The Importance of Identifying Students with Learning Difficulty in the School Context

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration with all authors. Author DK designed the study, helped with the thematic analysis, and conducted the final editing of the manuscript. Author KM wrote the literature review, collected the data and conducted the thematic analysis. Author NDUV wrote the first draft of the article, the discussion section and completed the references. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Original Research Article

ABSTRACT

This research adopted the qualitative research methodology to study teachers' ability to identify students with learning difficulties. The study was conducted in the Udawalawa region of the Ratnapura district of Sri Lanka and it provided teachers with a tool to help identify pupils with learning difficulties and facilitate their learning using adaptive instructions to meet their needs. The study highlights the challenges that pupils with learning difficulties face in the selected school. The findings provide insights into how teachers can identify pupils with learning difficulties in the classroom and provide suggestions for skill development of the teachers in the school. The sample studied included the two subject teachers and eight class teachers. The average age of the pupils studied was found to be eight years. The convenient sampling method was adopted for the study. Study revealed that teachers were aware of pupils with learning difficulties but not the specific type of learning difficulties that they experienced. Teachers also were not well equipped to use adaptive instructions to meet their needs. The study concluded that there was a gap as far as the teachers and their learners were concerned and that this needs to be further analyzed.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In the journey of human development, early education is an important milestone. Early childhood education and primary education lays the foundation for basic, secondary, and higher education for human capital required for national development [1]. For this reason, teachers of young children must know the different ways of giving instructions for children, taking into consideration their special needs. Many teachers, parents, health experts, and other people are not well aware of the nature of learning disorders and how to plan interventions or treatments to mitigate their effects on children's learning. In the classroom, pupils who consistently fail to score high marks on tests are considered not intelligent or not good enough [2,3,4,5]. This perception of children's learning ability can negatively affect their progression through education particularly in the early stages of children's lives. Failure to consider learning difficulties in the early childhood education curriculum for preschools can make it difficult to achieve the goal of developing quality human resource capital for national development.

1.1 Learning

Learning has been defined in several ways. According to Farrant [6], learning is "the process by which we acquire and retain attitudes, knowledge, understanding, skills, and capabilities that cannot be attributed to inherited behavior patterns or physical growth". According to Farrant, individuals have an inborn capacity to learn based on psychological factors. The various types of learning identified by Farrant are; Affective learning (learning that involves feelings and values affect a person's attitude and personality), Cognitive learning (learning that is achieved through mental processes that involve recalling and reasoning or how one thinks) and, Psychomotor learning (the development of skills like efficient coordination between the brain and the muscles as seen through drawing from observation or writing what is seen). Farrant [7] also explains that when learning is concerned, the teacher must help the learner go through each of the learning stages efficiently. Efficient learning, therefore, requires readiness, motivation, and involvement on the part of the learner.

1.2 Learning Difficulty

A person with a learning difficulty may be described as having specific problems processing certain forms of information. The United States of America's public law, for instance, defines "Specific learning disability" as a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in using spoken or written language which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, and spell or to do mathematical calculations. The term "Learning difficulty" however, does not include learning problems, which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or environment, cultural or economic disadvantage [8].

In most cases, as cited in the National Association of Special Education Teachers report [9], the classroom teacher is usually the first to notice signs of learning difficulties and refers students for special education assessment. In addition, the teachers assist in gathering assessment information and in the coordination of special services. Students may be identified as learning disabled at any age, but most are noticed during the elementary years. In addition to these two main indicators of learning disabilities, teachers should watch for several other signs.

According to Guilford & Hoepfner [10], outstanding examples of learning difficulties cited are: Severe difficulties in reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic; Distinguishing left from right, up and down, front and back; Perceptual and language weaknesses; Some clumsiness in hand and eye tasks; and Association difficulties such as in associating speech sounds with their symbols in reading and writing. Moreover, California Association for Neurologically Handicapped Children [11] and affiliate of the national association for children and adults with learning disabilities in the USA, cites other signs that are seen in children with learning difficulties as: Difficulties expressing thoughts; Trouble understanding time and distance; Guessing constantly when reading; Easy distractibility.

It needs emphasizing that difficulties in learning can manifest in any age group which imply that each age group requires different interventions and teaching strategies. However, the literature

suggests that substantial numbers of children with learning difficulties are identified in the age range of 9-14 years. It also indicates that most children are not identified until age 9 when learning difficulties become apparent as they enter school and fail to acquire academic skills in areas like reading, mathematics, writing, and other school subjects [12]. In 1981 Margolis, Sheridan & Lemanowicz have emphasized the importance of developing checklist and testing measures by schools to help teachers identify students with disabilities.

1.3 Manage Pupils with Learning Difficulties

Lewis and Doorlag [13] assert that if learning difficulties are suspected, the teacher should refer students for special assessment. parents are notified of the reason for referral and presented with an assessment plan prepared by the educational team. There are a number of intervention strategies for children with learning difficulties. However, Koppitz [14] notes that there is no specific teaching method or technique which can be used as a cure, thus teachers should apply a wide range of instructional materials and techniques.

1.4 Teachers Involvement to Reduce Student' Learning Difficulties

Great teachers can change the lives of their students in many ways. Developing positive relationship between a teacher and student is a fundamental aspect of quality teaching and student learning. Gillespie [15] recognized that the inherent qualities of a student - teacher relationship (caring, knowing, trust and mutual respect) and a teacher's rapport with students resulted in a classroom environment where students were supported to achieve their best. Every learning difficulty comes with different challenges. That's why teachers can benefit from getting to know what kind of academic and emotional support is needed for a specific learning difficulty.

1.5 Challenges Teachers Face with Pupils with Learning Difficulties

Special education teachers have a higher rate of burnout than is found in most other professions. They face several challenges that make their task extremely difficult. The challenges of the special education teacher include; The widespread misperception that teaching is easy, Lack of support, Dealing with multiple disabilities, Handling death, and a Lack of support from parents.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this study the convenient and purposive techniques were used to select a sample of five primary classes from grade one to grade five. The sample studied included ten teachers, two subject teachers and eight class teachers. The subject teachers were the English teachers and were selected primarily due to students having very poor or no command of English language exacerbating any learning difficulty. The average age of the pupils studied was found to be eight years. Data collected were in the form of pictures, video and audio recordings and, field notes of the concepts and strategies that were used to manage pupils with learning difficulties. Both primary and secondary data were collected for the research. Primary data collected gave the researcher an overview of events, situations, and conditions that prevailed within the primary school under study. Most of the data collected was non numeric based on verbal and nonverbal activities of respondents; the teachers and primary school pupils. Primary data collected by the researchers from Udawalawa primary school, especially the lower primary classes, represent the findings on the conditions under which pupils learn and the teacher's knowledge about learning difficulties in the school. This enabled the researchers to draw conclusions on the study of the primary school which actually reflected the performance of the pupils who were identified as having learning difficulties. Secondary data involved both empirical studies collected from online repositories and information on Learning Disabilities/ Difficulties again available online. Notable amongst these valuable research data were the Alberta Educational Resource material [16] that describe the nature and prevalence of learning disabilities among Grade five primary school pupils.

Upon making appropriate appointments one of the researchers proceeded to the school sampled for familiarization visits and to hold discussions with the Head of the school to make necessary arrangements for the actual data collection. First set of interviews were conducted with the two subject teachers (English Subject). The interview contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions. First item to be recorded was the English teacher's bio-data, while the

second item sought data on school enrolment, the third item generated data on the English teacher's knowledge about learning difficulties in the school, and the fourth item elicited information on what is being done to pupils with learning difficulties. The final item focused on challenges faced in the management cases with learning difficulties and suggested ways of effectively providing instructions for pupils with learning difficulties.

Eight class teacher's interviews and observations were administered on grade one to five class teachers to find out how they manage pupils in their classes who have learning difficulties. Considering that they are trained in child development, teachers are expected to know their children. Their observations were critical because they could easily tell when there was a gap. First item was intended to capture class teacher's bio-data, while the second sought to establish their knowledge about learning disabilities, third item focused on what was being done to manage learning difficulties cases and last item solicited comments on how class teachers were managing pupils with learning difficulties.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the study which aimed at investigating the conditions under which teaching and learning occurs in Udawalawa primary school and how pupils who have learning difficulties are identified and managed. The research findings are interpreted, explained and presented with regards to the objectives specified for the study.

3.1 Research Question One- Under which Condition do Teaching and Learning go on?

Udawalawa primary school is situated opposite the Udawalawa police station and Udawalawa Maha Vidyalaya. It has classes starting from grade one to grade five with each year group having five classroom labelled as A to E. Teaching and learning conditions were measured under the categories of school environment, classroom environment, and the condition under which teaching and learning go on in the school.

3.1.1 School environment

The udawalawa primary school has a good school environment in terms of classroom, playground, and immediate surroundings. It has

a clean environment and has all the necessary facilities available within the school compound which is enclosed by a metal fence. The school is well structured and organized.

3.1.2 Classroom environment

Class room environment greatly influences a child's learning abilities and pace of learning either by providing and complementing the learning experiences of the child through interactive learning or inhibiting his or her desire to learn [16]. The lower primary classrooms of udawalawa primary school are painted in yellow color which provides the children with a serene ambience for good teaching and learning outcomes. Each of the primary one classrooms has a big storage cupboard in which the pupil's exercise and text books are stored. Due to the small size of the classrooms and the arrangement of the pupil's chairs and tables and the storage cupboard, mobility, is quite restricted for both the pupils and the teachers. Display items such as wall charts, posters, and readily accessible flash cards of the English Alphabet are hung along the walls of the classrooms. The lower primary one section of the school has five classrooms that have been named to A – E. All the classrooms have between four and six functioning windows. Each classrooms has over 40 sets of small tables and chairs to give the pupils comfort but they are arranged so close together that it prevents a teacher from reaching pupils who need help, which discourages individualized style of teaching.

3.1.3 Condition under which teaching and learning go on in the school

The primary grade one classroom had 40 pupils and the primary grade two classroom had 42 pupils, but the class rooms were very small. The arrangement of tables and chairs in the classrooms makes the environment really crowded which makes it difficult for the teacher to use individualized teaching. As Fred Jones [17,18], explains, "a good classroom seating arrangement is the cheapest form of classroom management". Many experienced teachers therefore recommend assigning good seating arrangement to facilitate and promote individualized style of teaching. The researcher observed that at this school the pupils were crowded decreasing mobility of the teachers and also pupils and that high traffic areas were congested. Best practice suggests the following rules for managing classroom seating

arrangements: Students should be seated where their attention is directed toward the teacher; High traffic areas should be free from congestion; and teacher mobility should be the aim of any classroom seating arrangement [17].

From what Jones [18] says, the teacher's mobility in the classroom is important for effective teaching and learning, which implies that classroom should not be congested. Re-arrangement of the classroom is essential for the teacher and pupils to move about easily but reducing the class size would also be a good option for class management as well as to ensure that the pupils receive one-on-one attention from their teachers. Free movement of teachers in the classroom will also encourage the use of individualized teaching styles which will enable the teachers to quickly reach those pupils who may need extra help during lesson. This suggests that the condition under which the pupils in the lower classes in Udawalawa primary school are studying are not so conducive for the pupils to do effective learning especially those who have learning difficulties.

Arnold & Doctoroff, [19] has also shown that large classes cause wider educational achievement gaps between disadvantaged learners and their peers. This is because there is less communication, interaction, and coordination with the teachers. For instance while observing teaching and learning activities in the primary one and two classrooms, it was realized that on several occasions during lessons and after a teacher has finished teaching these classes of 40 or more pupils none of the pupils asked any questions. This could make the teachers assume that all the pupils had understood all that was taught.

3.2 Research Question Two- How Knowledgeable are the Teachers about Learning Difficulties, are there Pupils with Learning Difficulties, how do they Identify and Manage the Lower Primary Pupils with Learning Difficulties?

The presence of learning difficulties among the observed lower primary pupils in the udawalawa primary school was done in different ways. The process involved the use of the pupil's rating scale, the English teacher's interview, class and subject teachers' interviews.

3.2.1 Teachers' knowledge on learning difficulties

To establish whether teachers understood learning difficulties and if there were children in the school with learning disabilities both the subject (English) teacher, and the class teachers were asked to explain the term ' learning difficulty ' which was the first item on the interview guide. It is significant to report that all ten teachers explained learning difficulties as the challenges that some pupils face in their learning which can be mild to severe [20]. Hence, it was evident that the teachers knew about learning difficulties.

3.2.2 Background of the respondent teachers

Two interviews were conducted with the school teachers to ascertain how they teach and handle pupils identified as having learning difficulties in the classroom. The second item in the interview was to find out their backgrounds and experiences as far as education is concerned. The class teachers were interviewed first who fall under the generalist teachers and secondly the specialist teachers who teach creative subjects.

3.2.3 Teacher's response on how well they can identify a pupil with a learning difficulty

This section was to find out how well teachers could identify a pupil with learning difficulty scaled as fair, good, and excellent. Only one teacher (15%) responded confidently about being able to identify a pupil having a learning difficulty excellently, 45% responded fairly and the last 40% responded as good. This reveals clearly that the teachers do not really know their pupils, especially when it comes to learning difficulties. This is a disturbing observation, particularly because without a good knowledge of the learner, the teacher will not be able to appropriately instruct in such a way to meet the individual needs of the pupils. As Kuyuni, Bawa, & Ishwar [21] states, it is very important for teachers to know their learners so as to give appropriate instructions to them.

3.2.4 How are the pupils with learning difficulties in the sampled school managed?

The study sought to find out how pupils suspected to be having learning difficulties were being provided for in the school. Responses on the subject given by the class teachers are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The way pupils suspected to be having learning difficulties were being provided for in the school

	Pairing learning with able peers	Giving remediation	Individualized attention	Given simpler tasks	Breaking tasks	Use relevant teaching materials	Extra time for test
ST1	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	X
ST2	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
CT1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
CT2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
CT3	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
CT4	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT6	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
CT7	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓
CT8	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓

ST- Subject teacher
CT- Class teacher

Students who suspect learning difficulties were asked by class teachers and the subject teacher about the measures they have taken to manage them. This was done based on the approaches listed in Table 1.

The results show that the most frequently used approach is the 'use of relevant teaching materials' followed by giving simpler tasks and then giving remediation. They put in place to manage the pupils who have Learning Difficulties. From the response given by the two English teachers during interview and that which was given by the Class and Subject teachers, there was a clear variation amongst the two major responses. From the point view of the English teachers, there are so many measures put in place to manage pupils who have Learning Difficulties. Meanwhile the teachers also gave their own side of the story. The teachers might not be doing their work effectively as far as pupils having Learning Difficulties is concerned.

3.2.5 Challenges teachers face with pupils with learning difficulty

Table 2 reveals that the most frequently reported challenges faced by the teachers are the Large Class sizes which discourages Individualized Teaching style and also lack of parent cooperation to help their students at home.

Though lack of special education teachers and inability to diagnose LD had a lower response numbers, these may be the most serious challenges facing the school in the management of LD. A follow up question was asked from these teachers about why they felt they were not having problems diagnosing the pupils who have Learning Difficulties and the answer was that while they were in the training colleges they undertook some training on Learning Difficulties. A school with a large number of pupils such as Udawalawa Primary should have a number of Special Education teachers to serve as counsellors in the school.

3.2.6 How teachers address challenges they face with learning difficulties

To address the challenges faced in the process of providing for learners with learning difficulties, the respondents used six different ways as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 reveals that the class and subject teachers mentioned more specialized approaches to the challenges they face while working with pupils who have learning difficulties in the school. This was so obvious since the three approaches that got the highest percentages were all specialized approaches to address the challenges faced by pupils with learning difficulties. The Head teacher was also asked the same question about how the challenges of pupils having Learning Difficulties are managed using the same list of approaches in Table 1 and she reported general methods of managing learners in classrooms such as peer tutoring, individualized attention, motivation, guidance and counselling and asking parents to assist their children. It can be deduced here that teachers who handle the pupils directly are requesting help from specialist teachers in

Table 2. Challenges faced by the teachers

	Inability to diagnose cases	Lack of special education teachers	No time due to emphasis on examinations	Un-cooperative parents	Large class sizes
ST1	X	X	X	X	✓
ST2	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
CT1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT3	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
CT4	X	✓	X	✓	✓
CT5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT6	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
CT7	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
CT8	✓	✓	✓	X	✓

Table 3. How teachers address challenges they face with learning difficulties

	Special education teachers to diagnose learners with special needs	Sever LD cases are handled by special education teachers	Giving individual attention	Referring some for assessment	Guidance and counseling	Peer tutoring
ST1	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
ST2	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
CT1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT3	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
CT4	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
CT5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
CT8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

dealing with Learning Difficulties though they claim that they had some training in the area of Learning Difficulties.

3.2.7 The teaching strategies used by the lower primary school teachers.

To really know the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching strategies used by the teachers in the sampled school, an interview guide was prepared to find out the frequently used teaching method or style of teachers. There are certain basic assumptions people make about the rudimentary skills of all teachers. Many of these expectations have to do with instructional decision making skills and concern what content and the process to teach and how to organize and deliver content in the most effective ways possible. The responses gathered from the teachers are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 reveals that the most frequently used teaching method used by the teachers in the school studied were the Experimental and Demonstrative methods. This indicates that they put much attention on the participation of the pupils in their class. On the other hand, observation made by the researcher showed the opposite was rather true, where the most frequently used teaching style was the Teacher-centered method of teaching. Wilson [19] states that when a teacher is instructing in class and his or her audience or learners are placed in a passive mode, it is often the Teacher-centered method of teaching that is being used. This was the exact picture painted in the classrooms; the pupils were passive learners and were not really playing a role during teaching. After the teaching, teachers allowed time for questions which they then answered.

3.2.8 Motivation and Discrimination in Classroom

The last item in the interview guide was to find out the teachers' knowledge about Motivation and Discrimination in the classroom. The researchers used a range to score the teachers based on a list of items. This was to find out whether they really adopted motivation and also avoided discrimination in their classes.

Fig. 1 reveals that the teachers often motivated the pupils who were already good followed by putting fear in the pupils.

Fear makes a pupil anxious during class hours and that is not a good style of teaching. Learners with high self-esteem typically say that effort or ability rather than luck or task difficulty is the root of their success [22]. Students who have high achievement motivation usually identify effort as key to success while those with low motivation blame failure on luck or task difficulty. Motivating already good students is not bad but making them feel they are better than the pupils with learning difficulties discourages pupils with Learning Difficulties. From Fig. 1, it is seen that teachers discriminated in class during lessons and that it is not a healthy exercise for pupils at the lower primary level.

Table 4. Response to the type of teaching method frequently used in class

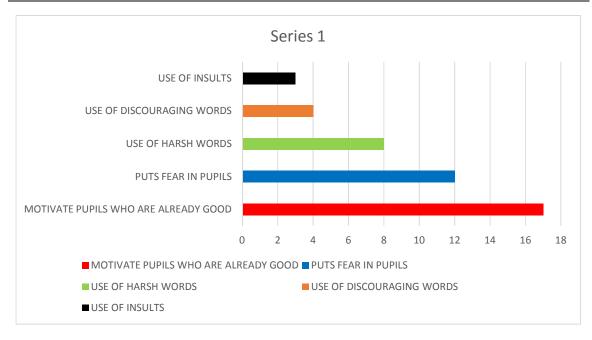|	Teacher centered	Individualized teaching method	Computerized structured	Experimental teaching method	Demonstrative method	Adaptive instructions
ST1	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
ST2	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
CT1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT3	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
CT4	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
CT5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CT7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
CT8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Total	10	10	7	10	9	8

Fig. 1. Teachers' knowledge about motivation and discrimination in class

15

4. SUMMARY

The research conducted sought to highlight the challenges that pupils with learning difficulties face in the selected school which is Udawalawa primary school. This research, highlights the challenges with learning difficulties which brings to the fore the urgent need to make preparations for a policy. The Goal is to expand and improve pedagogy by using adaptive instruction, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. The purpose of this study therefore was to seek ways to better equip classroom teachers in the selected school to work with students who have learning difficulties. The case study approach of qualitative research design with observation and interview were adopted as well as the descriptive approach to document the findings. The population studied was the lower primary pupils and teachers in the selected school. The study disclosed the following:

1. The teachers were not able to tell which type of learning difficulty a pupil is experiencing,
2. The teachers are unable to handle pupils with learning difficulties and assign appropriate instructions to meet the need of pupils with Learning Difficulties,
3. The use of words by teachers to demoralize students, especially students with Learning Difficulties
4. Discrimination by teachers among pupils; which makes some pupils very confident and others very intimidated to even answer a question in class.

The observations and interviews also revealed that most children with learning difficulties showed so much happiness when involved with extra-curricular activities. This shows that their needs could be met through a good observation of their personalities and meeting their needs through individualized adaptive instructions. This finding in Udawalawa is consistent with several studies which report that children with LDs often drop out of school because teachers neither adapt instruction to those pupils' needs nor pay attention to them during instruction [21,23,24,25].

For example, during lessons the researcher observed that some pupils were very timid in answering questions asked by their teachers. The class teacher's reaction to why the children were so timid was that "they were not intelligent". This establishes the fact that teachers use intimidating words on pupils and if a child accepts those word it affects him or her psychologically. Instead of belittling students it is beneficial for teachers to use humor to hold students' interest and reduce classroom tensions [26].

5. CONCLUSIONS

The education of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and disabilities is now an established key policy objective in many countries [27]. Though this study has highlighted the ways of identifying pupils with learning difficulties, other research in other primary schools in Sri Lanka should be conducted to verify the results obtained and presented here. The main findings of the study, as listed according to the research objectives, are as follows:

5.1 Objective One: To Investigate and Describe the Conditions under which Teaching and Learning Happen in the Selected School

The class size was very large with 40 to 50 pupils in a class and there are over 4 classes each for a grade. Due to the large number of pupils in each class they don't get individualized attention from teachers when they need help. The teachers did not have enough information and knowledge about pupils with learning difficulties but knew some pupils face challenges in learning. The teachers were not knowledgeable about the specific learning difficulties the pupils were experiencing.

5.2 Objective Two: To Find out How Primary School Teachers Identify Whether There are Pupils Having Learning Difficulties in the School and how they manage them

The primary school teachers identified pupils with learning difficulties by the tasks given to them. If they are unable to do very simple tasks given to them in class they started observing such pupils for some time to find out the problem the pupil may be experiencing. They also looked out for very hesitant pupils who always avoid answering questions in class. The teachers are not able to meet the needs of the pupils because they are not really equipped to help pupils with learning difficulties. They have not been able to use adaptive instructions to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties.

5.3 Objective Three: To Ascertain the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Teaching Strategies Employed by the Lower Primary Teachers in Addressing the Needs of Pupils with Learning Difficulties

Before the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching strategies can be ascertained the teaching strategy used by the teachers were found out. It was seen that most of the teachers interviewed and observed were mostly using the teacher-centered teaching strategy. The strength of this learning strategy was that it was good for large classes and the weakness is that it was not helpful for pupils who needed special attention in the class.

Finally, the study point out the need for investments in teachers' continuing education to identify students' learning difficulties and to make curricular adaptations to meet students' needs. In addition, it is necessary to guide teachers not to discriminate students with learning difficulties, which reflects in the students' self-esteem and learning process. Further, research has shown that special education teachers do not provide guidance and support to classroom teachers. Therefore, programs should be implemented where special education teachers work in partnership with classroom teachers to help classroom teachers better cope with students with learning difficulties.

CONSENT

The participant teachers were informed about the purpose of the study and their consent was taken for participation before any of the interviews were conducted. They were also made aware that they are free to withdraw from the interviews at any point.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

As per international standard or university standard written ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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