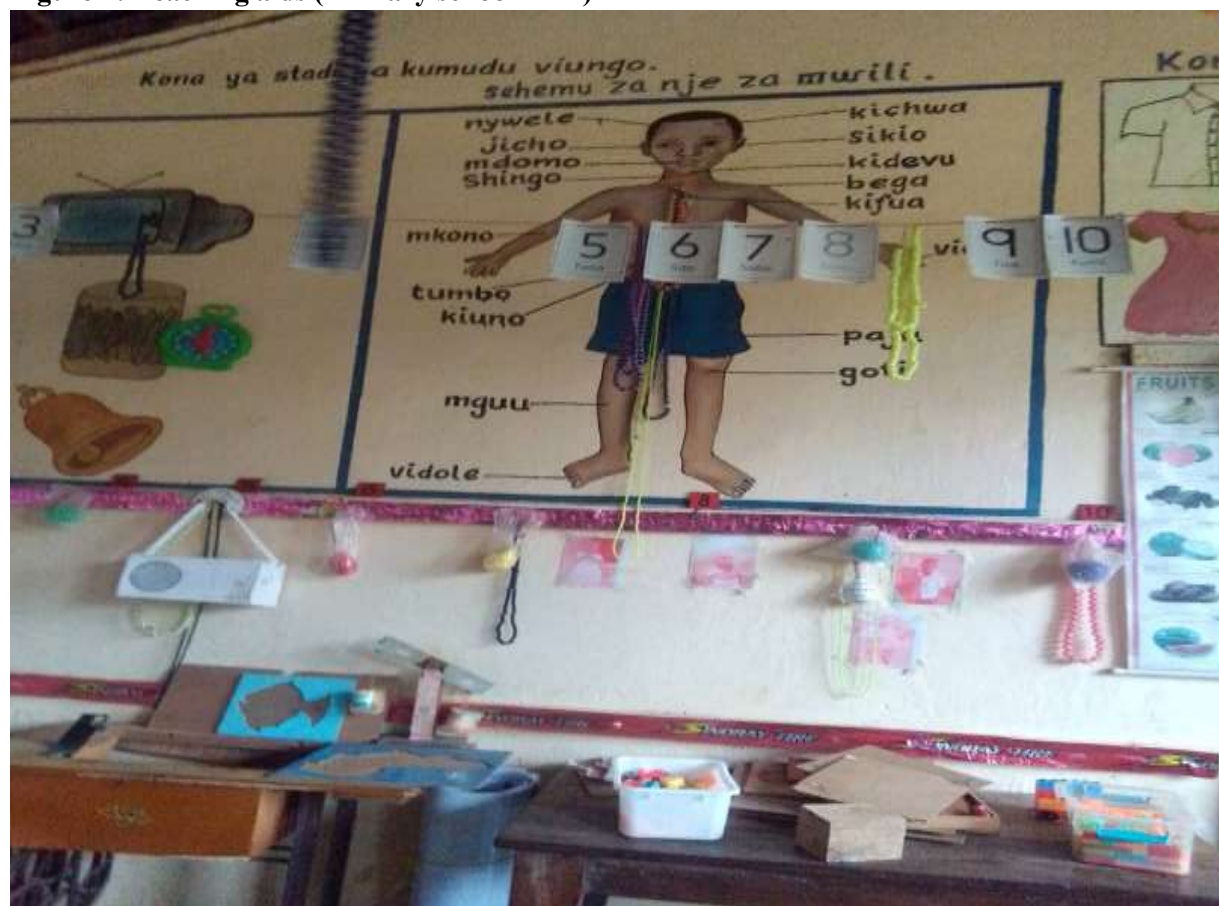
Furthermore, in primary school “C” the respondent recommended that visual aids help in smooth learning process. The respondents mentioned some of visual aids such as charts, diagrams and pictures that play a great role in motivating learners with mental disorders. As stated by one of the respondent from school “C” that,

“...in our school, we have a lot of the teaching and learning materials. The children are able to get access to them and handle them and it helps in their learning and improves their understanding. Visual aids like charts, diagrams and pictures serve as the reminder for what have been taught to them. Also the visual aid like classrooms charts serve as instructional materials for creating an interactive and

inclusive atmosphere and also play a great role in influencing the process of teaching to be well, specifically to the pupils with mental disorders”
(Respondent 5, 2024)

Moreover, the findings from the observation, revealed the presence of visual aids like, pictures promote the teaching process for the pupils with mental disorders as indicated in the figure below:

Figure 2: Teaching aids (Primary school “A”)



Source: Field data, 2024

In the teaching process using an aid as indicated in the figure (2), can clearly add the level of understanding and mastery of the subject matter to learners as compared in teaching theoretically alone. The effective of teaching and learning through

picture observation was supported by R 5, who has this to say:

More examples on the effectiveness of the use of teaching aid as an important aspect in any teaching can be observed in the following figure 4.3.3;

Figure 3: Teaching aid (Primary school “B”)



Source: Field Data (2024)

In illustration (3) can be commented that the teaching process can be more effective by direct observation than learning by listening alone, thus improving learning process.

The effective of teaching and learning through picture observation was supported by R 3, from school “B” who has this to say:

Learners always enjoy when they see wall pictures and practice reading some letters through learning singing, this make them to have

long term memory and easy remember the taught subjects.” (Respondent 6, 2024)

This finding was also noted by Frimpong (2021) argues that teachers’ ability to meaningfully use teaching and learning aids in their lessons and to create the necessary environment and opportunities for their children to have access to the teaching and learning materials and to manipulate them is crucial for the better understanding of the lesson. Therefore, if teaching and learning materials are available but only the teacher is allowed to handle them during the

teaching and learning process, it can be said that teaching and learning materials have been used but without necessarily being accessible to children to bring about quality learning outcome. Hence, availability and accessibility of teaching and learning materials are important in teaching pupils with mental disorders.

Similarly, Yavuz and Guzel (2020) revealed that better knowledge and skill acquisition can be developed through hands-on activity or learning by doing. The implication of this is that, the success in the teaching and learning process could be influenced by the resources made available to support it and the direct ways in which these resources are used.

This objective is supported by the theory of learning by doing which places heavy emphasize on pupils engagement and is a hand on, task oriented and process to education. The theory requires the learner actively participate in more practical and imaginative way of learning.

Simplified text books

This is among of the teaching materials which need to be available to support the teaching process to pupils with mental disorders in selected public primary schools. The simplified text books provide the simplified version of the texts or instructions to accommodate different cognitive abilities for the pupils with mental disorders. It was revealed that teachers who teach pupils with mental disorders do not have specific books for teaching these learners. One of the interviewees in primary school “A” stated that;

“Hahaa..., you know what, during teaching and learning process, learners are given by alternating the available teaching and learning materials, so there is no specific book to teach pupils with mental disorders instead teachers use books for standard one to teach by basing on the skills needed” (Respondent 2, 2024)

The respondents from primary school “C” revealed also there are no specific text books to teach pupils with mental disorders instead they use standard one text books to teach them by selecting a specific area that are relevant to skills required by the pupil to be taught, this becomes difficult basing on the capacity

differences. Where one of the interviewees commented that;

“Although other teaching materials in our school are sufficient to accommodate all pupils with mental disorders, but the issue of text books for learners with mental disorders is a challenge for effective teaching due to the fact that the books which are used are standard ones. Hence we use syllabus to extract specific lesson to teach learners of a certain level” (Respondent 5, 2024)

While the findings differ with the data from public primary school “D” where there is shortage of teaching materials in their schools and absence of text books especial for teachings pupils with mental disorders, where the interviewee stated that;

“Although, the government promotes the issues of inclusive education, still there is prevailing problems for our school to implement this slogan. There isa shortage of teaching materials to accommodate all pupils with mental disorder because of absence of text books for our pupils. Also, there are few building blocks and game puzzles which led to the difficulties in teaching pupils” (Respondent 7, 2024)

Interactive games

These also are teaching materials for pupils with mental disorders in primary schools at Mvomero District Council. This includes the game puzzles and audio recordings which involve the use of audio materials to present information and instructions which can be beneficial for auditory learners. This helped pupils because of interactive activities to make teaching and learning process more engaging and enjoyable. The findings from the questionnaire revealed that 85% of the schools had game puzzles to support the teaching and learning process for pupils with mental disorders.

The teaching materials are very important for pupils with mental disorders in public primary school. The worldwide agenda in academic arena is to promote the inclusive education to ensure even children with disabilities attend schools. The pupils with mental disorder are supposed to attend school. This study conquers with the findings from study of Tumbo (2011) who revealed that, there is shortage of

teaching facilities and learning facilities where it was so difficult for pupils with intellectual impairment to learn smoothly in selected schools in Dar es Salaam. Likewise, the study of Godwin (2013) research work shows that there is a problem in teaching pupils with special needs.

In addition the study of Hu et al. (2014) who revealed that, if the children don't have access to the play items or teaching and learning materials when they want or during a lesson, they may end up struggling among themselves to have access and this may put their minds under stress

Furthermore Frimpong (2021) suggested that teachers and providers of special need education should ensure that teaching and learning materials are made available and accessible to learners to interact with. Teachers should also devise innovative ways of creating and developing teaching and learning materials from their locality. Moreover, they should encourage and promote children's active interaction with the teaching and learning materials is a sure way of achieving learning.

The implication from the response is that a teacher has to be careful during distribution of playing materials (items) in order to get the attention of every learner in the classroom. This may mean that there should be enough time or enough play items so that within the shortest possible time, every child can have a reasonable time to interact with the play items. The responses again suggest that teaching and learning materials should not only be available and accessible but also there should be enough of them such that every child can have access to the teaching and learning materials whenever there is the need.

Certainly, if materials are available then one could consider the accessibility by learners, but as it were, they were non-existent or in limited supply. Also, if the materials are not available, the teachers cannot have them to aid their teaching and the learners' contact with the material will equally be limited. It comes out quite clearly through this study that sometimes participants may know what is good and or right but circumstances may prevent them from practicing what is good or what is right. For example, the participants appreciated the use of teaching and learning materials and learners' opportunity to manipulate them as key to ensuring

quality education provision but they could not position themselves to ensure active manipulation by learners because the material were either in short supply or unavailable

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, on the impact of teaching materials for pupils with mental disorders in public primary schools at Mvomero district council. The study shows that there is shortage of teaching materials like game puzzles, visual aids, audio visual, video visual, and text books as indicated in selected four public primary schools at Mvomero District Council.

The government should increase fund for these schools which provide educational services to pupils with mental disorders and conducive environment should be ensured to all teachers and pupils to improve the teaching and learning process among pupils with mental disorder. The government should hire more teachers who teach special education in order to reduce the teacher- pupil ratio.

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