

**SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS INFLUENCING ACCESS TO  
PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION BY FEMALE LEARNERS  
WHO ARE PHYSICALLY DISABLED IN KISUMU EAST  
WARD, KISUMU COUNTY KENYA**

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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY**

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## DECLARATION

### Declaration by the Candidate

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

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### Declaration by the Supervisors

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors.

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my husband Daniel Odhiambo Ngota and my children Richard, Robert, Ruth, Mary and Harriet who willingly submitted their efforts to witness the success of my work.

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## ABSTRACT

Education is one of the basic human rights. The right to education has been enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Girl child education was identified as the most urgent priority at the World Conference on Education For All, held in Jomtein (1990). This includes the rights of females who are physically disabled. The rights of people with disabilities is a growing phenomenon Worldwide. Female learners who are physically disabled have constraints in attaining their academic endeavors, which would enable them to be self-reliant. Records from a special school for the physically disabled in Kisumu county shows that among the males and females who register in class one, very few females with physical disabilities complete primary education as compared to the males, yet socio-cultural factors influencing their access to primary education are not well understood. The overall objective was to examine socio-cultural factors influencing access to primary schools education by female learners who are physically disabled in Kisumu East ward. The specific objectives of the study were, to establish the attitudes of female learners who are physically disabled towards education, explore the household factors that influence access to education by female learners who are physically disabled and assess the community's attitude towards provision of education to females who are physically disabled in Kisumu East Ward. The study was guided by Social exclusion theory by Burchant, Le Grand and Pichaud (2006). The study population included females who were physically disabled below twenty five years of age in Kisumu East Ward whose current number had not been established. The study used descriptive research design. The starting point was interviews with 10 teachers and 20 individual interviews with female learners who were physically disabled in a school. One hundred females who were physically disabled were finally selected, 40 female learners in school were selected using purposive sampling procedure and 60 females out of school were selected using snowball sampling procedure until saturation. Qualitative data was analyzed through ethnographic methods of thematic analysis. The data was presented using texts and verbatim quotations. Quantitative data was coded and analyzed using relevant descriptive Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 and was presented through tables and charts. The findings showed that, females with physical disabilities had negative attitude towards their own education. Due to financial constraints in most of the families of females with physical disabilities and the fact that their education was more expensive than their able bodied siblings, they were left at home while others went to school. Females with physical disabilities who were orphaned had no one to take them to school. It was also realized that social barriers as well as physical barriers posed many difficulties in accessing education by females with physical disabilities. The study recommends that; females with physical disabilities should be exposed to female role models with physical disabilities who have gone through education and are successful enough to be emulated, sensitization should be conducted by the government to make the community aware of the cultures that hinder developments and their responsibility towards provision of services to persons with disabilities and reinforce policy formulation that may positively influence access to education by females who are physically disabled.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

Declaration.....	i
Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Table of Content.....	v
List of Tables.....	ix
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms.....	x
<b>CHAPTER ONE</b> .....	1
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	6
1.3 Research Questions.....	7
1.4 Research Objectives.....	8
1.5 Justification.....	8
1.6 Scope of the Study.....	10
1.7 Theoretical Framework.....	10
1.8 Operational Definition of Terms.....	13
<b>CHAPTER TWO</b> .....	14
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	14
2.1 Introduction.....	14
2.2 Socio-cultural factors influencing the Attitudes of Females with Physical Disabilities towards Education.....	15
2.3 Household factors that Influence the Access to Education by Females who are physically disabled.....	22

2.4 Community’s Attitude towards Education of Females with Physical Disabilities .	26
2.5 Role of the Government in increasing Access to Education.....	34
<b>CHAPTER THREE</b> .....	37
<b>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b> .....	37
3.1 Study Design.....	37
3.2 Study Area .....	37
3.3 Study Population.....	38
3.4 Sampling and Sampling Procedure .....	38
3.5 Instruments of Data Collection .....	39
3.5.1 Questionnaires.....	39
3.5.2 Interview Schedules .....	40
3.5.3 Focus Group Discussions ( FGDs) .....	40
3.5.4 Documentary Evidence .....	41
3.5.6 Data Analysis .....	42
3.6 Ethical Considerations .....	43
<b>CHAPTER FOUR</b> .....	45
<b>SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY</b>	
<b>POPULATION AND THE ATTITUDE OF GIRLS WITH PHYSICAL</b>	
<b>CHALLENGES TOWARDS EDUCATION</b> .....	45
Introduction.....	45
4.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents.....	45
4.2 Attitude of Females with Physical Disabilities towards Education .....	46
4.2.1 Importance of Education .....	46
4.2.2 Academic Performance of Females with Physical Disabilities .....	51
4.2.3 Reasons for Dropping out of School.....	56

4.2.4 Career Choice.....	60
Conclusion .....	62
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>HOUSEHOLD FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ACCESS TO EDUCATION OF</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>FEMALES WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES .....</b>	<b>63</b>
Introduction.....	63
5.1 Family Income .....	63
5.2 Family Cohesion among the Females with Physical Disabilities .	66
5.3 Parents’ Level of Education.....	71
5.4 Orphanhood.....	73
5.5 Distance to School .....	76
Conclusion .....	78
<b>CHAPTER SIX .....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>COMMUNITY’S ATTITUDE TOWARDS EDUCATION FOR FEMALES.....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES .....</b>	<b>80</b>
Introduction.....	80
6.1 Community’s Assistance towards Education for Females with Physical Disabilities .....	80
6.2 Schools Attended by Females with Physical Disabilities .....	83
<b>CHAPTER SEVEN.....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>90</b>
Introduction.....	90
7.1 Summary.....	90
7.2 Conclusions.....	92
7.3 Recommendations.....	94



<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	96
<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	104
Appendix I: Introduction Letter .....	104
Appendix II: Sample Written Consent Forms for Parents of Females with Physical Disabilities .....	105
Appendix III: Focus Group Discussion Questions .....	106
Appendix IV: Sample Written Consent Forms for Females with Physical Disabilities in School .....	107
Appendix V: Focus Group Discussion Questions .....	108
Appendix VI: Sample Written Consent forms for Females with Physical Disabilities who are out of School .....	109
Appendix VII: Focus Group Discussion Questions .....	110
Appendix VIII: Questionnaire for Females with Physical Disabilities .....	111
Appendix IX: Interview Schedule for Parents of Females with Physical Disabilities whose Daughters are in School.....	119
Appendix X: In-Depth Interviews for Parents of Females with Physical disabilities whose Daughters are not in School.....	124
Appendix XI : Interview Schedule for Females with Physical Disabilities who are In School .....	126
Appendix XII: Interview Schedule for Teachers in a Special School for the Physically Disabled.....	130
Appendix XIII: In-Depth Interview Guide for Females with Physical Disabilities ..	133
Appendix XIV: Interview Schedule for (Key Informants, Education Officers, Chiefs, and Religious Leaders) .....	135

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Responses on Whether Education Is Important.....	47
Table 4.2: Academic Performance of Females with Physical Disabilities .....	52
Table 4.3: Reasons for Dropping out of School .....	56
Table 4.4: Career Choice of Girls with Physical Challenges.....	60
Table 5.1: Source of Income .....	63
Table 5.2: Caretakers of the Girls .....	66
Table 5.3: Level of Education of Parents of Females with Physical Disabilities .....	71
Table 5.4: Parental status of the Females with Physical Disabilities.....	74
Table 5.5: The Response on the Types of Schools the Girls Attended.....	76
Table 6.1: Community's Assistance in Fee Payment .....	80
Table 6.2: Schools Attended by Females with Physical Disabilities.....	83

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>APDK</b>	-	Association of Physically Disabled in Kenya
<b>CBR</b>	-	Community Based Rehabilitation
<b>CWDs</b>	-	Children with Disabilities
<b>DEO</b>	-	District Education Officer
<b>DPO</b>	-	Disabled Peoples Organization
<b>EARS</b>	-	Educational Assessment and Resource Services
<b>FAWE</b>	-	Forum for African Women Educationalists
<b>KDHS</b>	-	Kenya Demographic and Health Survey
<b>KICD</b>	-	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
<b>KSPH</b>	-	Kenya Society of the Physically Handicapped
<b>MDG</b>	-	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MGSCSS</b>	-	Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services
<b>MOEST</b>	-	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
<b>NGPWD</b>	-	National Council of People with Disabilities
<b>NGO</b>	-	Non Governmental Organization
<b>PWDs</b>	-	People with Disabilities
<b>SDO</b>	-	Social Development Officers
<b>SNE</b>	-	Special Needs Education
<b>UDPK</b>	-	The United Disabled Persons of Kenya
<b>UN</b>	-	United Nations
<b>UNESCO</b>	-	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNICEF</b>	-	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>WHO</b>	-	World Health Organization

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Education is one of the basic human rights to all, including females who are physically disabled. This right has been enshrined in the universal declaration of human rights (1948) and was clearly stipulated in article 26 of (2003) of the Education Act of Kenya which emphasized the right to education for everyone. The Dakar framework for action on Education For All (2000), re-affirmed the goal of EFA as laid down by Jomtein and facilitated towards specific Education for All by 2015. This is also stipulated in the Millennium Development Goal number two (2) and three (3) respectively. The Millennium Development goal number two is to achieve universal primary education by ensuring that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. Goal number three is to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education and at all levels of education not later than 2015. This transits to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDS) which is an intergovernmental set of aspiration Goals with 169 targets that while acting as the post 2015 Development Agenda (successor to the Millennium Development Goals), builds on the principles agreed upon which includes Education For All.

Statistics by the United Nations (2002) indicate that out of the estimated world population of 6 million people, 1 million suffer moderate to severe forms of physically disability. Globally, people with physical disabilities are considered socially and physically less capable of performing activities as compared to able bodied persons, in many cultures, attitudes towards a disability may include religious

acceptance, people may also believe that a disability is caused by factors such as the influence of past lives, mystical intervention or the past sins committed by parents (Thomas and Thomas, 2000).

According to Frankline (2000), globally, girls with physical disabilities are the most excluded children in accessing education. According to Asch, Rousso and Jefferies (2001) girls with disabilities are a large, diverse groups whose educational needs have gone unnoticed by those committed to either gender equity or disability equity. This could be due to widespread cultural biases based on gender and disability. Since physical disabilities often occur in combination with other disabilities, it is hard to determine their prevalence. The World Report on Disability (WHO, 2011) states that the correlation between low educational outcomes and disability is stronger than for any other marginalizing characteristic. Both social and physical barriers are factors that prevent girls with disabilities from obtaining the benefits of education (Rossou, 2000). According to Nyarko (2003), persistence of certain cultural, legal and institutional barriers make women and girls with disabilities the victims of two fold discrimination; as women and as persons with disabilities. "Girls and women of all ages with any form of disability are among the more vulnerable and marginalized of society.

In Southern Asia, gender equity is a problem for a large majority of women, given the socio-cultural practices and traditional attitudes of society (Palmer, 2007). Like most African countries, in India each sex is expected to perform different gender roles in the society. These roles are determined by historical, religious, ideological ethnic, economic and cultural factors (UNESCO 2002). In these societies, boys are expected

to work outside the house, go to school, earn a living and support the family. On the other hand, girls are judged according to their physical appearance and ability to take care of a home. Traditionally girls were expected to take the responsibility for all domestic chores such as cooking, fetching water, washing clothes and utensils among others (Deabester, 2003). Although both boys and girls with physical disabilities would face difficulties in fulfilling their expected gender roles, boys were usually taken to schools, while girls were left to attend to house chores (UNICEF 2001). The studies however did not have any information on the community's expectations on educational achievements of both males and females with physical disabilities.

The tendency to deny girls with physical disabilities the right to education in most African countries marks a persistent characteristic in many societies (MGSCSS, 2005). This could be as a result of cultural practices and beliefs about gender roles in many of the societies. The stigma about disability in Kenya is partly due to cultural beliefs and misconceptions about the causes of disabilities (Randiki, 2003). Children with physical disabilities have been commonly considered a punishment from God, in Kenya (Nicole, 2010). In most cultures, children with physical disabilities are seen as cursed or possessed by evil spirits. They are considered not to be in need of any education (Randiki, 2003). In many communities in Africa, it is still a practice that girls with physical disabilities are hidden in the homes and are excluded from accessing education (Coleridge, 2000). According to estimates recorded by UNESCO (2006), 55 million girls in Africa still do not attend schools. This is a clear indication that the commitment to achieve the Education for All goals may not easily be achieved in the near future. Despite the rights of the persons' with disabilities being a growing phenomenon, education of girls who are physically disabled in particular

have been denied. Even though considerable progress has been made in promoting gender equality in accessing basic education by increasing girls enrollment, retention and completion of primary education. The persons with disability Act (2003) in Kenya proposes the establishment of equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in obtaining education, employment and participation in everyday activities within their communities. However, girls with physical disabilities in particular have been a neglected lot. This could have been as a result of the community's attitude towards disability and gender, the lack of available data surrounding this issue demonstrates that there is negligence in finding ways of improvements in the sector of education by females with physical disabilities.

Girls with physical disabilities in Kenya not only represent a crucial sector of the marginalized population, but also face special problems as a result of their disabilities (Nicole, 2010). Many girls with physical disabilities have no access to education, health, employment and rehabilitation. The majority experience hardships as a result of in built socio-cultural and economic prejudice, stigmatization and, more often, abuse and violence (Coleridge, 2000). The reference of people with physical disabilities especially in Kiswahili such as “*Kilema*” (cripple) portray them as objects thereby viewing them as lesser beings (Randiki, 2003). Education of girls with physical disabilities in Kenya has been characterized by neglect, inequality and mistreatment (Nicole, 2010). Despite the Kenya government’s efforts of promoting the development of Special Needs Education, in the new constitution with the National Development Plan (2002-2008), which focuses on strengthening vocational rehabilitation centers for people with physical disabilities and affirmative action in areas of employment, vocational training and education, there has been an outcry on

practices that contribute to inaccessibility to education by persons who are physically disabled Smith, Polloway, Patton and Dowdy (2001). There has been little attention paid nationally to investigating and addressing the household factors that influence access to education by girls with physical disabilities in Kenya.

In the Luo community, children born with disability were believed to be either cursed or to be a consequence of past sins committed by their parents (Randiki, 2003). For women in the Luo society, having a physical disability portrays a disability which signifies dependency. Any girl who is physically disabled and chooses to fight this demeaning stereotype in the society has an uphill lonely battle. In the community, many parents believe that boys are more intelligent than girls and so are better educational investments than girls (Odaga & Henveld, 2006). Boys therefore are favoured as the prime beneficiaries of family assets.

In Kisumu East Ward, many girls who are physically disabled are vulnerable to lack of access to educational services. However, despite the high number of the girls who are physically disabled but are not receiving education, there is no adequate information on how their access to education can be enhanced.

According to statistics of children referred from assessment centre to join a special school for pupils with physical disabilities, very few females with physical disabilities who enrolled in the school completed their primary education as compared to the males. (Unpublished records from assessment centre and a school for the physically disabled). Even though there are records from the assessment centre and from a special school showing that females with physical disabilities do enroll in std one but



do not complete std 8, there are no records showing the factors that influence their access to education. It was important that socio-cultural factors that influence their access to primary education be explored in the present study to fill the gap.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Research on Education For All (EFA) show that females with disabilities fall within the group of the most marginalized when it comes to educational opportunity at all levels (Roussou, 2003). They have been insignificant in the realization of EFA and there is lack of recorded statistics showing the trend of their education. Under the Salamanca statement, children with disabilities were to be mainstreamed in National Education For All (EFA) plans, however, by 2015 not much progress has been made. This could have been due to social, cultural and economic disadvantages which make accessing education and employment problematic. Despite the global goal of universal primary education, females who are physically disabled are constrained with many challenges in accessing education. One of the issues that could be affecting the education of females with physical disabilities is social, culture and economic discrimination. Despite the fact that the government has implemented the Free Primary Education to all Kenyans, the challenges faced by females who are physically disabled have turned out to be persistent and very complex, this could have been due to constraints placed on them by traditional gender roles and the social discrimination generated by their disability. There exists scanty documented information on the attitude of females with physical disabilities towards education, the household factors that influence their access to education and the community's attitude towards provision of educational services to females with physical disabilities. With such little

information, it is not clear how intervention measures can be put in place to empower the females to be self reliant.

In Kisumu East Ward, available records from the only special school for the physically disabled show that for every group of learners registered in Std one, very few females complete their primary education as compared to their male counterparts. This could be due to prejudices associated with disabilities, some children with physical disabilities may adopt negative attitudes leading to further difficulties in accessing education. Some parents may also sideline these children and give priority to able bodied ones. However, little has been done to determine the females' with physical disabilities attitude towards education and the attitude of the community towards education of such females, yet this knowledge is important for the design of proper strategies to help the females with disabilities access to education.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

This study sought answers to the following specific research questions:-

1. What are the socio-cultural factors that influence the attitude of females who are physically disabled towards their education in Kisumu East Ward?
2. What are the Socio-cultural factors linked to the household factors that influence education of females who are physically disabled in Kisumu East Ward?
3. What are the socio-cultural factors that influence the community's attitude towards education of females who are physically disabled in Kisumu East Ward?

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The main objective of this study was to examine the socio-cultural factors that influence access to education by females who are physically disabled in primary schools in Kisumu East Ward.

The specific objectives were as follows:-

- i. To investigate the socio- cultural factors that influence attitude of females who are physically disabled towards their own education in Kisumu East Ward.
- ii. 2. To explore the Socio-cultural factors linked to household factors that influence access to education by females who are physically disabled in Kisumu East Ward.
- iii. To assess the socio-cultural factors that influence the community's attitude towards provision of educational services to females who are physically disabled in Kisumu East Ward.

#### **1.5 Justification**

A lot of studies have been done on education of children with disabilities, but there is very little on females with physical disabilities in particular. Whereas the females with physical disabilities are among the world's most marginalized sectors of society their needs and the double discrimination they face has been neglected in education sector. International initiatives such as Education For All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) stressed the importance of inclusive education as an intervention to curb the problem. The inclusion of children with disabilities in regular primary schools has not been easy and special schools are very few and far away from rural homes, this could have been attributed to socio-cultural factors that influence

both the community's attitude and the girls own attitude towards their own education. According to available records in one special school for the physically disabled, registration of boys with physical disabilities is slightly higher than that of girls who get registered in standard one but very few girls with physical disabilities sit for their standard eight examinations every year as compared to the boys. The year 2015 has ended with very little being done in Kenya to make Education For All a reality. What has not been recorded is the socio-cultural factors that influence access to education of females with physical disabilities in the region. Clearly, this is a significant gap in knowledge, which hinders the ability to advocate for appropriate policies. When the females lack education, they lack the empowerment of being self reliant. This situation essentially affects the whole society. For intervention measures to be taken it requires that socio-cultural factors that influence their access to education be understood. The outcome of the research may therefore provide a baseline on how to take intervention measures. Information gathered from the study may help the policy makers to formulate policies and programs that may emphasize the participation of females who are physically disabled in the education system.

Kisumu East Ward has one of the largest schools for learners with physical disabilities in the county and was therefore identified as the most viable area for the study. There were no records in Kisumu East Ward of studies done on the socio-cultural factors that influence education of females who are physically disabled. There was therefore need for investigations and this study aimed to attain the objective of filling this gap. The study is related to the Millennium Development Goals number two and number three respectively which aim at achieving Universal

Primary education to all and the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women by 2015, which has not been realized.

This study further contributes to knowledge on the physically challenged friendly environments, required in all educational institutions for inclusive education to be successful. It therefore forms a useful reference material to other researchers in this area.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study was conducted in Kisumu East Ward. The target population was females who are physically disabled below 25 years. The study excluded females with other forms of disabilities other than physical disabilities.

### **1.7 Theoretical Framework**

The study was guided by social exclusion theory. The social exclusion theory by Burchardt, Le Grand and Piachaud (2006) explains that an individual can be socially excluded in participating in a society for reasons beyond his/her control while, he/she would like to participate. The areas of activities where one can be socially excluded include, accessing educational institutions, and social interactions with family, friends and community. Social exclusion has increasingly taken over from terms such as poverty and deprivation as a term for describing social division. It is common to describe social division and inequality in terms of concepts such as poverty, deprivation and disadvantaged. Most of these terms were used with the idea that poor or disadvantaged members of the society lacked adequate resources with which to achieve acceptable standards of wellbeing and with which to participate in the customary activities of society (Townsend, 1979).

The term social exclusion has been generally used to refer to persistent and systematic multiple deprivations as opposed to poverty or disadvantage that is experienced for short periods of time (Walker, 1997). In this respect, the concept of exclusion captures the process of disempowerment and alienation whereas other descriptions focus largely on the outcomes of such processes. The study of such processes can be used to identify the factors that lead to situations of decline and exclusion.

Levitas (2005), argues that the term social exclusion is intrinsically problematic. This is because the term highlights a primary division between the excluded minority and the included majority. It draws attention away from the inequalities and differences among those who are included. Notably, the very rich are discursively absorbed into the included majority with their power and privilege slipping out of focus if not wholly out of sight.

There is the tendency to regard the excluded as ‘outside’ society, with the result that society itself comes to be seen as an integrated, consensual entity. Those on the outside can be brought in, but they are coming into something that is held to function well. This move discourages a critical view of society itself. Indeed, the implicit presumption is that certain groups are excluded and the reason for this is likely to lie with them. The issue of inclusion and social diversity has one clear danger because those who are included in the societies become conformist, assimilative and intolerant of “deviant” behavior. Indeed, excluded groups might be seen as having responsibilities as well as rights and might be expected to conform to certain norms of social behavior such as going to school and taking a job. But how far might such pressures to conform be taken and how are they compatible with the existence of

pluralistic and culturally diverse societies? Policies aimed at social inclusion might as well exclude other groups such as those who are unwilling to engage in “community” activity or those unwilling to settle in one place.

The relevance of the theory to the study is that in most of the learning institutions and recreation centers in Kenya, lack adaptation in the environment for easy access by people with physical disabilities, and yet the people with physical disabilities would like to access such places.

In many societies, due to the traditional ideals, girls and women are treated as inferior entities of the community in one way or the other since almost all societies of the world are patriarchal in nature. This, to some extent, has seen females with physical disabilities not being able to access certain social gatherings and even educational institutions. Approval to male dominance has been historically tolerated and manifested in families where boys are given first priority to education than girls. Randiki (2003) argues that the stereotype beliefs about physical disabilities are primarily responsible for the social exclusion of females with physical disabilities in accessing education.

A female with physical disability needs to be supported by the family and the society as a whole in order for her to access education. The diverse understanding of contemporary situation of these females will only be possible if knowledge on socio-cultural factors that influence their education is obtained.

## 1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

<b>Access</b>	Ability to get something, enter a place or use a facility.
<b>Primary School</b>	A school in which basic education is provided from std 1 to std 8.
<b>Female</b>	A biological sex definition of a girl or a woman.
<b>Gender</b>	A socially constructed definition of women and men determined by conception of tasks, functions, and roles attributed to men and women in society and in public and private life.
<b>Handicap</b>	A disadvantage resulting from a disability that hinders the performance of a particular activity.
<b>Social environment</b>	The beliefs, attitudes and behaviors that surrounds a person with disability.
<b>Physical environment</b>	Natural and man-made physical structures that surrounds a person with disability, that limits or promotes ones' ability to perform an activity.
<b>Disability</b>	Lack of ability or restriction resulting from impairment for one to perform an activity.
<b>Culture</b>	A pattern of ideas, customs, and behaviors shared by a particular group of people or society.
<b>Impairment</b>	Loss of structures or function of a specific part of the body.
<b>Tradition</b>	A belief or behavior passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning holding to a previous time.
<b>Socio- cultural</b>	A set of beliefs, customs, practices and behavior that exists within a population.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Little attention has been focused on Education of girls with physical disabilities from a global perspective (Smith, Polloway, Patton & Dowdy, 2002). For women in any society, having a physical disability portrays a disability which signifies dependency (Heller, Forney, Alberto, Schwartzman & Goeckel, 2000). In most African communities, physical disability is seen as a weakness leading to loss of status and condemnation to being unproductive (Deabester, 2003). In Kenya, any girl who is physically disabled who chooses to fight this demeaning stereotype in a society has an uphill lonely battle (Nicole 2010). Studies have shown that only a few girls who are physically disabled managed to break through the walls of prejudice and discrimination in education have benefited (UNICEF, 2000). Education is a very powerful tool in empowering girls with physical challenges to be independent (UNICEF, 2006). In many countries, however, available educational services do not cater for girls with physical disabilities (FAWE 2004). Teachers are generally not trained to cater for children with special needs in regular schools (Deabester, 2003). In addition, little emphasis is given in plans for development of provisions such as adaptations on institutional infrastructure, public transportation system, curriculum adaptations, assistive devices, and teachers training. A new constitution in Kenya explicitly prohibits discrimination on the grounds of disability. However very little has been done to realize the implementation of constructing all educational institutions and transportation systems to accommodate persons with disabilities.

## **2.2 Socio-cultural factors influencing the Attitudes of Females with Physical Disabilities towards Education**

According to Gimbeleh (2000), in the United States of America, females who were physically disabled who were upper level students in schools served as mentors to those in lower level classes. They all recognized that students who were physically disabled often do not develop social skills that they need to succeed in education. Sometimes, these students were regarded by teachers and other students as not being able to do the required academic work (Kemp & Parette, 2000). The girls themselves believed they could do well academically and might only lack the motivation to succeed due to societal negative attitude towards their capability as girls and as the disabled. The girls therefore had a strong support for each other. For example, at UCSD which is an educational institution in America, girls who are physically challenged helped each other. They met weekly to provide emotional support and information. Through this, they discovered what academic and social risks existed and developed strategies to meet and overcome the challenges. They also identified the best accessible study locations and techniques of learning particular subjects.

The girls themselves evaluated major career goals and shared how to be effective advocates for themselves in society. Cultural beliefs are important to understand, as they provide an overview of beliefs and attitudes towards individuals with disabilities, however, no individual lives within culture. An individual lives within a social network that include family, friends and community. The variables involved include what group in the society and individual with disability belong to, the socio-economic status of the family into which an individual with disability is born, the gender of the

individual with disabilities and the specific socio-cultural roles and rights linked to gender.

According to the American Association of University Women (2013), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) gave public schools a high bar for accountability in order to demonstrate that they are serving all students equally. The Individuals with Disabilities Act made a federal commitment to a "free appropriate public education for students with disabilities, designed with their individualized educational needs in mind. As of 2006, more than 6 million school age children in the United States receive special education services. The measure included several provisions designed to align IDEA with the No Child Left Behind Act. Teachers are required to educate students with disabilities in the "least restrictive environment". To the greatest extent possible, students who have a disability should have the opportunity to be educated with their non-disabled peers. This includes being taught the general education curriculum and having access to extra-curriculum activities or any other programs their non-disabled peers. The federal government, however, continues to fall well short of its promise to fund 40 percent of the costs of educating students with disabilities, forcing local school districts to shoulder more of the special education costs from their general budget. The reviewed literature focused on the measures taken by the American government to provide education to children with disabilities but had no information on the socio-cultural factors that influence access to education by females with physical disabilities, which was captured in the present study to bridge the gap.

A study by the U.S. Department Health and Human Services revealed that a significant number of women who receive dependent-child services from the government did not have high school diplomas. Girls actually fare better academically than boys in special education. However, they are less likely than their male counterparts to be employed after graduation, less likely to earn low wages, Even if they can find employment, women with a work disability are more likely to live in poverty than men with a work disability (24.2 percent). According to the reviewed literature females with disabilities in America were not as highly educated as men and were also not well paid as their male counter parts which is a form of discrimination.

Fenstermaker and West (2002), observed that traditionally, girls are viewed to be inferior and therefore discriminated upon right from birth. The parents under such circumstances fear losing honor, and prestige and bride price due to effect of schooling. Many parents, especially illiterate parents had low academic expectations for their daughters, some believe that education is for boys only and others think that boys are better educational investment than girls. Fitzsimons and Lennon (2002) argue that formal education of girls is even viewed with suspicion as a threat to morality. In this regard, girls' education is given less attention than that of boys. With such negative traditional beliefs about able bodied girls' education, that of females with physical disabilities would be worse.

According to Juma (1994), girls have low academic aspirations among ethnic groups where girls had internalized sex role expectation for women. Many female pupils have internalized self-images of academic inferiority conveyed by parents and teachers. Low self esteem by female pupils because of internalization of culutral

attitudes which regard women as inferior sex affect girls beliefs in themselves and their behavior. Okojie (2001), similarly observed that in certain societies, many girls are not ambitious or interested in school because of societal, including parents and teachers expectations that their primary roles are to be wives and mothers. The girls are socialized to believe that formal education is not required to fulfil these roles. As a result many girls suffer from low self-esteem and lack of confidence leading to their withdrawal from school by parents. The same scenario or even worse could apply to females with physical disabilities and their access to education could be more challenging than those of females without disabilities.

Juma (1994) argues that undue emphasis on marriage and motherhood result in undue preoccupation of girls with the idea of marriage which inhibit them from developing imagination, initiative and independent thought of pursuing education. According to Maleche (2009), this pre-occupation makes girls lose interest and hence drop out of school. Sifuna (2005) in corroboration observed that patriarchal attitudes which assigned inferior status and roles to women played a major role in societal attitude that education is less important for females in most African countries. On the other hand girls themselves, internalization of sex roles expectations reduced girls self esteem and academic ambition. While the reviewed study focused on education of girls in general, the present study focused on education for females with physical disabilities which is missing in the reviewed literature.

The 2010 EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO 2010) identifies disability as one of the most influential factors in education marginalization and estimates suggests one third of children out of school have disabilities (UNESCO,2006). The world

Disability Report (WHO and World Bank, 2011) states that children with disabilities are likely to enroll and have lower rates attendance, school survival and completion (UNESCO, 2010). This may be due to altitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers which make enrolment difficult or impossible; such as lack of physical access or specialist facilities, negative cultural attitudes towards the education of children with disabilities, lack of parental support and financial barriers such as fees or special schools or transportation. Children with disabilities face institutionalized discrimination, stigmatization and neglect and are less likely to attend school and therefore have limited opportunities.

Women with disabilities face the typical disadvantages of gender inequality, which are compounded by disability. The disadvantages posed by gender and disability intersect to create further marginalization and disadvantage, a concept referred to as intersectionality. Davis (2008) describes this as interaction between gender, race, and other categories of different individual lives, social practices institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power. The double discrimination faced by women and girls with disabilities can clearly be seen within this context. These women are often excluded from education, health services, family life and employment and experience high rates of physical, mental and sexual abuse. The reviewed study was focused on education of children with disabilities in general and had no information on education of females with physical education in particular. This study explored the socio-cultural factors that influence access to education of females with physical disabilities.

A research by UNICEF (2006) in four countries in Africa revealed that there was a common view that girls were academically less capable than boys and taking them to school would be a waste of resources. This was said in the hearing of the girls until the girls themselves believed they were incapable of learning. This attitude has had a negative effect on the participation of girls in education (Krathwol, 2007). Since girls who were physically disabled were considered less capable academically, they received less encouragement and were rarely challenged at home or school to strive to succeed in their education. Since less was expected of them, they also expected less of themselves and were less confident of their academic abilities. Research done by UNESCO, (2002) in Uganda revealed that the physically challenged girls who do manage to break through the walls of prejudice and discrimination, usually have benefited from strong role models or support groups of their own peers. Different countries in Africa have different cultural and traditional beliefs about gender and disabilities. The Kenyan perspective in education of females with physical disabilities was missing in the reviewed literature and was captured in the present study.

Butalia and Urvashi (2001) argue that emotional and psychological well being of a student is a factor that underlies success in education, coupled with a suitable environment for teaching and learning. Moreover, a student's positive attitude towards learning greatly influences the learners' performance and retention in schools. Girls who are physically challenged need to increase their self-determination, confidence, independent living skills and community participation. This is to help them become more self efficacious, whereby they can become their own judges on what they are able to do with the skills that they have to participate actively in education (Summers, 1992). From the cited literature, it is evident that

globally, girls with physical disabilities were regarded by the society as not being able to do the required academic work (Kemp & Perrete, 2000). Generally, studies done earlier indicate that teachers, parents of able bodied children, and the able bodied peers of girls with physical disabilities viewed the girls with physical disabilities as less capable in several ways including their academic work. However, the literature has shown how girls with physical disabilities in the United States of America were able to motivate each other and developed strategies to overcome their educational challenges. The studies however, have not provided information on the attitude of females with physical disabilities towards their own education in developing countries.

A qualitative study conducted by Muigai (2012) on challenges facing education of girls with physical disabilities in Kenya, established that discrimination and isolation impede education of girls with physical disabilities. Lack of policies that encompass all the people including those with physical disabilities and lack of sponsorship which limit girls with physical disabilities, to make them self reliant and economically viable. All these endanger education of girls with physical disabilities and lack of sponsorship limit girls with physical disabilities from furthering their education. The study further established that the challenges faced by girls with disabilities from the community included being looked down upon, rejection and unfair treatment. Some students faced problems in their homes such as being given a lot of chores to do despite their disabilities. In their schools, the girls faced problems such as, lacking space to maneuver around, lack of textbook, role models and security. On the economic front, the girls lacked finances for boarding facilities, text books, personal effects, wheel chairs and crutches. The policies that were found to be of disadvantage



to the disabled included; the disabilities Act of 2003, cultural background, religious values and philosophical convictions. The reviewed study was purely qualitative lacking the quantitative aspect. The present study used both qualitative and quantitative approaches which has been known to provide a better understanding of research problem than utilizing only one approach.

### **2.3 Household factors that Influence the Access to Education by Females who are physically disabled**

UNICEF (2006), reports that an incentive such as the provision of free primary education in itself may have an important political connection. It is seen as an indicator of government effort to raise enrolment in primary schools. However, it had little if any effect on various regions. Parents in arid and semi-arid districts and those with meager resources or financial income were unable to pay the direct and indirect costs of their daughter's education. Family income plays an important role in academic performance.

According to Kemp and Parette (2000), dropout and repetition appear to be most common among students from low socio-economic backgrounds and are more prevalent in females with physical disabilities. Studies conducted by World Bank (2001) revealed that it is more difficult for poor families to provide educational inputs for their children, especially for those with disabilities. Eshiwani (1988) concurs with this finding that disadvantaged children from low income families' drop out of school much earlier. The reviewed studies had provided information on socio-economic background but had no information on socio-cultural factors which influence access

to education for females with physical disabilities which was captured in the present study.

According to Abagi (2005), females from household with low education and limited resources are more disadvantaged than boys from the same background, as a result parents often prioritize providing for basic family and boys education to that of girls. This may lead to a conclusion that parents with high level of education, better occupation and large resources are more willing to educate both their sons and daughters. This finding is in corroboration with Khalid and Mujahid-Mukhtar (2002) who reported that poverty is regarded as a factor obstructive to education of poor household, income of the family, affects parents' decision on the education of their children. Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (2005) similarly argue that the effect of poverty on education are direct, poor families find it difficult to pay fees. Abagi and Khasin (2005) in agreement record that parents generally favor education of male children when confronted with limited resources for the provision of education. The study however did not unearth the social environments that leads to poverty stricken families not educating their daughters with physical disabilities but educating their sons. This study explored the socio-cultural factors that influence the community's participation in enabling females with physical disabilities access education.

In Kenya economic realities and tradition combine to reinforce the perception that there is no benefit in education of girls (Randiki, 2003). Education of girls who are physically challenged is further constrained by the comparative inaccessibility of education facilities (Okech, 2003). Research carried out by Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2005) showed that the school drop-out rate among girls

results from economic, socio-cultural and pedagogical factors. Some of the factors include inability to pay for the cost of education, poor health and early marriages. Studies of repetition and dropout pattern are consistent due to socio-economic disparities (Kemp & Parette, 2000). Shank (2000) argues that, girls with physical disabilities who go to school and proceed unimpeded are a privileged few determined not only by the socio-economic status of the family but also by prevailing existing attitudes of the family and community regarding the perceived costs and benefits of girl's education.

As the prime beneficiaries of family assets, boys are favored in human capital investment decisions. In addition, parents worry about wasting the little resources they can access on the education of girls who are likely to get pregnant or married before completing school (Bigge *et al.*, 2002). Odaga and Henveld (1995) observed that there is the strong belief that once married, girls become part of another family and parental investment is lost. Girls who are physically disabled from poor families are used as an important source of income for their families, and the need for additional household income often takes priority over education (Kemp & Parrette, 2000). Economic factors do affect even those communities where parents are aware of the importance of education of girls. With the belief in most communities that boys would be better educational investments than girls, the situation of girls with physical disabilities could be worse. Educating girls with physical disabilities could be more expensive than educating their able bodied peers as they would need assistive devices and medical attention, disability coupled with their gender might be a greater hindrance to their accessing education. This is why this present study shifted attention to females with physical disabilities.

All families face challenges when raising and educating a child with significant disability, but some cultural groups face particularly difficult issues in dealing with disability especially when females with disabilities are involved. Physical disability in a female child can be extremely strenuous for families in certain communities, the effects on family members are often shaped by, social attitudes leading to increased social isolation including access to education. The birth of a child with disability can result in crisis within the family. This is made more difficult by the absence of supportive attitudes and both social and physical structures within the family and community. Even though there is free primary education in Kenya, the families of females who are physically disabled still tend to have a fairly bigger share of the burden in educating the girls. In communities where girl child education is not valued, the issue of poverty further aggravates the situation of girls who are physically challenged.

There is sometimes a focus on appearance rather than on acceptance and the worth of the individual. The impact of disability on the family can be on various levels such as social, cultural and economic. These impacts in turn shape the decision made by families of females with physical disabilities about their access to education and some of the decisions they make hinder the females with physical disabilities from accessing education.

## **2.4 Community's Attitude towards Education of Females with Physical**

### **Disabilities**

Research has established that the support by the community has a great deal of influence on females' participation and level of success in education (UNICEF, 2006). The persistence of certain attitude and customs make it more difficult for females with physical disabilities to access education. Public attitude towards females with physical disabilities have been seriously negative (Coleridge, 2000). Many females with physical disabilities still face unreasonable discriminatory practices in education. Community's perceptions are mainly influenced by traditional beliefs regarding the ideal roles of girls and women in society (Nkinjagi, 2000). In Europe, the belief that girls are physically weak, coupled with physical disability, meant that females were perceived as being less capable in performing well academically, as compared to males with physical disabilities (Smock, 1991). In general, the burden of care for children with disabilities falls squarely on the shoulders of parents and not the community at large. In India, incest is a very common practice and females with physical disabilities are an easy prey for exploitation within the family (United Nations, 2002). While the reviewed studies focused on the community's perceptions and traditional beliefs regarding roles of girls and women in the society, it had no knowledge on the socio-cultural factors that influence access to education by females with physical disabilities which was captured in the present study to bridge the gap.

Based on the findings from World Economic Forum (2005) in the United States of America, children born with physical disabilities were labeled imbeciles or morons. This described their collective status as those who were not able to learn (Krathwol, 2007). Children with physical disabilities suffered penalties ranging from confinement

in isolation to parental rejection and community disapproval (John- Stannie & Mahn 1996). Like in most African countries, in India each sex is expected to perform different roles in society, (UNESCO, 2005). These roles are determined by historical, religious, ideological, ethnic, economic and cultural factors. In these societies males are expected to work outside the house, earn a living and support a family. On the other hand, females are judged according to their physical appearance and their ability to look after a home. In this respect, for instance, females were traditionally expected to take the responsibility for all domestic chores (Krathwol, 2007). While the reviewed studies focused much on the gender roles in different societies, this study focused on the socio-cultural factors and how they influence education of females with physical disabilities.

In United States of America, assistive technology is a useful and common technique for adapted instruction and evaluation for students with physical disabilities who experience mobility impairment (Summers, 1992). The technology related assistance to individuals with disabilities (1988), authorized the federal government to provide funds to states so that they could create or improve statewide systems for delivering assistive technology devices and services to all children with disabilities. UNESCO (2006) on the contrary reported that the students using wheel chairs in America participated less in extra-curricular activities than their able bodied peers. Even though social interactions posed few problems, the physical environment in the United States of America is adapted with modifications such as ramps in educational institutions for those with wheel chairs. There are automatic doors, elevators, adapted toilets, desks and door knobs designed at the proper height of the physically challenged learners. Other devices available in educational institutions include

adapted computers, grips attachments and non electronic devices such as communication boards and communication note books (Shank, 2002). While the reviewed literature had information on advanced technology used by people with disabilities in America, it had no information on the socio-cultural factors that influence access to education of persons with disabilities.

According to UNICEF (2005), in terms of gender parity in Asia, the situation does not seem promising as South Asia will not reach gender parity by the end of 2015, and is unlikely to achieve Universal Primary Education by 2015. According to UNICEF, gender differentials in basic education have been decreasing in most countries in South Asia. According to Baker and Miller (2010), in some South Asian cultures, such as parts of Pakistan, a girl is expected to be like her mother and a boy like his father, when a girl is born with a disability, it becomes more of a disturbance in the natural order than when a boy is born with a disability. In traditional communities parents may even feel isolated from the rest of the community because of the perceived stigma of having a child with disabilities. The reviewed literature had information on traditional beliefs about males and females that plays critical role in defining gender roles and patterns of family lives and priority. However, there was no information on cultural practices and traditional beliefs about gender, disability and education.

According to Musibala (2003), the community and the society at large in Kenya form the context in which all children live. It concerns the surrounding conditions that exclude children who are physically disabled by failing to provide their basic rights and needs including access to education. Okech (2003) shifts the focus from the child

to those responsible for ensuring protection and development of the physically challenged through community rehabilitation services. Such services are lacking in the communities as a result of negative attitude and perception about disabilities. The discrimination that people with physical disabilities encounter in the school environment is due to lack of provision of proper infrastructure in learning institutions which is usually done by the community (Okech, 2003). While the reviewed study focused on children with physical disabilities in general, the current study focused on the state of females with physical disabilities and the socio-cultural factors that influence their access to education.

Learners with physical disabilities may not necessarily need variations in the curriculum, but definitely need modification of the physical environment (Mary, 2002). According to Miugai (2012), the only success to education of children with physical disabilities in Kenya, include environmental modifications which makes the environment accessible and non restrictive to those with physical disabilities.

A study by Eileen (2004) on factors affecting female participation in education in seven developing countries revealed that a major deterrant to female take up and follow up through educational opportunities is a near universal fundamental cultural bias in favor of males. The widespread operation of patriarchal systems of social organization, of incidence of early pregnancy, heavier domestic and subsistence duties of females, a generally lower regard for the value of female life, all combine though differently in each case to adversely affect the participation of females in formal education. Such long standing constraints result in a dearth of female role models that could challenge the traditional one. The reviewed study concentrated on females in



general but had no information about education of females with physical disabilities and this was captured in the present study to fill the gap.

According to Abagi (2005), African societies are characterized by gender inequality between males and females. The ideological foundation for gender inequality is their patriarchal structure. The system provides material advantages to the males while simultaneously placing severe constraints on the roles and activities of females. Social roles are classified as superior or inferior and bases of classification include age and sex (Kathuri, 2005). Patriarchy also conditions the spatial segregation of men and women, the male space consists of the public domain, while the female space consists largely of the household and its immediate environment. Women's activities are largely confined to the household or the female section of the family compounds. Thus women are expected to get married and care for their families, formal education is not regarded as a pre-requisite for being a wife or a mother. On the other hand, boys are seen as the future household heads and are favored in access to education, education is seen as enhancing their abilities to earn good income which will enable them to care for their families and aged parents. Girls were therefore regarded as temporary members of the household as they will be married off to another family (Eileen, 2004). The reviewed study was done on girls in general and had no information on education of females with physical disabilities which was done in this study.

In Ghana, there are a number of examples of cultural practices that compromised education for girls (Kaggia, 2000). For example, the trokosi system which was found among some communities in the rural areas. Their traditional practice required that

parents accused of wrong doing had to atone for this by giving a daughter to the trokosi suit to serve out in bondage. The girl, who had no say in the matter, had to serve the members of the cult until such a time as when the leaders felt their parents' sins had been properly atoned for. At the time the girl is released back into their community, a lot of time would have elapsed; barring the girl from attending school (Kaggia, 2000).

A study of children and adolescents with disabilities in Zimbabwe showed that the Shona and Ndebele people's cultures hold negative beliefs on causes of disabilities. For instance, disability was associated with witchcraft, promiscuity by the mother during pregnancy, punishment by ancestral spirits or by God (UNESCO, 2006). These negative attitudes handicap further the people with disabilities. In some areas of rural Tanzania, on reaching puberty, all girls including those with physical disabilities were expected to participate in initiation ceremonies aimed at preparing them for womanhood and marriage (Odaga & Henveld, 2006). These ceremonies were often held during the school term. As a result, girls missed a considerable amount of school time. This affected the girl's participation in education. The girls, who underwent initiation rites regarded themselves as adults and ready for marriage, hence saw no need of concentrating in school. In Cameroon, the practice of female genital mutilation was one of the traditional practices that interfered with education for girls (Krathrol, 2007). This practice involves health risks as well as absence from school. After participating in such activities, girls are considered by society as ready for marriage and this has a negative effect on the girl's attitudes towards education.

According to Rosenbaum (2001), in the developing countries, it is expected that girls will only take on the role of wives and mothers in adulthood. Many parents and community members therefore believe that a formal education is not necessary in order for girls to prepare for these expected roles as they can be learnt from their mothers and others from the community. It therefore follows that many parents do not believe in educating girls. Many parents in African societies believe that boys would take care of them in their old age thereby providing them with a sense of security about their future, while girls once married, would be expected to take care of those in the families they are married into (Rosenbaum & James, 2001). Parents therefore feel that sons should be educated so that they are able to get employment for their future upkeep (Biggie, 2000).

Biggie (2000) cited in Heller *et al*, (2001, p. 6), states that girls were also considered a risk to educate in Africa, because they were likely to get pregnant or married and drop out of school. Any money spent on girls' education would therefore be wasted. For this reason, many parents preferred to educate boys to girls. In most African countries, girls are expected to take up the roles of wives and mothers in adulthood (Heller, *et al*, 2000). The girls' socialization at home is therefore geared towards providing them with experiences that will prepare them to carry out these roles effectively. These expectations, therefore determine the division of labor within the household with girls being assigned the home making chores. This leaves them with no time for studies.

In Kenya, just like most African countries, a girl who is physically disabled is perceived as one who is handicapped both physically and academically (Nicole, 2010). According to Kaggia (2000), many people hold the misconception that, because of a physical disability, a girl is unable to think, learn or work. In a few instances, physically disabled girls may be married off to old men by their parents just to get rid of them (Debest, 2003). Girls who are physically challenged therefore face specific attitudinal barriers. They are perceived as being unable to fulfill a future role of a mother, and are therefore not seen as fit to be taken to school (Mute, 2007). Initiation ceremonies are still seen as very important in some communities in Kenya (Nicole, 2010).

Although both girls and boys who are physically challenged would face difficulties in fulfilling their expected gender roles, boys are usually taken to schools, while girls are left at home (Summers, and Jones, 2004). According to available literature, a physically challenged girl tends to be judged and found wanting in appearance. In comparison with the conventional stereotype of beauty in her culture, she is perceived as one who is unable to perform her traditional roles as a girl and is rendered not worth going to school, even if she may be able to excel academically. Public attitudes and perception about girls who are physically challenged have remained quite negative. As a result, many girls who are physically challenged still face unreasonable discriminatory practices. For instance, poor access to education remains one of the greatest challenges faced by girls who are physically challenged (Nicole, 2010). According to available literature, most of the studies done in African countries have concentrated on socio-cultural practices and how they influence girl child education in general with very scanty information on females with physical disabilities. The

current study was mainly focused on socio-cultural factors influencing access to education of females with physical disabilities to bridge the gap.

In Kenya, just like most of the African countries, the environment in most of the educational institutions is not disability friendly. Specifically, there is lack of support from the government in the modification of the learning environment to include children with physical disabilities. Even in the newly constructed institutions not much is done to cater for learners with physical disabilities. For instance, the traditional beliefs in many societies have been found in the literature to foster negative attitudes towards education of girls. This limits family and community support for females who are physically disabled from accessing education. Identification and examination of these perceptions is necessary before any decisions can be made on what should be done to bring change. However, it is an indisputable fact that without parents and community support, any efforts to improve the situation of females who are physically disabled in accessing education will be greatly hampered. This study was therefore intended to contribute to knowledge on the socio-cultural factors that influence education of females who are physically disabled in Kisumu East Ward, to generate unavailable information in the literature.

## **2.5 Role of the Government in increasing Access to Education**

Government policy has been cited in several international instruments including the Salamanca statement (UNESCO, 1994) as one of the main factors that are instrumental to the development of inclusive education in any country. This initiative has been supported by global trends to involve governments in ensuring that the

children who have been continuously left out of education are enabled to access quality education (World Vision 2007).

MOEST (2003) states that the government of Kenya made great strides in its attempts to fulfill and meet the goals of the Jomtein conference, Education for All (UNESCO 1990) in the year 2003 through the Free Primary Education Policy. The initiative has been instrumental in promoting the access to education by children with disabilities in primary schools. This goodwill gesture towards special needs education in the country facilitated the provision of special needs fund for each school for the purposes of environmental adaptation for children with disabilities. However, the lack of proper preparations interfered with proper utilization since many head teachers of primary schools do not understand the disability concepts. It therefore required prior awareness and capacity building for the teachers on the needs of children with special needs.

According to MOEST (2003), the Ministry of Education provides for children with physical and mental challenges to be placed in regular schools. Other significant bodies include the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE), a government institution established in 1986, with the aim of meeting the educational needs of disabled children, youth and adults. Through an Act of Parliament, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights established a monitoring team on the abuse of human rights in Kenya.

Ndurumo (2001) notes that Kenya is committed to achieving education for all its citizens, while the Kenyan constitution states that children with disabilities have a

right to benefit from a full and decent life in conditions that ensure dignity, enhance self-reliance, and facilitate active participation in society. However, the rights of children with disabilities to have special care and assistance, particularly in relation to access to educational opportunities are restricted.

According to Oriedo (2003), Kenya's policy on special education promises to (a) provide skills and attitudes with the goal of rehabilitation and adjustment of people with disabilities to the environment; (b) provide adequate teachers, who are skilled in theory and in practice of teaching students with special needs; (c) increase the inclusion of exceptional children in regular schools, related services, and community – based programmes and (d) identify gifted and talented children early and provide them with special programmes that will increase the development of their special gifts and talents. Despite these provisions, the government has failed to provide both formal and informal educational opportunities to people with disabilities. This failure could be partly attributed to lack of an explicit special education policy.

Conclusions based on the literature show that many studies have focused on many issues surrounding people with disabilities, but little emphasis has been placed on the impact of peoples' attitude towards access to education by girls with physical challenges. This study focused on determining the socio-cultural factors that influence access to primary education by girls who are physically challenged in Kisumu East Ward.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Study Design**

The study used descriptive research design which was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. A descriptive study design involves describing specific behavior as it occurs within a given socio-cultural context. The descriptive emerges following creative exploration, and serves to organize the findings in order to fit them with explanations (Krathwol 2004). A descriptive study can provide information about naturally occurring health status, behavior, attitudes, or other characteristics of a particular group. Bickam and Rog (1998) suggest that descriptive studies can answer questions such as "what". The major purpose of a descriptive research was to describe the state of affairs as it exists. Shuttleworth (2008) points out that descriptive studies are not only restricted to fact findings but may often result in the formulation of important knowledge and solution to significant problems. In this study, descriptive study was used to provide information on the attitudes of females with disabilities on education, the household factors that hinder their access to education and the community's attitude towards education of females with physical disabilities.

#### **3.2 Study Area**

The study was carried out in Kisumu East Ward. Kisumu East Ward is one of the largest wards in Kisumu County with twelve locations and thirty six sub-locations. The Ward had a total of seventy five (75) primary schools, with one mixed special school for the physically handicapped. A report from Kisumu District commissioner's office (2008) showed that gender disparity in Kisumu County was characterized by a situation where women and girls disproportionately do the largest share of both



domestic and agricultural work. Their contribution to family farm income was considerable, whereby they put many hours into planting, weeding, cultivating, fetching firewood and water. Despite their large contribution to both family income and the rural economy, girls and women are faced with cultural norms such as traditional divisions of labor, lack of access to education, land and property.

According to records at the Department of Gender and Social Services, the total number of registered persons with disabilities in Kisumu East Ward were 3069, though the number could be higher as some could have failed to turn up for registration. The study area was purposively selected as it was the only area in Kisumu with a school for the physically challenged.

### **3.3 Study Population**

The study population was females who are physically disabled who are below 25 years of age both in school and out of school in Kisumu East Ward. Currently, the population of the physically disabled people in Kisumu is not known following the controversies that followed the 2009 census, specifically on the number of people with disabilities. It was therefore not possible to establish the total number of females with physical disabilities in the study area.

### **3.4 Sampling and Sampling Procedure**

A total of 100 females with physical disabilities were used in the study. This sample size is recommended by Kathuri and Pals (1993) who indicate that a sample of at least 100 for each major category of an unknown population is sufficient for a survey. Purposive sampling procedure was used to reach 40 females with physical disabilities

in school which was the entire population of females with physical disabilities in the upper primary in the school. The other 60 females with physical disabilities who were out of school and were sampled through snowball which is the easiest way of reaching hidden population which are difficult to access. The study employed saturation concept on finding the females with physical disabilities who were out of school as recommended by Griffin and Hauser (1993). Ten (10) opinion leaders were purposively sampled, these included two (2) area administrators, chief and assistant chief, (5) religious leaders, two were from the main churches that sponsor special schools, two were from the churches where majority of the respondents attended and one was from the nearest church to the school, and three (3) education officers who were in charge of special education in the area. Twenty (20) teachers were purposively sampled out of twenty three, three teachers who were not in school during the research period did not participate. Twenty (20) parents of females with physical disabilities were sampled through purposive sampling and only real parents were selected excluding care takers who were not biological parents. The total number of respondents were one hundred and fifty.

### **3.5 Instruments of Data Collection**

Several instruments of data collection were used in this study, namely:

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Questionnaires were administered to 100 females who are physically disabled and 20 teachers in a school for physically disabled. These were

expected to provide information on the attitude of females who are physically disabled and on the household factors that affect their education.

### **3.5.2 Interview Schedules**

In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspective on a particular idea, program or situation associated with their experiences and expectations (Krathwol, 2007). In-depth interviews were administered to five (5) out of school females selected through convenience sampling according to their availability, five (5) females who were physically disabled in a special school, who were class monitors from std 4 to std 8. Eight parents of females who were physically disabled and ten (10) opinion leaders in the region. The respondents who participated in the interviews were sampled through convenience sampling depending on their availability and interest. Their views provided information on the community's attitude on education of females with physical disabilities, the females with physical disabilities attitude towards their own education and the household factors that influence the education of females with physical disabilities.

### **3.5.3 Focus Group Discussions ( FGDs)**

Focus Group Discussion is a small group of people especially chosen to represent different social classes. They are normally asked to discuss and give their opinion about a particular subject (Krathwol, 2007). Three Focus Group Discussions were conducted. Two Focus Group Discussions were conducted with the previously clustered two groups of females with physical disabilities in school and females with physical disabilities out of school and each group had 8 members. One Focus Group

Discussion of eight teachers from the special school was also conducted. The teachers in the Focus Group Discussion were purposively sampled as the class teachers of all classes from std 1 to std 8 while the females with physical disabilities who participated were conveniently sampled as those who were interested in the discussion. The groups discussed the challenges faced by the females with physical disabilities while in school. This information helped the researcher to establish the attitude of both the female learners with physical disabilities and teachers towards their education, the socio-cultural factors linked to house hold factors that influence their access to education and the community's attitude towards their education.

#### **3.5.4 Documentary Evidence**

According to Yin (2009), the most important use of documents in case studies is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources. Some of the strengths of documentary evidence include the fact that documents are stable and can be reviewed repeatedly. Documentary evidence in this study involved examining the referrals of females with physical disabilities from an assessment centre to a special school, the schools' registration of females with physical disabilities, and their rate of completion of primary education. This would give an evidence of completion or drop out in the number of females with physical disabilities in a special school.

#### **3.5.5 Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher obtained permission from relevant authorities starting from Maseno University. Permission was sought from females with physical disabilities for their participation. A research permit was sought from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovations (NACOSTI) in order to conduct research. Similarly the

principal of the school for the physically disabled granted permission for the access of female learners in the school and their teachers. The school was assured that findings of this study will be used appropriately and the name of the school will not be disclosed. Different interview schedules were organized for different groups of respondents to be interviewed. In-depth interviews were carried out with 10 opinion leaders who included the chief of the area, assistant chief, 5 religious leaders and three education officers in charge of special needs education in the region. Interviews of the participants met the general protocols and procedures for interviewing and oral history. The parents in the Focus Group Discussion were recruited as members playing the same role, who were the parents of females with physical disabilities. After identification of parents, each parent was called to confirm interest and availability. A written confirmation was mailed to the parents, a call was also made to remind them four days before the scheduled date. The same procedure was followed with females with physical disabilities who were out of school. During focus group discussion, the researcher ensured even participation, careful wording of key questions, maintained a neutral attitude and appearance and summarized the sessions which reflected the opinions evenly and fairly. A detailed report was then prepared at the end of each session. The three groups discussed, the socio-cultural factors linked with household factors that influence access to education by females with physical disabilities and the communities attitude towards education of females with physical disabilities.

### **3.5.6 Data Analysis**

Johnson and Christensen (2008) define data analysis as creating meaning out of new data. Data analysis processes is suggested to involve data collection, data entry and

storage, segmenting, coding and developing category systems and identifying relationships such as themes, patterns, and hierarchies. It involves constructing diagrams, tables, graphs and finally corroborating and validating results. Qualitative data was analyzed using ethnographic methods of thematic analysis to determine the themes, trends and opinions expected within the contexts of the information obtained. Thematic analysis is a method that can be useful in organizing and describing research data in details. Brawn and Clarke (2006) identified six phases to follow in the use of thematic data analysis. This study used the six phases which included familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining, naming themes and production of final report. Themes coded according to the attitude of females with disabilities attitude towards education included, role models, employment opportunities, and other peoples' attitudes. Themes that emerged from household factors included, financial implications, family cohesion and orphanhood and the themes that emerged from the community's attitude included, discrimination, stigmatization and rejection. Considering the range and diversity of participants, experiences and perceptions verbatim quotations were included to show feelings, attitudes and perceptions of the participants. Quantitative data was coded and analyzed using statistical package for social scientists which presented descriptive statistics through tabular descriptions.

### **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

As Punch (2000) asserts, all social research involves consent, access and associated ethical issues. Since the study was based on data about disability, the study ensured that informed consent was obtained from participants. The researcher obtained permission from the relevant authorities starting from Maseno University, and the

respondents. The researcher was also given a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovations (NACOSTI) in order to conduct the research. The respondents' informed consent was sought before the questionnaires, interviews and Focus Group Discussions were administered. Full information about the research including reasons they were chosen to participate was clearly stated. Participants privacy, confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed. Consent forms and covering letters were provided.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY**  
**POPULATION AND THE ATTITUDE OF GIRLS WITH PHYSICAL**  
**CHALLENGES TOWARDS EDUCATION**

**Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings, analysis and interpretation of the data collected on the attitude of females with physical disabilities towards education. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section presents information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents while the second section outlines the attitudes of females with physical disabilities towards education.

**4.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

A total of 100 females who are physically disabled were involved in the study. Data collected revealed that 44% of the females were aged between 12-14. Those between the ages of 15-17 were 37%, while those aged 18 and above were 19%. Among the females who were out of school, a small portion of 5% had never been to any school while 55% had been to school 5% of them were once in regular schools while 50% percent were once in special schools but had dropped out at some stage before completing primary education. The occupational status of females with physical disabilities who were out of school included:- 30% doing small businesses, 15% were just at home, 5% were beggars, 8% were working as house helps, while 2% were working as commercial sex workers in Kisumu. Religious affiliation of the respondents showed that majority 97% were Christians while a paltry 3% were Muslims. A moderate number of Christians, 30%, belonged to the Catholic denomination, while 67% were Protestants.



The demographic analysis shows that majority of females with physical disabilities attend primary school when they are over fifteen years of age. It also shows that very few females with physical disabilities attend regular schools. This could be attributed to inaccessible infrastructure or the attitude of able bodied people towards them. It was also evident that majority of the females with physical disabilities who were out of school had once been in school but had dropped out before completing their primary education, due to various challenges associated with their disability.

#### **4.2 Attitude of Females with Physical Disabilities towards Education**

The study sought to find out the females attitude towards education. The issues that were investigated included their understanding of the importance of education, academic performance of females with physical disabilities, reasons for dropping out of school and the career choice of females with physical disabilities.

##### **4.2.1 Importance of Education**

The interviews conducted with the females with physical disabilities revealed that majority of the females perceive education as important, but only to the able-bodied individuals. The females argued that people receive education in order to get employed but not many of them get these opportunities simply because of the discrimination against their physical challenges. A chief who was a key informant supported this finding by asserting that it is difficult to employ a female who is physically disabled even when she is qualified when there are nondisabled females with the same qualifications. This attitude is a clear evidence of discrimination. It was evident that the females with physical disabilities perceive education as

important. However, they lacked female role models with physical disabilities who have gone through education and are in good positions of employment.

Table 4.1 below shows the perception of females with physical disabilities about the importance of education

**Table 4.1: Responses on Whether Education Is Important**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
12 – 14	43	1	44
15 -17	34	1	35
18 & above	17	4	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

Most of the respondents were aware of the importance of education but due to various challenges experienced as a result of their disability, they felt that education was not beneficial to them. For example, quite a large number, (85%), mentioned the rigid and inaccessible curriculum. They do the same examinations as their able bodied peers without the consideration that some of them write using their mouth or leg instead of hands. During Focus Group Discussions with the females with physical disabilities, a large number of them mentioned examinations at the end of every term as a factor that hinders their enthusiasm for learning as most of them do not perform well in the exams due to various challenges associated with their disability.

According to females with physical disabilities who dropped out of school, most of them (53%) were made to repeat classes several times and some teachers rejected them when they were promoted to their classes arguing that they would lower the school's mean score. This is a form of discrimination. This could be attributed to lack of clear policy guidelines on the inclusion of people with disabilities in education. For example, despite its strength, a close examination of the persons with Disability Act (2003) No. 14 shows that it does not articulate coherently the key values on which it is founded, including gender equality and non-discrimination as well as equalization of opportunities for all citizens. Moreover, the 2003 Act seems to be an unaccompanied tool whose provisions are not harmonized and attuned with other domestic legislation. In addition, the disability issues addressed in it require integration into broader arena of social legislation in order to gain acceptance. More work needs to be done to ensure that the act is harmonized and implemented and that the rights of people with disabilities, especially females with physical disabilities are protected, at all times.

According to UNICEF (1992), formal education is a major source of transformation. It links us to employment opportunities in the labor markets, especially in civil services. Poor performance and lack of access to education among females with physical disabilities deny them access to labor market. It is an indisputable fact that without job opportunities in the labor market today, many able-bodied persons in school today would drop out, one of the teachers observed. The females with physical disabilities therefore see no reason for seeking education.

Discussions with females with physical disabilities who were once in schools and enrolled in the regular schools revealed that majority of them had no hope of gainful employment as a result of their education. They had low self-esteem resulting from the discrimination that they faced against social environment and physical environment. Inaccessible toilets, as well as the nature of some of the physical disabilities might mean that such females need help with toileting. Since many cultures emphasize modesty and privacy, the need for such assistance may be highly problematic. It may also intensify safety concerns. It was evident that inadequate toileting facilities in regular schools hindered females with physical disabilities from attending the regular schools. Menstruation females with physical disabilities was mentioned as a compounding factor – the absence of the provision of sanitary towels in schools, which is necessary for the girls’ safety and lack of embarrassment in managing their monthly periods in school intensified parental fears and further discouraged them from taking the girls to school.

The need for help with such personal tasks may reinforce negative stereotypes about the females’ ability to function independently as learners. It was reported by the females that most of the time when they had their menstrual periods; they decided to remain in the dormitories instead of attending classes. This trend contributed to them missing some lessons. With all the challenges experienced while in school, and no assurance of job opportunities, the girls felt that education was less important for them. During interviews with the parents of females with physical disabilities, it was clear that parents were well aware of the importance of education for females who were able bodied but not for females with physical disabilities.

Comments from teachers of female learners with physical disabilities showed that the teachers saw no ambitions in the learners which could be interpreted a negative attitude by the teachers. There were various points mentioned that still hindered the females with physical disabilities from access to educational resources, such as inadequate educational facilities, inadequate trained teachers in Special Needs Education especially in regular schools and the teachers' use of rigid teaching approaches which only benefit the average learner. The teachers also mentioned the irrelevant, overloaded content and rigid assessment procedures based on mean score competition which does not consider learners with physical disabilities, which could be interpreted as neglect by the curriculum developers. Moreover, the National Disability Policy of 2006 as noted in sessional paper number 1 of 2005 on education that it will provide special educational support for all children with disabilities paying special attention to the girl child. There is a need to retrain teachers in regular schools to cater for children with special educational needs, review the national curriculum and reform the examination system to provide the necessary adaptation to cater for the needs of all learners with disabilities and to make all schools accessible to all children irrespective of their disabilities while intensifying monitoring, supervision and quality standards in all schools to ensure that children with special educational needs are provided for without discrimination. However, the implementation of such policies has not been done.

The convention on the Rights of the Child and the convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women established education as a basic human right and not a luxury. This offers females with physical disabilities basic education as one sure way of giving them much greater power of enabling them to make genuine

choices over the kind of life they wish to lead. It emerged during the Focus Group Discussion with the parents of females with physical disabilities that the girls may have a change of a future healthier and happier life should be reason enough to promote and support their education. It also emerged that there are also important benefits for society as a whole. An educated female with physically disability has the skills, information and self-confidence to participate in the building of a nation just like any other citizen.

UNIFEM (2004) revealed that the girls with physical challenges, who manage to break through the walls of prejudice and discrimination, usually have benefited from strong role models or support groups of their own peers. Out of 23 teachers in a special school for children with physical disabilities, there were four (4) male teachers with physical disabilities with no female teacher who is physically disabled. Access to role models and successful adult women with physical disabilities is crucial to help counter stereotypes. The role models would also make the females with physical disabilities realize that education is important to all females irrespective of their physical appearance.

#### **4.2.2 Academic Performance of Females with Physical Disabilities**

The study sought to investigate the academic performance of females with physical disabilities and the teachers were the main sources of information.

**Table 4.2: Academic Performance of Females with Physical Disabilities**

<b>Performance</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Above average	0	0
Average	5	25
Below average	15	75
	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

The result presented on Table 4.2 above indicates that majority of the females perform below average. Analysis of Focus Group Discussion with the teachers revealed that parents or guardians of females with physical disabilities took the females education for granted. The females were taken to school several weeks later after schools had opened. The females were then left until the end of term without being visited. According to the teachers, parents felt that leaving the children in school was a burden taken away from them by the teachers. This was confirmed by one parent who had this to say, when asked why her daughter reported to school late:

My husband took another wife and abandoned me with four children. I am not employed anywhere and can afford to employ a maid to take care of my daughter while am away. Locking my daughter alone in the house from morning to evening as I look for what we can eat pains me so much that I would rather bring her to school where she can stay with the teachers and other children with the same condition as hers. She even says she is happier while in school.

This is similar to Kisanji (1998) in the observation that, many parents in Kenya prioritize taking their able bodied children to school first and only considered taking females with physical disabilities to school later if finances were still available. However, for the parents, school attendance was not for academic gain but to get relieved from the burden of taking care of the children. The girls therefore did not strive to work hard in school giving excuses that they were taken to school late, leading to low academic performance.

Interviews with females with physical disabilities about the state of their performance partly supported the teachers' view that the girls' parents did not take their daughters' education seriously. Majority of the girls confirmed that they were taken to school several weeks later after schools had opened. They were not given enough shopping, no pocket money and no visitation until the schools closed. This affects their emotional and psychological wellbeing which in turn affects their performance. Several issues were raised during the Focus Group Discussions that hinder their academic performance. Sexual abuse was among the factors mentioned. One girl narrated how she was repeatedly sexually abused by an uncle and was threatened not to reveal the experience.

"... I was repeatedly raped by my own uncle who threatened me that if I say anything, he will kill me. This was only discovered when I was pregnant and the issue was aired in the media. That is how I ended up in school. I am already a mother who is just starting school and things are very difficult. I am not sure of passing any exams".

This finding is similar to the findings by United Nations (2002) in India which revealed that incest is a very common practice in India and girls with physical challenges are the easy prey for exploitation within the family. Eventually, this would affect the girls' emotional wellbeing and even when taken to school they may not be able to perform well academically.

Further discussions with the girls revealed that their own teachers had low expectations from them. This was said in their presence and as a result they also expected very little from themselves. This concurs with a report by UNICEF (2006)



which revealed that there was a commonly held view in developing countries that girls were academically less capable in academics. This was said in their hearing until the girls themselves believed that they were less capable in academic work. This attitude has had a negative effect on the participation of females with physical disabilities in serious educational outcome. As the females with physical disabilities observe other people's attitude towards their education, they lose hope and render themselves educationally unfit. Interviews with parents revealed that in impoverished families, the limited resources available were used to educate males and able bodied females in the hope that they will ultimately help support the family in future. It was noted that females with physical disabilities also need costly disability related equipment or special transportation which was a great burden to the parents. This tampers with their consistency in school hence dismal academic performance.

Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) with teachers revealed that females with physical disabilities in special schools were less proficient in basic literacy and numeracy skills. They also had lower expectations about their own capabilities and lacked confidence in social settings. Gimbeleth (2000) proposed that mainstreaming girls with physical challenges into regular schools where they are able to compete their able bodied peers would make them work harder in their academics. However, this can supply all schools with the necessary resources or infrastructure that they require to support inclusion. United States Department of Education (2006) reported that successful education of children with physical disabilities can only take place when the institutional learning environments and teaching methods are modified. One of the teachers of pupils with physical disabilities reported that there were females who appeared to have a physical disability when actually they had multiple disabilities

some of which were not prominent. For example, there were females with physical disabilities who were also epileptic; therefore the seizures and falls they experienced interfered with their intellectual ability to perform well academically. On the other hand, the attitude of their able bodied peers still hinders inclusion of these females in various fields of education. Moreover, the high number of learners in the regular classrooms hinders teachers from offering individual attention to learners with disabilities in general. It is worth noting that with the advent of Free Primary Education, classrooms with up to 100 pupils are not an uncommon sight in Kenya. Furthermore, most teachers in regular schools are not trained in special education and therefore may not be able to meet the girls' educational needs.

Rossou (2000) revealed that the more girls with physical challenges viewed their learning disabilities as not modifiable and stigmatizing, the more likely they were to give up on education. Educators therefore need to understand not only the physical impairments in females, but the several environmental and psychological factors that may affect performance. Environmental factors such as infrastructure, pain, fatigue and absenteeism, and psychological factors such as motivation, self concept and social emotional problems need to be identified. For example, it was revealed by the teachers that there were girls with physical disabilities with typically normal intelligence but absenteeism as they visit clinics, results into poor academic performance which was often misinterpreted or overlooked. Modifications on the curriculum and the infrastructure are therefore required to minimize the effects on the girls' performance and their attitude towards education.

### 4.2.3 Reasons for Dropping out of School

A majority (95%) of females with physical disabilities who were out of school had once been in school but dropped out before completion of primary education. This study investigated the reasons for their dropping out of school of which the results are presented in Table 4.3

**Table 4.3: Reasons for Dropping out of School**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Disability	6	10
Illness	2	3.3
Lack of fees	3	5
Infrastructure	3	5
Underachievement	32	53.3
Lack of interest	2	3.3
Pregnancy	6	10
Distance	3	5
Combined reasons	3	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

The most frequent barrier mentioned by females with physical disabilities that contributed to their dropping out of school was under achievement in their academic performance. Focus Group Discussion with teachers of pupils with physical disabilities revealed several issues as the barriers to the females' academic achievement. According to the teachers, people with physical disabilities were likely to have other hidden disabilities that affect their intellectual functioning.

Irrelevant, overloaded and expensive content of the curriculum was raised as another factor for dismal academic performance by the females with physical disabilities. Rigid assessment procedures, based on the mean score competition which does not consider learners with physical disabilities, was a major cause of many females dropping out of school. Moreover, when the females were made to repeat more than once, they felt defeated and opted out. This finding concurs with UNESCO (2002) noting that there was a failure of the curriculum in place in addressing the specific subjects that would cater for learners with physical disabilities in giving meaningful and quality education.

Inadequate educational facilities, equipment and services for females with physical disabilities was also mentioned. Massive discrimination that females with physical disabilities in regular schools faced made them feel hopeless. The examination oriented nature of the curriculum overwhelms the females with physical disabilities and their able bodied peers made fun of them, as a result they dropped out of school. Analysis of the findings shows lack of clear policy guidelines and legal status on provision of education to learners with physical disabilities, which underscores the need for such policy guidelines based on research findings.

A significant number of (10%) of females who left school did so as a result of pregnancy. Focus Group Discussions with teachers revealed that a considerable number of females with physical disabilities who failed to complete primary education were likely to have dropped out due to pregnancy. Smock (2002) similarly revealed that girls with physical disabilities who failed to complete their primary education were more likely to become teenage mothers and were less likely to

become employed and more likely to require public assistance. Miugai (200) similarly observes that in Kenya, the rates of females with physical disabilities becoming parents was higher than their non-disabled peers. This often caused the females to drop out of school whereas boys who were physically disabled rarely dropped out of school to assume parenting responsibilities which is a form of gender disparity.

Harassment of females with physical disabilities by male teachers, male learners, and some male workers was also raised as a crucial issue in residential schools. This may be particularly widespread and severe in schools in African countries (Summer 1992). The risk and realities of sexual abuse limit the educational opportunities for females with physical disabilities. According to most of the parents of females with physical disabilities, perceived risks caused reluctance in parents sending their daughters to school. In addition, the risk of violence may reinforce the stereotyping view held by some parents that their daughters who were physically disabled were helpless and in need of constant protection. This translated into parents deciding to protect the girls by keeping them in isolation. Interview with parents revealed that parental over protectiveness, very much intertwined with the parents' fears about their daughters sexuality and sexual vulnerability was a major barrier to the females' access to education. However, once sexual abuse occurs, it may lead not only to trauma but also to pregnancy which would automatically cause the females to drop out of school. Two cases were cited by teachers where two females with physical disabilities had lost their lives due to pregnancy and disability related complications.

Discussions with the females' parents revealed that cultural and traditional values still stand between females who are physically challenged and their prospects for education. The negative attitude of the society towards disability impacts negatively on both the parent and the education of females with physical disability. Based on the chief's comment earlier that he cannot employ a female with physical disability even when she qualifies when there is one with no disability, clearly points to the fact that the society has not yet believed that the achievement of females' right to education can address some of the society's deeply rooted inequalities. Condemnation of millions of females with physical disabilities to a life without quality education has often led to a life of missed opportunities.

The Beijing conference of 1995 affirmed that education is one of the most critical areas of empowerment for women. Consequently, an educated woman will be more productive at work. Indeed, the dividend for education investment is often higher for girls than boys. Studies from a number of countries suggest that an extra year of schooling will increase a girl's future earnings by about 15 percent, compared with 11 percent for a man (UNICEF 2004). Moreover, UNICEF (2006) reveals that over recent decades, there has been significant progress in girls' education, but females with physical disabilities are left out of the picture. The females with physical disabilities are less likely to access school, to remain in school or to achieve education. During Focus Group Discussions with the teachers of females with physical disabilities, the teachers stated that, it would be important to let parents realize the importance of education to their daughters, it emerged that it is through education that females with physical disabilities can claim their rights and realize their potential in the economic, political and social arenas. One female teacher stated that

education is considered the single most powerful way to lift females with physical disabilities out of poverty. Education plays a particular important role as a foundation for development of females with physical disabilities towards adult life. It should therefore be an intrinsic part of any strategy to address the disability and gender based discrimination against females that remains prevalent in many societies.

#### 4.2.4 Career Choice

Gender disparity is displayed within societies in various ways, more so in career choices and job opportunities. This study investigated the career choices for females with physical disabilities who were in school of which the results are presented in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Career Choice of Girls with Physical Challenges**

<b>Profession</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Teaching	1	5
Nursing	2	10
Doctor	1	5
Secretarial	1	5
Business	10	50
House help	3	15
Don't know	2	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

The findings show types of career choice for the females with physical disabilities in school, this can be interpreted that even though the females are in school, they do not expect much in terms of employment after education and majority 50% intend to go into business after their education. This was earlier confirmed from one of the opinion

leaders (chief) whose comment confirmed the type of discrimination in employment that the females with physical challenges face.

Even though females with physical disabilities were aware of the importance of education, their hope of getting any gainful employment was very slim as shown in Table 4.4. Furthermore, in addition to the prejudice and discrimination barrier, the accessibility of the physical environment such as regular schools, office buildings, roads, transport and toilet facilities is a serious obstacle to accessing education and even working outside their homes. Miugai (2012) observed that in Kenya most regular schools are not meant for persons with physical disabilities. This shows discrimination. African women with disabilities of 2001 similarly noted that even for an industrialized country, women with physical disabilities who are working full time earn 56 percent of the salary of full time men with physical disabilities. Furthermore, in addition to the prejudice and discrimination barriers in accessing learning institutions, there is a serious barrier to getting any gainful employment. Double discrimination and underlying cultural biases based on rigid gender roles, compounded by the stigma of disability contributes to devaluing the importance of education for females with physical disabilities by the girls themselves.

Despite the most optimistic outlook for change in employment opportunities for females with physical disabilities, from the analysis of the findings, the present reality is that the best hope for productive work may lie in self-employment or group employment, hopefully on a cooperative basis. Apart from economic independence, work is an essential means of enabling a person to develop a sense of identity and self-esteem. Investing in the education of females with physical disabilities and



promoting opportunities for their employment is therefore a sound economic and social policy. Gainful employment would then be an important means of promoting positive attitude towards education among females with physical disabilities.

### **Conclusion**

The findings from the attitude of females with physical disabilities towards education show that the reasons their not being positive about their education were related to, attitude of others about their education, lack of role models, rigid assessment procedures, not being able to access the existing infrastructure and lack of confidence in social environment due to stigmatization and discrimination.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### HOUSEHOLD FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ACCESS TO EDUCATION OF FEMALES WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the findings; analysis and interpretation of data collected on the house hold factors that influence access to education by females with physical disabilities. During interviews, the main themes that emerged as key household challenges for girls with physical disabilities to access education included; family income, family cohesion, the parents level of education, orphanhood and distance from school.

#### 5.1 Family Income

Family income plays an important role in children's education. It emerged that education for females with physical disabilities is more expensive than that of able bodied girls and it was therefore important to find out the source of income of parents or caretakers of girls with physical disabilities.

**Table 5.1: Source of Income**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Permanent employment	2	10
Business	8	40
Farming	5	25
Casual work	5	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Interview with the parents of the girls revealed that the cost of educating a female with physical disability is higher than that of educating a non-disabled female. The parents therefore opted to take the able bodied females to school and left the female with physical disability to stay at home. Other factors were related to the direct and indirect costs of sending females with physical disabilities to school which were overwhelming, especially when coupled with the overall poverty of the family and employment prospects available. Despite the government's effort to provide Free Primary Education (FPE), parents of females with physical disabilities have a lot of other direct costs such as the provision of assistive devices, transportation to school and medical expenses to meet. All these are constraints to enrolling and keeping females with physical disabilities in school. The effect of school fees payment was a significant factor that made females with physical disabilities drop out of school. Since Special schools are residential schools, boarding fees has to be paid by parents. According to a principal of a special school visited, most of the parents only pay school fees on admission and after the fees has accumulated for more than one year, they withdraw the learners from school. In support of this finding, (Nicole, 2010) states that economic factors affect even those communities where parents are aware of the importance of education to females. The high cost of education, coupled with the females' demands for other assistive devices leave the poor families with no option but to keep their daughters at home.

During Focus Group Discussions with the females, it was revealed that some parents use their daughters with physical disabilities to work as house helps to help them pay school fees for their able bodied children. Two females with physical disabilities working as house helps asserted that they had to work and their salaries were directly

sent to their parents to help pay school fees for their siblings. Kemp and Parrett (2000) states that girls from poor families are used as an important source of income for their families, and the need for additional household income often takes priority over their own education. Odaga and Heneveld (2006) similarly observed that the world's poor are significantly more likely to have or incur a disability within their life time compared to more financially privileged population; he further explains that the rate of disability and lack of education within impoverished families is notably higher than that found in more economically stable families. These findings concurs to the World Health Organization (2006), which records that the two –way link between poverty and disability creates a vicious circle. Poor people are more at risk of acquiring disability because of lack of access to education, good nutrition, health care, sanitation as well as safe living and working conditions. Once this occurs, females with physical disabilities would face barriers to education, employment and public services.

Three parents had a feeling that it would be a waste of money to educate a female with physical disability up to very high level of education when in the end they will have no returns. This supports the findings by Odaga and Henveld (2006), who observed that parents worry about wasting money on the education of girls because they are more likely to get pregnant or get married before completing their schooling, becoming part of another family and the parental investment in them is lost. This perpetuates parents discouraging females with physical disabilities from remaining in school. World Health Organization (2006) confirms these findings by revealing that the overall females with disability receive less education than males with disability. They present further explanations to the effect that females tend to drop out of school

or are withdrawn earlier for both economic and cultural reasons. The study further argues that the opportunity cost of sending females with disability off to school is high as benefits of their schooling will not accrue to their parental household. Nicole (2010), similarly explains how the connection between poverty and disability is complex and multi-directional. She explains how the high cost of education, coupled with the females' physical disability which would need more supportive devices leaves the poor families with no option but to keep their daughters away from school. All these point to the constraints of enrolling, retention and completion of primary education among females with physical disabilities. This demonstrates the complexity of the problems at hand, in the context of pervasive poverty in the families.

## 5.2 Family Cohesion among the Females with Physical Disabilities

**Table 5.2: Caretakers of the Girls**

<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Both parents	4	20
Mother	8	40
Grandmother	6	30
Uncle	2	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

During Focus Group Discussion with the females, it was revealed that many fathers abandon their families upon realizing that they have a disabled child. Some parents stay together with their able bodied children but leave the disabled child to stay with the grandparents. The females with disabilities are therefore used as house helps to their aging grandparents. This denies them the opportunity to access education.

According to Jurasek (2000), emotional and psychological wellbeing of a learner is an underlying factor towards success in education. Parental love and acceptance are therefore essential for a child's performance and retention in school. According to Focus Group Discussions with the females with physical disabilities, it emerged that only a few of the females with physical disabilities were allowed to attend important family events, especially when some outsiders were invited. This made them to feel that their family members were ashamed of associating with them. It was also revealed that they were not always consulted about making household decisions even when it directly affected their lives. Most relatives of the husbands' side blamed the disability on the wives. Most of the mothers of children with physical disabilities related sour relationships between the mothers-in-law. They therefore gave little support in such situations. Of those who received support, it came from maternal grandmothers. This was done primarily to support their daughters who carried the blame of giving birth to such a child. The maternal grandmothers also sympathized with their inexperienced daughters because of the overall responsibilities associated with caring for the child with disability.

On the other hand, some of the parents of females with physical disabilities did not receive support from both their nuclear family and the extended family. When asked why, the following were given as explanations; some relatives saw the birth of a child with disability as a taboo that brought bad omen to the family. As a result, they did not want to be associated with such children. Further probing during Focus Group Discussion revealed that, family members only came to their support if there were family rituals being performed to cleanse the child with disability to remove the bad omen. This suggested that the family members were supportive not of the child but

rather the desire to prevent the disability from infecting the others. Some parents felt that their relatives did not give them support because they did not know how to support them. They observed that most of their relatives were uncomfortable whenever the children with disabilities were around them, this was noticeable any time when the relatives visited them, this resulted to parents of such children locking them away from people which is a form of discrimination and isolation.

According to the responses from questionnaires, the birth of a child with disability in a family raised in parents feelings of shock, disbelief, denial, anger, resentment, depression, despair, guilt and shame. In-depth interviews with the parents of females with physical disabilities further revealed that most fathers blamed their spouses when a child was born with physical disabilities. This, in most cases, brought about family conflicts. It was also revealed that the mothers could in turn become very harsh with their daughters with physical disabilities not because they did not love them, but due to struggles, anxiety and depression that they went through to raise money to take care of the whole family, especially when their husbands abandoned them. They sometimes found themselves very irritable and ended up projecting their anger on the girls. In-depth interviews with the females with disabilities also revealed that most of them felt that their parents did not love them and did not care much about their education. They therefore became more reluctant about their own education than their parents.

Under normal circumstances, pupils desire to do better in their academics if they know that their parents want them to do it. Pupils show more motivation, effort and zeal towards their academics when they think they will impress their parents. Pupils

who do not have to worry about a hostile or dysfunctional home life, under normal circumstances, are more likely to succeed in school. This is because they go home to parents who care and want to protect them. According to the interviews with the females with physical disabilities, if they can have the feeling of safety and belonging within their own families, then they would not care much about the outsiders but would focus on school work. Unfortunately, the few of them who still have both of their parents living together focus more on the stresses caused by their parents who fight most of the time and they feel that they are the cause of the fights. This affected the girls' achievements in school. However, there were two parents who stayed together and gave support to their daughters and had very high confidence and expectations of their daughters' educational outcome.

Research by UNICEF (2006) has established that the family support has a great deal of influence on participation of girls with physical disabilities and level of success in education. Since the girls need to receive care, encouragement, attention and support from both parents. According to the National Survey of children (2006), fifteen percent of children living with their mothers without contact with their fathers were expelled from school. The studies further reveal that children abandoned by parents including those with disabilities are less imaginative. They tend to be more dependent, demanding, unaffectionate and disobedient than children from intact families. The children are also more afraid of being abandoned, losing love and physical acceptance. They usually carry these problems to school and end up being vulnerable to lasting emotional effects such as;



Feelings of anger or fear that create acting in unacceptable behavior in class. It is surprising that some of the girls with physical challenges act as if they are above everybody by being disrespectful, abusive, rude and non-apologetic to people in authority, states a teacher. This could be a manifestation of fear which is the cornerstone of low self-esteem, resulting in hopelessness. The girls therefore do wrong things intentionally to hurt others just to make them feel better.

Social withdrawal that creates difficulty participating in class was another factor mentioned by one of the teachers. He explained how the girls are sometimes absorbed in their own thoughts or feelings of rejection from home. This makes them fear being close to their teachers and their able-bodied peers in school. When they do something they deem to have been wrong and they think that others have noticed, then it is like this confirms their own feelings of inadequacy, incompetence and being unlovable. With such feelings the girls would easily be withdrawn and isolated feeling embarrassed, humiliated, devastated, depressed and despairing in pursuing education.

Lack of concentration or motivation associated with depression was another factor stated by one of the females with physical disability. As a result, of depression, the girl cannot focus when receiving directions in class which results in misunderstanding between the girls and their teachers. The relationship between the females with physical disabilities and the teachers suffer when the teachers perceive the learners' distractions as lack of seriousness in their studies. Class work therefore becomes difficult due to missed information and lack of enthusiasm in education.

Findings from the teachers from the special school visited revealed that females with physical disabilities who were visited by both parents in school performed much better compared to those who had single parents and were never visited. It is important that family cohesiveness is embraced for the sake of access to education by females with physical disabilities. When both parents and even the siblings can be involved in education of females with physical disabilities, then the females may have a higher chance of succeeding in academics. This success may occur regardless of

other influences such as socio-economic background and their parents' educational background. Interest of every family member in the education of a female's with physical disability demonstrates interest in the individuals' life which in turn increases individuals' self-esteem.

### 5.3 Parents' Level of Education

**Table 5.3: Level of Education of Parents of Females with Physical Disabilities**

<b>Level of education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Never attended school	31	
Completed Primary education	5	25
Dropped out in primary	6	30
Completed Secondary education	2	10
Dropped out of Secondary	3	15
Completed University	1	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

It was evident that most parents were aware of the benefits of sending their daughters with physical disabilities to school. However, when situations that prevented them from educating all their children arose then females with physical disabilities were usually the ones not enrolled in the schools. It also emerged that some parents of females with physical disabilities repeated the same mistakes their own parents made when they were young. Their intention was to send their daughters into early marriages immediately when they felt they were old enough to be married. Some of the parents, especially those with very little or no education, believed that their

daughters would not make it in academics even if given a chance. One of the parents who had never been to school had this to say.

"I have been able to take good care of my family through business and I believe that with or without education, my daughter can make it in life. When a girl stays for so long in pursuit of education, she ends up not getting a husband, men fear marrying educated ladies"

The females with physical disabilities are therefore taken to schools but are withdrawn as soon as they mature in order to prepare them for marriage. It was also revealed by the parents that some parents with very little or no education still hold on to the belief that there are men who do not want educated wives who may challenge their authority. When such men want to marry their daughters, such parents pull the girls out of school. Such parents also believed that marriage would solve some of the family's financial problems. For example, their physically challenged daughter will no longer be their responsibility. It was made clear that such traditional beliefs still prevail in society. The attitude that it is more beneficial to formally educate a boy than a girl with physical disability was therefore confirmed. Findings with regard to the impact of parents' education on schooling of children show that the children of more educated parents are more likely to be enrolled and more likely to progress further with education than those whose parents are not educated (UNICEF 2006). Interviews held with the females with physical disabilities who were out of school revealed that none of them had parents with education beyond primary level.

UNICEF (2005) similarly notes that girls are more likely to drop out of school than boys and pupils whose mothers have not attained any level of education will most likely dropout of school. High academic attainment of a mother and a father

significantly reduce chances of primary school dropout for girls with physical challenges. For a mother, this could be attributed to the fact that educated mothers reduce the time of doing household chores by employing house helps, while increasing the time spent with their children than their uneducated counterparts. Interviews with the parents of girls with physical challenges also revealed that educated parents are more informed of the importance of education to the girls with physical challenges. It was also evident from teachers that it was only educated parents who were more effective in helping their daughters with academic work as they monitor and supervise their children's academic progress.

UNICEF (2006) asserts that educated parents are more aware of the possible returns to education of their daughters with physical disabilities. It further notes that educated parents are likely to have access to information and social networks necessary for assistive devices required by their daughters in order to access education. The academic attainment of parents therefore enhances positive attitudinal change towards education of females with physical disabilities. In support, UNICEF (2006) concludes that children with disabilities, whose parents provide emotional support and encourage independent decision making, are generally more involved in their schooling and are less likely to drop out of school.

#### **5.4 Orphanhood**

It emerged that the females with physical disabilities who are orphaned experience compounded challenges. It was therefore important to consider the parental status of the females.

**Table 5.4: Parental status of the Females with Physical Disabilities**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Mother dead	10	10
Father dead	22	22
Both parents dead	20	20
Both parents alive	48	48
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

During Focus Group Discussion with the females, it emerged that females' whose parents had died often experienced additional changes in the set of adults who provide them with care. The relatives who distributed the orphaned children avoided those with disabilities. Separation of siblings following the parent's death when relatives distribute the burden of care among themselves constitutes another source of trauma for females with physical disabilities who are not easily accepted by the relatives. The rejection therefore left them with no one to take care of their educational needs.

Further discussions with the girls revealed that extended family relationships became weaker where children with disabilities were left as orphans. They felt that they were with weaker ties to other branches of the family left. Females with disabilities who belong to families with meager resources were at risk of being abandoned if they were orphaned and this marked the end of their education. Orphaned females with physical disabilities moving to a new household may be under particular pressure to work harder to compensate for the extra burden of belonging in the new family. This would hinder them from attending school.

Remarriages and migration among widows and widowers was mentioned as one of the factors that resulted to the separation of females with physical disabilities from the

surviving parent and siblings. The individuals with disabilities ended up staying with either their grandparents or well-wishers who can only provide them with shelter and food but not education. Some of them were forced to live on the streets involving themselves into commercial sex and crime as a means of survival at the expense of their education. They sometimes had to allocate more time for income generating activities such as household chores, food production, or caring for other family members instead of going to school.

It was also revealed during the discussions that females with physical disabilities whose fathers were dead but whose mothers were alive were more likely to access school and continue with education while maternal orphans were more likely to drop out of school. Females with physical disabilities who were double orphans on the other hand were less likely to attend school and complete primary education. The impoverished families who were not able to employ house helps accepted to take in the females with physical disabilities after the parent's death only to allocate a lot of household chores to them thereby giving them no opportunities for studies. UNESCO (2006), similarly reported that in some societies, boys are expected to work outside the house, go to school and earn a living to support the family. Girls on the other hand were judged according to their physical appearance and their ability to perform the household chores. The foster parents made girls to spend a lot of their time in learning how to work within the home so that they may be able to make good future wives. It also emerged that some of the females with physical disabilities were married off quite early as it was perceived that marrying off the girls was an escape route from poverty. It was assumed that the girl's foster parent would no longer be

responsible for taking care of the girls and that dowry would be paid. This was a source of wealth to the family.

### 5.5 Distance to School

This study investigated the types of schools the females with physical disabilities would have liked to attend.

**Table 5.5: The Response on the Types of Schools the Girls Attended**

Type of school	Frequency	Percent
Regular School	4	20%
Boarding Sp. School	16	80%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

Information in Table 5.5 evidently shows that the number of special schools in the region has not kept pace with the population growth of children with physical disabilities. They had to travel long distances to get to school. Focus Group Discussions with the females with physical disabilities revealed that, due to challenges related to travelling, most of them opted out of schools. The females with physical disabilities who attended the day schools reported experienced a lot of challenges due to distance which in turn decrease their productivity as they arrived in school very tired. They also arrived back home in the evening too tired for any meaningful studies. The females with physical disabilities were not able to participate in private tuition classes held in the evenings as they had to leave school early in order to reach their homes before dark. As a result of their disability, they took a long time to walk as compared to their able bodied peers. Focus group discussion with females with physical disabilities who had been in day regular schools but dropped out also

revealed that, some of their parents made arrangements with some of their relatives whose homes were close to schools but were not necessarily the right people to be selected as guardians for them. Some of them felt that they were accommodated but were also being mistreated in various ways that affected their education. It was also revealed by some parents that when the schools were located away from home, parents tended to worry about the safety of their daughters and often were unwilling to let them go to school.

As mentioned earlier in Table 4.4, it was evident that distance to school constitutes educational barrier to 5% of females with physical disabilities. This could be partly because of safety and cultural prohibitions against females traveling unescorted as was revealed by the girl's parents. With physical disabilities, such barriers are intensified. In most cases, the only schools serving children with disabilities are segregated special schools, often located in urban centers. Females with physical disabilities from rural regions must travel to attend such schools. However, the cultural expectations that females should stay close to home may prohibit participation by females with physical disabilities. Interviews with parents of females with physical disabilities revealed that even if families allowed their daughters with physical disabilities to attend a school away from home, transportation system still posed a problem to the females with mobility problems. Most of the passenger service vehicle conductors did not accept to carry the females with wheelchairs, crutches or walkers arguing that they wasted a lot of time getting in and off the vehicles and that they occupied a lot of space with the devices. On the other hand, attending regular schools in the region also presented travel challenges, walking for some distance for a girl with mobility impairment unless assisted to and from school was not easy.



Although boys with physical disabilities may face the same travel difficulties, however, gender roles and related stereotypes about males as strong, sturdy, and independent work to their advantage.

In both the review of the literature and the field validation, attitudes, beliefs, and stigma towards females with physical disabilities featured prominently and this made most of the females with physical disabilities to make friends with females who are physically disabled and not their able bodied peers. Rousso (2000) notes that because friendship is often gender segregated, boys with physical disabilities tend to forge friendships with their non-disabled male peers, where the code is to help one another. Boys with physical disabilities can therefore rely on their able bodied friends to lift them onto inaccessible buses and into inaccessible school buildings. In contrast, stereotypes about females particularly those with physical disabilities as fragile and dependent, combined with safety and cultural issues, may cause parents to discourage risk taking through creative ways of solving problems by relying on peers. During the interviews with parents, it was revealed that due to the distance of regular schools in the region combined with mobility problems experienced by the girls; many males had taken advantage of them and had impregnated them. The influence of distance to school on the chances of dropout was therefore more pronounced among females with physical disabilities than among boys with physical disabilities.

## **Conclusion**

The findings for household factors that affect access to education by females with physical disabilities show that, due to family income, females with physical disabilities from higher socio-economic income families are more likely to access

education than those from low socio-economic income. Females with physical disabilities from families with conflicts tend to drop out of school earlier than females with physical disabilities from intact families. Females with physical disabilities who are orphaned face a lot of challenges and are not able to access education, they are assigned a lot of household chores that interfere with their time for studies. Parents with higher educational levels have stronger confidence in their daughters' academic abilities irrespective of their disabilities, have higher expectations of their daughters and motivate them to do well in school. This makes the girls more likely to complete their education.

## CHAPTER SIX

### COMMUNITY'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS EDUCATION FOR FEMALES WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

#### Introduction

This chapter presents findings, analysis and interpretation of data collected on the community's attitude towards education for females with physical disabilities. The issues presented in the chapter include community's assistance towards education of females with physical disabilities and the types of schools attended by females with physical disabilities.

#### 6.1 Community's Assistance towards Education for Females with Physical Disabilities

The study sought to investigate the community's assistance towards education of females with physical disabilities and the results are presented in Table 6.1

**Table 6.1: Community's Assistance in Fee Payment**

<b>Fees payment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Parents	8	40
Grandparents	4	20
Aunts	0	0
Uncles	0	0
Church sponsored	6	30
Harambee	0	0
Individual sponsored	2	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Analysis on Table 6.1 is a clear indication that the education of females with physical disabilities is majorly catered for by their parents, grandparents, the church and a few

individuals. This concurs with what one of the teachers explained during an interview. The teacher reported that education of females with physical disabilities was entirely left as a responsibility of the parents, churches, and a few individuals. This observation was also made by the head teacher who explained that the female's school fees was mostly paid by their parents, grandparents and through sponsorship by churches and a few individuals.

Interviews with the parents of females with physical disabilities revealed that rejection of most of the females with physical disabilities started right from their families. The children were condemned as not worth going to school by either both or one of the parents. It was revealed that most of the fathers abandoned their families just to escape being responsible for a child with physical disability. The parents also revealed that most people in the community believe that disabilities were caused by witchcraft, curses or a punishment from God for wrongs done by the parents. It was therefore, easier for a poor parent of a female with physical disability to receive help from some of their relatives by accepting to help able bodied children to pay school fees but not one with a disability. The parents were therefore left to shoulder the burdens of educating their daughters with physical disabilities alone. Focus Group Discussions with the girls revealed that there were girls with physical disabilities who had been abandoned by their parents and were staying with grandparents. It is the grandparents who struggle to pay their school fees yet the parents are alive. One of the girls stated:

My mother and father work in Nairobi and stay with my other siblings but I was left to stay with my maternal grandmother who pays my school fees. My parents do not want people to know that I am their child and even my grandmother tells me to say that I am a daughter to one of her daughters who died 12 years ago. It pains me that at times I feel like telling people the truth but I also do not want to offend my grandmother.

This verbatim quotation demonstrates that the females know that there is lack of acceptance from their own parents. It also demonstrates the level of stigmatization and discrimination that the girls experience from their own parents.

Further discussions with the girls revealed that many people in the community consider physical disability contagious and therefore isolate them. It is therefore very difficult for the community to contribute towards their education. Randiki (2002) affirms this practice by stating that some African communities used to throw children with physical disabilities in the bush because women were expected to give birth to healthy babies. Any weakling was not given any chance to live because they were considered a burden to the community. For example, in Nigeria, the common perception held by policy makers and the public at large, is that disabled people and disability issues are viewed in terms of charity and welfare.

Similarly, some great philosophers such as Plato and Socrates condemned children with physical disabilities as not capable of reasoning and therefore could not learn. Interview with the chief about the provision of education to females with physical disabilities revealed that he doubts if people can contribute towards the girls' education. His comments was;

"... One of the parents with a disabled child organized for a fundraising to take the child for surgery to correct a disability and this is something that I personally participated in actively but still it failed, very few people attended and very little money was realized, if a medical fundraising failed can that of education succeed"?

The chief further explained that people generally make judgment about the people with disabilities in relation to the disability, both visible and imagined. The females with disabilities are continuously assigned duties, responsibilities and expectations

pegged on their disability and their education is seen as a waste of resources. There may not be enough empirical evidence to support this belief yet the chief stated that;

*“at the back of our minds, we associate people with disabilities more with the disabilities than what they are capable of learning in school.”*

## **6.2 Schools Attended by Females with Physical Disabilities**

The study investigated the schools that females with physical disabilities attend and the results are presented in Table 6.2.

**Table 6.2: Schools Attended by Females with Physical Disabilities**

<b>Type of school</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Boarding	18	90
Regular	2	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Responses from the table above show that 90% of females with physical disabilities attended boarding residential schools while only 10% attended regular schools. This could have been attributed to the community's attitude towards education of persons with disabilities. This might also be interpreted as a way of exclusion from the main stream. Inclusive education is not only accommodating children with disabilities into a regular school rather, it goes beyond that. It is a focus on creating both social and physical environments responsive to the differing developmental capacities, needs and potentials of children with disabilities.

During Focus Group Discussion with the females, it was revealed that the attitude of parents of their able bodied peers was negative and this influenced their peers' attitude towards them. The parents of the females with physical disabilities confirmed this during interviews when they said that parents with able bodied children felt that children with physical disabilities need to learn in separate settings because they would affect the performance of their children. The females with physical disabilities asserted that most of the people in their community associate them with beggars and not learners. This reflects to the use of the term 'handicapped' as used by Tuyet and Johanson (2001), obviously unaware of the fact that this term has its origins in the belief that people with disabilities can only be beggars with 'caps in hand' out on the streets begging for money. The word 'handicapped' which was created in 1504 by King Henry VII to describe people with disabilities continues today, all schools for the physically disabled are still registered as schools for the physically handicapped. This illustrates deeply rooted stigmatization and discrimination of people with physical disabilities in society. It was also revealed that one of the churches that sponsor some of the schools used to set specific days in a week to send the children out on the streets with marked tins to go and beg and bring the money to church as was stated by one of the females with physical disability who was out of school;

"...I remember when I was in school, the church sponsoring our school used to come once every week with tins which we were given to go and beg in the streets for a whole day without food and that the money was taken to church".

This is similar to media reports in Kenya. On several occasions, the local media houses such as KTN and Citizen have highlighted persons with physical disabilities being used by able bodied people by distributing them in the streets of Nairobi in the morning to beg, collecting them in the evenings only to be given food and shelter at

the expense of their education. Nicole (2010) explains how superstitions about causes of disabilities have led many parents who give birth to girls with physical disabilities to hide them and deny them access to education. Nicole further explains that negative attitudes usually arise from ignorance and fear of the unknown.

According to the chief of the area, education officer and religious leaders, it appears that most of the harsh treatments against females with physical disabilities have since been discarded. However, a more salient challenge has remained resistant to this, namely, attitude. According to the religious leaders, there is a common belief that disabilities are as a result of a curse from God either for the crime of a parent or a community's misdeed and one cannot succeed until the curse is broken. One of the religious leaders stated that "even in the Bible, new testament has continued to portray persons with disability as requiring healing and redemption." This appears to support what is usually seen and heard on the media announcing for the disabled to be taken to religious crusades for healing, claiming that the lame shall walk. One of the females with physical disabilities in school testified during a Focus Group Discussion.

During one of the holidays, my mother took me to a crusade where it was announced that all the lame shall walk. After prayers, the crutches that I used for walking were taken away and I was told that I am healed. It happened so fast and people were so many, I could not complain because I could not walk. To my disappointment, my mother had to carry me on her back on our way back home. Since she could not afford to buy new crutches she brought me back to school on her back. I had to crawl to class, to the bathroom and toilet for two weeks before the principle of the school got me some other crutches to use.

Some parents of females with physical disabilities had been subjected to mental and physical pain on several occasions as a means of exorcising the evil spirits by certain religious leaders. All these portray that religion considers people with disabilities as



deficient or incomplete in a way. However, during Focus Group Discussion with the teachers, it was evident that charity model to disability provision has led to the community and other stakeholders ignoring the education of females with physical disabilities as a responsibility of voluntary organizations and a few churches, such as the Salvation Army and Lutheran churches.

Due to attitudinal and retrogressive cultural beliefs, females with physical disabilities have often been subjected to discrimination and exclusion. Many times the media present girls with physical disabilities as objects of pity whose accomplishments must be held in awe. However, there are occasions when the media industry has played a role in attitude and policy change at household, community and national levels. For example, in an opinion article carried in the *Sunday Nation* (August 10, 2008) Phitalis

Were Masakwe writes:-

Disabled girls and women continue to be hidden, raped and denied education yet the convention on the Rights of the Child and one of the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women have been with us for a while. Parliament and other decision making organs around the world are conspicuously missing disabled peoples representatives and yet we have very strong protocols and treaties on people's participation in planning and decision making (Sunday Nation, August 10, 2008).

A weak educational foundation combined with social prejudices in the cultural and economic challenges prevent the girls with physical challenges from participating fully in the society. Even though the government of Kenya has tried to resolve some of the issues related to education of children with disabilities, the girls with physical disabilities have been left out. According to information from education officers in charge of special education in the county, there is no known girls' school for the physically disabled in Kenya. Ahead of the 1981 United Nations International Year

of Disabled Persons, the Kenya Government declared 1980 the year for persons with disabilities and supported a number of campaigns on disability and gender issues. Furthermore, in 1993, the Attorney General appointed a Task Force to review laws relating to people with disabilities. The Task Force collected views and presented its report. Consequently, people with Disability Act was enacted in December 2003 and gazette for commencement in June 2004, with the exclusion of section 22, 23, 24, 35(2), 39 and 40, which make provisions for adjustment of public buildings, and public vehicles and the issuing of adjustment orders to facilitate access to education.

In order to achieve these objectives, the government drafted the National Disability Policy (2006) so that it can guide the government plans on how to address the needs and aspirations of people with disabilities in prevention, public education, training, employment, assistive devices and other services. Disappointingly, not much has been done to coordinate with building contractors public transport, educational institutions and medical facilities to ensure that they are friendly to people with physical disability. The Kenya National Survey for Persons with Disabilities Report (2008) indicates that there is dire need for assistive devices such as crutches, wheelchairs, prosthesis and walkers and other support services, which would enhance the lives of females with physical disabilities and allow them to access education.

Odhiambo, & Odada (2008) explains how disturbingly, the current constitution has provisions that can be read as discriminatory to persons with physical disabilities. For example, section 12 states that a person who is incapacitated by reasons of physical and mental infirmity while exercising the functions of office of the president should be removed from that office. Although the provision may be seen as reasonable with regard to mental illness, it can imply that those with physical disabilities cannot hold

the office of the president. The provision could have been more reasonable if it had been interpreted without such ambiguities.

World Economic Forum (2005) states that in the United States of America, Children born with physical disabilities were labeled to as 'imbeciles' or 'morons'. This described their status as those who were not able to learn. This supports Mute and Wanjala (2002) who found that the other legislation in Kenya that protects female with physical and mental disabilities is the Penal Code, which prescribes principles of criminal liability. It makes provision for the protection of "idiots" and "imbeciles." The language used by this Act ("idiots and imbeciles") is highly derogatory and does not clearly identify persons it seeks to protect. Moreover, the offence of engaging in sexual intercourse with the girls who are physically challenged and those who are mentally challenged, referred to as "idiots" and "imbeciles" amounts only to defilement, not rape, which only results in lenient punishment, unlike rape which attracts stiffer penalties. These are areas that could be highlighted so that they are remedied.

Community's attitude towards the girls' education has impacted negatively towards their access to education. This has been supported in the literature. For example, UNESCO (2006) states that a lot of advocacy has been done regarding the value of educating and training people with physical disabilities. However, advocacy for girls with physical disabilities is still deficient. Furthermore, the prejudice surrounding them continues to perpetuate the belief that educating them is futile. UNESCO (2006) notes that, in Kenya, nearly all public regular primary schools are not accessible to persons with physical disabilities, more so those with crutches and wheelchairs. As a consequence, very few girls with physical challenges attend these schools. In spite of

the government's efforts to accommodate children with disability through inclusive education, misconceptions still exist and this has hindered the modification of the infrastructure and the transportation systems to accommodate people with physical disabilities. It is therefore important that policies that are already in place concerning the adaptations of the infrastructures that are disability friendly are implemented.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations on the attitude of girls who are physically challenged towards education. The household factors that influence education of girls with physical challenges and the community's attitude towards education of girls with physical challenges are also presented.

#### **7.1 Summary**

The attitude of females with physical disabilities towards their education is highly influenced by the attitude of the society towards them. The majority of females with physical disabilities perceive education as important only to the able-bodied individuals. This could be attributed to lack of role models who have gone through education and are in good employment. Due to various challenges experienced as a result of their disability, the girls feel that education is not beneficial to them, hence the negative attitude towards their own education.

Majority of girls with physical challenges have no hope of gainful employment after their education. This results in low self-esteem. The girls meet a lot of discrimination against various resources which leads to hopelessness and lack of enthusiasm in education. Due to low expectations from girls with physical challenges by their teachers and parents, the girls also expect very little from themselves. As the girls observe other people's attitude towards their education, they lose hope and render themselves unfit educationally. Some of the household factors that influence access to education of girls with physical challenges included large families that are not able

to provide for educational needs of all their children. When faced with economic hardships, given that the direct and indirect costs of sending girls with physical challenges to school is higher than that of taking the non-disabled girls to school, the parents opt to take boys and the able bodied girls to school leaving the physically challenged girls to remain at home.

When the costs of taking children to school become overwhelming to poverty stricken families, the girls with physical challenges are sometimes used to work as house helps to help raise school fees for their able bodied siblings. Majority of girls with physical challenges lack family cohesiveness which leads to lack of motivation, effort and zeal towards their academics as they have no one to impress. Girls with physical challenges whose parents are educated are more likely to access education than those whose parents have little or no education.

Girls with physical challenges who belong to families with meager resources are at risk of being abandoned if they are orphaned and can no longer access any education. The impoverished families who are not able to employ house helps therefore accept the orphaned girls with physical challenges to work for them in compensation for the extra-burden of hosting them as part of the new family. Due to attitudinal and retrogressive cultural beliefs, girls with physical challenges have often been subjected to discrimination and exclusion. Rejection of most of the girls with physical challenges starts right from their immediate family members. Education for girls with physical challenges seems to be left as a responsibility of their parents, churches and very few individuals who volunteer as sponsors. Due to disability of a child in a

family, most fathers abandon their families to escape bearing responsibility for such children.

Society generally believes that disabilities are caused by witchcraft, curses or wrongs done by the children's parents. Economically, empowered relatives easily accept to help their poor relatives by paying school fees for their able bodied children but not to those with disabilities. Sexual harassment to girls with physical disabilities is downplayed. However, sexual harassment of such girls by males in the community including family members, teachers, and boys usually have drastic effect on the girls education. As a result of lack of acceptance into regular schools, most of the girls with physical challenges attend special boarding schools far away from their homes and due to long distances and transportation problems; they opt to drop out of school. All the schools for the physically challenged are still registered as schools for the physically handicapped. This label illustrates a deeply rooted stigmatization and discrimination of people with disabilities in society.

## **7.2 Conclusions**

Negative attitude of females with physical disabilities towards their education is highly influenced by the attitudes of people around them, lack of role models who are in gainful employment, rigid assessment procedures that make them dropout of school, inaccessibility to existing infrastructure in learning institutions and lack of confidence in social settings due to stigmatization and discrimination, impacts negatively on the females with disabilities attitude towards their own education. The females with physical disabilities therefore believe that education is important only to able bodied individuals but not for them.

Household factors that influence access to education by females with physical disabilities results from socio-cultural factors such as inability to pay for the cost of education for females with disability as their education is more costly as compared to their able bodied peers. Females with physical disabilities from higher socio-economic income are more likely to access education than those from low socio-economic income. Females with physical disabilities from families with conflicts tend to drop out of school earlier than females with physical disabilities from intact families. Physical disability coupled with orphanhood make the females with physical disabilities face a lot of challenges that hinder them from accessing education. Females with physical disabilities whose parents have higher education are more likely to access education than those whose parents have little or no education. Due to long distance to schools, females with physical disabilities are more likely to drop out of school than males with physical disabilities.

Community's attitude towards education of females with physical disabilities revealed that females with physical disabilities are less valued than males with physical disabilities. Attitudes and practices embedded in cultural beliefs, taboos, rites of passage and religion create obstacles that are insurmountable to participation of females with physical disabilities in social and cultural activities which eventually hinder their access to education.



### **7.3 Recommendations**

#### **For the government, policy makers, education implementers, and other stakeholders**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

Teachers and parents of females with physical disabilities should collaborate with other stakeholders in education need to recognize the challenges faced by females with physical disabilities in accessing education and provide strategies to meet and overcome the challenges. Females with physical disabilities should have more opportunities to observe female role models with physical disabilities in good careers, this would motivate them to work hard to emulate the role models.

Schools should implement flexible alternatives of school fees payments such as inform of agricultural produce or provision of labor for the school fees. The government should establish special boarding schools for females with physical disabilities in every county which are currently missing in Kenya. The government should be able to identify and support learners with disabilities who are orphaned.

The government should formulate and enforce laws to protect females who are physically disabled from practices that threaten their wellbeing. The government should collaborate with policy formulators to find means of implementing the policies that would make all regular schools accessible to all learners with physical disabilities so that all learners can attend schools that are closer to their homes. This would make it possible for females with physical disabilities to attend any school that is closer to their homes without difficulties.

### **7.3.1 Suggestion for further Research**

Based on the findings of this study, there is need for further research in the following areas.

- Effect of Orphanhood on education of children with disabilities.
- Effect of family conflicts on children with disabilities

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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTION LETTER**

**Janet Auma Odhiambo**

**P. O. Box 4165,**

**Kisumu.**

**Date:.....**

**The Principal,  
Joyland Special School,  
For the Physically Handicapped,  
P. O. Box 1790,  
Kisumu.**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH (COLLECTION OF DATA)**

For the fulfillment of my Masters degree in Social Development and Management. I am to carry out a research practice. I therefore wish to humbly request you that I be in your school between, January 2013 - April 2013.

I look towards your cooperation.

Thanking you in advance.

Yours sincerely,

**J. A. ODHIAMBO**

## **APPENDIX 1I: SAMPLE WRITTEN CONSENT FORMS FOR PARENTS OF FEMALES WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES**

You are invited to participate in a Focus Group Discussion in a research conducted by Janet Auma Odhiambo from Maseno University. The study is to establish the Socio-cultural factors that influence access to primary education by females with physical disabilities in Kisumu. Our main focus of discussions will be on the house hold factors that influence access to education by females with physical disabilities and the community's attitude towards education of females with physical disabilities. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a parent of a female with physical disability.

If you decide to participate, you will be paid a total of amount Kshs 3000/= only to carter for your transportation. Meals will be provided.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by the law. Subject identities will be kept confidential and anonymity will be observed.

Your participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the school authorities or researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation anytime without penalty.

## **APPENDIX 111: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Think back over the years that you have participated in the care taking of your daughter, tell me about the positive experiences that you have had with your family members and the community about your daughters' education.
2. How has the community been involved in the education of your daughter?
3. Tell me about the disappointments you have had in making her access education..
4. What can each one of us do to make the girls access education?
5. Of all the things we have talked about, what is the most important to you?

**APPENDIX 1V: SAMPLE WRITTEN CONSENT FORMS FOR FEMALES  
WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES IN SCHOOL**

You are invited to participate in a Focus Group Discussion in a research conducted by Janet Auma Odhiambo from Maseno University. The study is to establish the Socio-cultural factors that influence access to primary education by females with physical disabilities in Kisumu. The main focus of our discussion is to establish the attitude of females with physical disabilities towards education, the house hold factors that influence their access to education and the community's attitude towards their education. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a female with physical disability.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by the law. Subject identities will be kept confidential and anonymity will be observed.

Your participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the school authorities or researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation anytime without penalty.

## **APPENDIX V: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Tell me about the importance of education to you as an individual.
2. Think back over the years that you have been in school and describe some of the good experiences you have had as you pursue your education.
3. Tell me about the disappointments or challenges you have had in pursuing education.

**APPENDIX V1: SAMPLE WRITTEN CONSENT FORMS FOR FEMALES  
WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES WHO ARE OUT OF SCHOOL**

You are invited to participate in a Focus Group Discussion in a research conducted by Janet Auma Odhiambo from Maseno University. The study is to establish the Socio-cultural factors that influence access to primary education by females with physical disabilities. Our main focus of discussions will be the attitude of females with physical disabilities towards education, the household factors that influence their access to education and the community's attitude towards their education. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a female with physical disability.

You will be paid a total of 1000/= shillings for your transport. Meals will be provided.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by the law. Subject identities will be kept confidential and anonymity will be observed.

Your participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the school authorities or researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation anytime without penalty.



## **APPENDIX V11: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Tell me the reasons for your not being in school.
2. Think back over the years that you were in school and describe some of the good experiences you had while in school.
3. Tell me about the disappointments or challenges you had while in school.

**APPENDIX V11I: QUESTIONNAIRE I: FOR FEMALES WITH PHYSICAL  
DISABILITIES**

Dear Madam,

I am a student of Maseno University pursuing a Masters' Degree of Arts in Social Development in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. With research as one of the requirements, this questionnaire is intended to find out about socio-cultural factors influencing access to education by Females with physical disabilities in Kisumu, County, Kenya. I am requesting you to be sincere while providing the required information.

Instruction: (I) Write answers in the space provided.

(II) Put a tick (√) to the right option of your choice

**SECTION A**

1. What is your name..... ( Optional).
2. Age [   ]
3. Household size [   ]
4. Religion:    Christian [   ]    Muslim [   ]

**SECTION B**

1. a) Do you go to school?  
Yes [   ]        No [   ]  
If No. explain.....
- b) What type of school do you attend?        Day (   )    Boarding (   )
2. Do you think education is important?        Yes [   ]    No. [   ]  
If No. explain.....
3. Do you always complete your homework?        Yes [   ]    No [   ]

4. How often do you miss your classes? Quite often [ ] Rarely [ ]

5. Where do you enjoy spending most of your time?

At home [ ] In school [ ]

Explain .....

6. Do you have any people with physical disabilities that you do admire?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain .....

7. Which career do you intend to pursue in future?

.....

.....

How does being physically challenged affect your education?.....

8. Do you think you can perform as well as the able bodied girls? Yes[ ] No [ ]

Explain.....I

s there any improvement that you would like to be made in your school environment? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain.....

**SECTION C**

1. How many siblings do you have? [ ]

2. Which born are you? [ ]

3. Who do you stay with? Father [ ] Mother [ ] Both parents [ ]

Guardian [ ]

4. Do you always report to school in time? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

5. How do you reach

school?.....

.....  
6. Are you able to perform activities of daily living? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

If not how do you cope at

home.....

.....

7. How is the relationship between you and your parents? Good [ ] Bad [ ]

Explain .....

8. How is the relationship between you and your siblings?

Friendly [ ] Hostile [ ]

Explain .....

9. Are there duties assigned to you at home? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

If yes explain.....

.....

10. Are you given the same educational opportunity like your siblings?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

If No. explain.....

.....

11. Are your parents dead or alive? Explain who is dead and who is alive and

how you cope.

**SECTION D**

1. How do you relate to your neighbors at home? Friendly [ ] Isolated [ ]
2. What are the people's comments about your disability?  
Positive [ ] Negative [ ]
3. What is the distance of the school you attend from your home?.....  
.....
4. Where have you made many friends? At home [ ] at school [ ]
5. How do teachers treat you in school?.....  
.....
6. How do your parents treat you?.....  
.....
7. Do you attend church services, during school? Yes [ ] No. [ ]  
Explain .....
8. Does the community provide any assistance to enhance your education?  
Yes [ ] No. [ ]  
Explain.....  
.....
9. Do you know your Church pastor? Yes [ ] No. [ ]
10. Do you know your chief/assistant chief? Yes [ ] No. [ ]
11. Are there persons in the village who are not close family members, but are close to you? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

## QUESTIONNAIRES II - FOR TEACHERS

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a student of Maseno University pursuing a Masters' Degree of Arts in Social Development in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. With research as one of the requirements, this questionnaire is intended to find out about socio-cultural factors influencing access to education by physically challenged primary school girls in Kisumu, County, Kenya. I request you to be sincere while providing the required information.

Instruction: (I) Write answers in the space provided.

(II) Put a tick (✓) to the right option of your choice

### SECTION A

1. What is your name?..... ( Optional )
2. Sex? Male [ ] Female [ ]
3. Marital status: Married [ ] Single [ ]
4. Do you have a child of your own, who is physically challenged?  
Yes [ ] No [ ]

### SECTION B

1. What is the attitude of girls, who are physically challenged towards education?  
Positive [ ] Negative [ ]  
Explain .....
2. Do girls who are physically challenged perform equally well in their academic work as their able bodied peers? Yes [ ] No. [ ]  
Briefly explain .....  
.....

3. Do you experience any of these with the girls who are physically challenged?

Absenteeism [ ] Rudeness [ ]

Indiscipline [ ] Incomplete work [ ]

Reluctance to work [ ]

4. Mention any other challenges that you face, while instructing the girls with physical challenges?.....

5. Do the girls get excuses to be absent from classes? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

6. Do the girls report in time for their lessons? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

7. Do the girls compete their peers in class work? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

8. Do the girls do thorough revision on their own during or after examinations?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

9. Do the girls form group discussions for their academic performance?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

10. Do the girls have career ambitions? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain .....

### SECTION C

1. Are the girls education supported by their families? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

2. Are the girls frequently visited by their parents? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

3. Are the girls brought to school in good time? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

4. Do parents of the girls pay their school fees? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

5. Do parents consult with the teachers on their daughter's progress in school?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

6. Are the girl's personal effects provided by the parents? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain .....

7. Are the girls collected by their parents from schools when the school?  
 Yes [ ] No. [ ]  
 If No. explain.....
8. Do both parents accompany each other to make follow ups on the child's  
 developments in school? Yes [ ] No. [ ]
9. Are the girls visited by their siblings while they are in school? Yes [ ] No.  
 [ ]
10. Are the girls medical need met by their parents? Yes [ ] No. [ ]  
 Explain .....

**SECTION D**

1. What is the community's perception about the causes of  
 disabilities.....
2. What is the community's' attitude towards education of girls who are  
 physically challenged? Positive [ ] Negative [ ]  
 Explain .....
3. What is your perception as a teacher about education of girls who are  
 physically challenged?.....
4. Do these girls use any assistive devices? Yes [ ] No. [ ]  
 If yes, what are their sources?.....
5. Are there any support services that the surrounding community provide for  
 these girls?  
 Yes [ ] No. [ ]  
 If Yes, explain.....
6. Are the physical facilities in the regular schools around disability compliant?  
 Yes [ ] No. [ ]



7. Are the churches around the area accessible by children with physical challenges?  
Yes [ ] No. [ ]
8. Are the local offices around the region accessible by the children with physical challenges? Yes [ ] No. [ ]
9. Are the social amenities in the area accessible by children with physical challenges?  
Yes [ ] No. [ ]
10. Are transportation systems in the area disability compliant? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

**APPENDIX IX: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS OF FEMALES  
WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES WHOSE DAUGHTERS ARE IN SCHOOL**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a student of Maseno University pursuing a Masters' Degree of Arts in Social Development in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. With research as one of the requirements, this questionnaire is intended to find out about socio-cultural factors influencing access to education by physically challenged primary school girls in Kisumu, County, Kenya. I request you to be sincere while providing the required information.

Instruction: (I) Write answers in the space provided.

(II) Put a tick (√) to the right option of your choice

**SECTION A**

1. What is your

name?.....

- Age [   ]
- Sex: Male [   ]      Female [   ]
- Occupation .....
- Household size [   ]
- Marital status: married [   ]      Single [   ]
- Religion: Christian [   ]      Muslim [   ]
- Level of education.

**SECTION B**

1. What is the attitude of your daughter towards education?

Positive [ ] Negative [ ]

Explain

.....

2. In which class is your daughter? [ ]

3. Does she do her homework? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

4. Does she perform activities of daily living? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

5. What is the general performance of your daughter in school? Average [ ]

above average [ ] below average [ ]

6. Does your daughter miss school often? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain .....

7. Is your daughter bothered wherever she misses school? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

8. Does your daughter show keen interest in her studies? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

9. Does your daughter look for excuses to be absent from school?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

10. Does your daughter like the school she is learning at? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Explain why.

11. Do you like the school where your daughter is learning? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Explain why.

12. What are your daughters activities in a

day?.....

13. What are your daughters future plans?.....

**SECTION C**

Do you have other children? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

If yes, how many.....

1. How did you react when you realized that your child had a physical disability?

Shocked [ ] Disbelief [ ]

Denied [ ] Normally [ ]

2. a) How did your spouse react toward the child's conditions?.....

b) Do you stay with the child? If not who stays with her?

3. How did the other siblings react towards their sisters disability?.....

4. Is your daughter able to perform activities of daily living? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

If No, how does she cope?.....

.....

If Yes, is she allocated duties to perform in the house?.....

5. Is your daughter in a boarding or day school? Boarding [ ] Day [ ]

6. If in boarding, how often do you visit her, while in school?

Often [ ] Rarely [ ] Don't visit [ ]

7. Does your daughter use any assistive devices? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

If Yes, explain their source.....

8. Do you visit the class teachers to follow up on her progress?Yes [ ] No [ ]

9. What challenges do you face in providing educational needs to your daughter?.....

10. Have you been getting any assistance from somewhere else to keep the child in school? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain .....

11. Do you take your child for medical check ups? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

12. Do you have support from all the family members in providing educational needs to your daughter? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain .....

**SECTION D**

1. How does the community perceive your child's impairment?

Sympathetic [ ] Normally [ ]

Withdrawn [ ] Mockingly [ ]

Isolate [ ]

2. What are some of the reasons that people gave as the cause of your daughters disability?.....

3. How does your daughter relate to her peers in the community

Friendly [ ] Unfriendly [ ] Isolated [ ]

4. Is your daughter usually involved in community activities? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain .....

5. Is the school next to your home accessible to your daughter?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain .....

6. Is your church accessible to your daughter? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain .....

7. Has your daughter ever been visited by a social worker? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

8. What kind of assistance does the community give towards your daughters education?

9. Is it easy to travel with your daughter? Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain .....

**APPENDIX X: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS FOR PARENTS OF FEMALES  
WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES WHOSE DAUGHTERS ARE NOT IN  
SCHOOL**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a student of Maseno University pursuing a Masters' Degree of Arts in Social Development in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. With research as one of the requirements, this questionnaire is intended to find out about socio-cultural factors influencing access to education by physically challenged primary school girls in Kisumu, County, Kenya. I request you to be sincere in providing the required information.

Instruction: (I) Write answers in the space provided.

(II) Put a tick (✓) to the right option of your choice

1. What is your daughter's attitude towards education?
2. What are your daughter's activities of a day?
3. How does your daughter plan to survive in future?
4. How do the siblings react to the fact that their sister is not in school?
5. Who provides for your daughter's needs?
6. Do you think it is necessary for your daughter to go to school?
7. Has your daughter been to a hospital or assessment centre?
8. Have you been visited by any social worker?
9. What future plans do you have for your daughter?
10. Does your daughter go to church?
11. Does she go to any social places with her siblings?

12. Are you aware of any support services available for the child outside the home environment?

13. Do you stay with your daughter or does she stay with someone else?



**APPENDIX XI : INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FEMALES WITH  
PHYSICAL DISABILITIES WHO ARE IN SCHOOL**

Madam,

I am a student of Maseno University pursuing a Masters' Degree of Arts in Social Development in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. With research as one of the requirements, this questionnaire is intended to find out about socio-cultural factors influencing access to education by physically challenged primary school girls in Kisumu, County, Kenya. I request you to be sincere while providing the required information.

Instruction: (I) Write answers in the space provided.

(II) Put a tick (√) to the right option of your choice

**SECTION A**

1. What is your name?..... ( Optional )

2. How old are you?.....

3. Who do you live with?

Father [ ] Mother [ ]

Both parents [ ] Relative [ ]

If not parents why?.....

**SECTION B**

1. Are you happy being in school?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Explain.....

2. Where do you prefer staying?

At home [ ] In school [ ]

Give reasons for your  
response.....

3. Are you being visited while in school?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

How often and by who.....

4. How do you usually travel to school?.....

5. What role does your family play in your education?.....

6. How do you relate with your siblings while at home?.....

7. What is the attitude of your teachers towards you?.....

8. What is the attitude of your peers towards you?.....

9. Do you have many friends?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

10. Which of the following places in school is difficult for you to access?

Class [ ] Office [ ]

Toilets [ ] Others

(Specify).....

11. What challenges do you face while in school?

.....

12. How do you cope with the challenges?

.....

13. What would you like to be in future?

.....

**SECTION B: FOR THE FEMALES WHO ARE PHYSICALLY DISABLED  
AND NOT IN SCHOOL**

1. Would you like to go to school?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Give reasons for your response

.....

2. Have you ever been in school before?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If Yes, why did you drop out? If No. give reasons

.....

3. Have you been visited by teachers or a school worker?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If Yes, what advice did they give?

.....

4. Who provides for your upkeep?.....

5. How do you intend to survive in future?.....

6. Do you have many friends around?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

7. Give an account of your days activities.

.....

8. What are your future plans?

.....

9. What is your perception about education?

.....

10. Are you usually involved in some social activities in the community?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Give reasons for your response

.....

11. What challenges do you face while trying to do activities of daily living?

.....

**APPENDIX XII: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS IN A SPECIAL  
SCHOOL FOR THE PHYSICALLY DISABLED**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a student of Maseno University pursuing a Masters' Degree of Arts in Social Development in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. With research as one of the requirements, this questionnaire is intended to find out about socio-cultural factors influencing access to education by physically challenged primary school girls in Kisumu, County, Kenya. I request you to be sincere while providing the required information.

Instruction: (I) Write answers in the space provided.

(II) Put a tick (√) to the right option of your choice

**SECTION A**

1. What is your name?.....
2. Sex:  
(a) Male [ ] (b) Female [ ]
3. How long have you been working as a teacher?.....  
years

**SECTION B**

1. What is the attitude of girls who are physically challenged towards education?  
.....
2. What challenges do the girls face while in school?  
.....
3. What does the school do about the challenges?.....

4. Are the girls visited by their parents while in school?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Briefly explain.....

5. Are the girls' personal needs met by their parents/guardian?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain .....

6. Do the girls report in time when the school opens?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Give reasons for your response

7. Do the girls perform equally well in their class work as the able bodied ones?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Explain briefly

8. Do you experience any of these with the children?

Absenteeism [ ] Incompleteness of work [ ]

Rudeness [ ] Reluctance [ ]

Indiscipline [ ]

Explain

9. Mention any other challenges that you face, while instructing the girls with physically challenges? Are they performing equally well as the able bodied children?

10. What role does the government play in the support of education for the girls?

11. How do these children relate with their peers who are not physically challenged?

Cooperative [ ] Uncooperative [ ]

Explain .....

12. Are there other sources of support for these girls while they are in school?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Explain .....

13. What are some of the assistive devices used by these girls?

.....

14. Are the assistive devices available?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Explain.....

15. What are the coping strategies for the girls with severe physical disabilities while they are in school?

.....

16. Do the girls excel academically?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

17. What do you think could be done to improve on the access of education by girls who are physically challenged/

.....

.....

18. What do you think could be done on the following area?

A. Enrolment.....

B. Retention.....

C. Completion .....

**APPENDIX XIII: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FEMALES WITH  
PHYSICAL DISABILITIES**

Dear Madam,

I am a student of Maseno University pursuing a Masters' Degree of Arts in Social Development in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. With research as the of the requirements, this questionnaire is intended to find out about socio-cultural factors influencing access to education by physically challenged primary school girls in Kisumu, County, Kenya. I request you to be sincere while providing the required information.

1. Is education important to you? Explain .....
2. How does being physically challenged affect your daily life in school?  
.....
3. How does being physically challenged affect your relationship with your family?.....  
.....
4. Do you think education will improve your life?  
Explain .....  
.....  
...How do teachers treat you?.....  
.....
4. How do your parents treat you?.....  
.....  
.....
5. How do your age mates treat you?.....



.....

Are you orphaned or not? If orphaned, how does it affect your education?

.....

6. What do you think the Government can do to improve your life?

.....





12. Which measure have you employed if any, to improve access to educational services by girls who are physically challenged?

.....

13. Have your Ministry/Department had Plans/Programs that have promoted the education of girls who are physically disabled?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Give reasons for your response

.....

14. In your view in what ways can parents/caregivers hinder access to education by girls who are physically challenged?

.....

15. Does the government play any role in ensuring accessibility of education by the girls with physical challenges?

Yes [ ] No. [ ]

Give reasons for your response

.....

16. What do you think can be done to improve on the following areas for the full access to education by girls who are physically challenged?

a. Enrolment in schools

.....

b. Retention in school

.....

c. Completion of school

.....

17. What is the state of the infrastructure in the learning institutions in terms of accessibility by children who are physically disabled?

Compliant [ ] Non compliant [ ]

**SECTION B**

**KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS FOR (CHIEFS AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS)**

1. What is the nature of your job and what are your main responsibilities?
  - a. What is the definition of a female who is physically disabled in the community?
  - b. What are the community's beliefs about the causes of disabilities?  
.....
  - c. Do you have any records on the number of people with disabilities in your office?
  - d. What is the communities' perception about education of girls who are physically challenged?
2. What do you think is the implication of a girl being physically challenged in the community?
3. What is the attitude of girls who are physically challenged about education?
4. What is the community/s attitude towards education girls who are physically challenged?  
.....
5. What is the state of the infrastructure in the learning institutions and churches in terms of accessibility by children who are physically challenged?  
Compliant [ ] Non compliant [ ]
6. If the instructors are non compliant has the community taken any intervention measures  
Yes [ ] No [ ]
7. From your daily contacts with the females who are physically disabled what can you say are the effects of inaccessibility to education by the females?