





International Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Sports (IJPERS)

**Qualifications and Experience Patterns of Physical Education Teachers for Learners with
Visual Disability**

Rose Jakinda, Prof. Simon Munayi, Dr. Janet Chumba and Dr. Benson Gathoni



Qualifications and Experience Patterns of Physical Education Teachers for Learners with Visual Disability

 Rose Jakinda,  Prof. Simon Munayi,  Dr. Janet Chumba and  Dr. Benson Gathoni

Article History

Received 11th April 2025

Received in Revised Form 18th May 2025

Accepted 24th June 2025



How to cite in APA format:

Jakinda, R., Munayi, S., Chumba, J., & Gathoni, B. (2025). Qualifications and Experience Patterns of Physical Education Teachers for Learners with Visual Disability. *International Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Sports*, 3(2), 16–24. <https://doi.org/10.47604/ijpers.3400>

Abstract

Purpose: The learners, the classroom environment and the teachers serve as essential pillars in the learning process, including the teaching of physical education (PE) to students with visual disabilities. This study aimed to examine the qualifications and experiences of PE teachers working with visually impaired learners. The primary objective was to determine the teachers' qualifications and professional experience in this specialized field.

Methodology: A descriptive research design was adopted, involving a target population of 10 head teachers from schools catering to learners with disabilities and 45 PE teachers. Data collection was conducted using two instruments: an interview schedule for head teachers and a self-administered questionnaire for teachers. The study provides a comprehensive analysis of the factors affecting the quality of physical education for learners with visual disabilities in primary schools.

Findings: The study revealed that nearly two-thirds (61.76%) of physical education teachers for these learners are female, with males comprising 38.24%, which is noteworthy considering males are generally more involved in physical activities in Kenya. The study highlights that all teachers have qualifications above the minimum P-1 certificate level set by the Teacher Service Commission (TSC), with 56% holding a diploma, 38% a degree, and nearly 6% a postgraduate qualification. Additionally, all teachers are trained in special education, with 55.88% having a diploma, 38.24% an undergraduate degree, and 5.88% a postgraduate degree in special education, underscoring the importance of specialized training. Over 85% of these teachers have more than 16 years of experience, emphasizing the significance of experience in delivering quality education. The study suggests a higher representation of women in teaching roles at the primary level due to their nurturing nature, benefiting young children. It also underscores the crucial role of teacher training in building confidence and effective teaching, with qualifications and experience significantly impacting the quality of education provided.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The study concludes that the TSC recruits qualified, experienced, and self-driven teachers, ensuring a fundamental infrastructure for delivering quality physical education to visually impaired learners. However, it calls for further studies to explore teaching practices, instructional resources, and institutional support to enhance the overall learning environment. Overall, the research highlights the importance of specialized training and support for teachers in providing effective physical education to visually impaired students, echoing the findings of previous studies.

Keywords: *Physical Education Teachers, Learners with Visual Disability, Experience*

©2025 by the Authors. This Article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)

INTRODUCTION

Learners, the classroom environment, and the teacher constitute the three fundamental pillars of education; they interact uniquely to facilitate learning. The teacher is notably the pivot of this interaction (Munayi, 2015), a fact that holds true for both typical learners and those with disabilities, across disciplines such as social sciences, languages, technical subjects, and physical education. Specifically, the physical education teacher is pivotal for classes involving learners with Visual Impairment (VI) (Jakinda *et al.*, 2022). Tripp *et al.*, (2004) underscored this in a position statement on inclusion, highlighting the teacher's role as fundamental amidst personnel, environment, and equipment—the tripartite supports for inclusion. Aydin (2014) emphasized the importance of training and awareness of inclusion for teachers to be effective.

Leiberman *et al.*, (2019) observed that learners with visual disabilities often fall behind their peers in physical activities, indicating the necessity for careful attention to these learners. Physical educators have found learners with visual disabilities to be among the most challenging in physical education. However, these children can excel in sports given the right environment, equipment, and experiences, underscoring the teacher's crucial role in providing class experiences. This study aimed to determine the qualifications and experience of teachers for learners with visual disabilities in Kenyan primary schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

De Castro *et al.*, (2013) studied attitudes about inclusion by physical education teachers. The study concluded that regardless of the experience from an inclusive setting, the benefit of inclusion is still indecisive, suggesting the need to look at the current state of learners with VI in Kenya. Haegele *et al.*, (2017) undertook a study for residential students who are blind. Amongst the implications derived from the study it was noted adaptation in physical education was necessary to meet students' needs. The expectations of the study were that to have quality teaching, the instructors had not only to be able to understand but to also have the required experience to be able to adapt.

Mullett (2017) surpassingly discovered a conflicting position when it comes to teachers' confidence in providing physical education. It was noted that teachers with the least professional development seemed to be the most confident in providing inclusive physical education. Suggesting the need to relook at the teachers, especially the teacher for the learners with visual impairment. Mncube *et al.*, (2021) discovered that novice teachers required support and guidance when dealing with learners with visual impairment otherwise the education they would be providing would not be quality. Haegele and Lieberman (2016) posited that children with visual impairment tend to be more delayed in motor skills than the typical learner. In their study on current experiences of physical education teachers in the United States schools for blind students recommended that there was need for additional training for teachers of physical education.

De Castro *et al.*, (2013) examined physical education teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. Their study concluded that the benefits of inclusion remain uncertain, regardless of experience in inclusive settings, highlighting the need to assess the current situation of learners with visual impairments (VI) in Kenya. Haegele *et al.*, (2017) conducted research on residential students who are blind, finding that adaptations in physical education are essential to meet the students' needs.

They emphasized that quality teaching requires instructors to not only understand but also possess the necessary experience for adaptation.

Mullett (2017) surprisingly found a paradox in teachers' confidence in delivering physical education, noting that those with the least professional development were often the most confident in providing inclusive education. This suggests a need to reevaluate the training of teachers, particularly those teaching learners with visual impairments. Mncube *et al.*, (2021) identified that novice teachers need support and guidance when teaching learners with visual impairments to ensure the quality of education. Haegele and Lieberman (2016) stated that children with visual impairments are often more delayed in motor skills than their peers. Their study on the experiences of physical education teachers in U.S.A schools for blind students concluded that additional training for these educators is necessary.

METHODOLOGY

The study aimed to examine the qualifications and experiences of physical education teachers working with learners who have visual impairments. It was grounded in the theory of normalization, as proposed by Wolf P. Wolfensberger in 1980. The research suggests that when teachers are well-qualified, they are more likely to understand and support learners with visual disabilities, fostering an inclusive and accommodating learning environment compared to those with less experience.

A descriptive research design was employed, as it is well-suited for identifying patterns and commonalities within a population, phenomenon, or situation. In the context of this study, it helped explore trends within physical education classes for students with visual impairments. Since descriptive research seeks to answer questions such as when, what, where, and how, it was deemed an appropriate approach. The study was conducted in schools across Kenya that serve learners with visual disabilities.

The target population constituted, ten head teachers, 45 teachers of physical education The final sample size was, 9 head teachers, 34 teaches randomly sampled. Two different instruments were used to collect data. These were, a questionnaire and an interview schedule for head teachers. This allowed for the triangulation of the data collected. Requisite ethical considerations were employed on the respondents.

RESULTS

The following are the results of this study:

Teachers' Distribution by Gender

Primary schools for learners with visual disability are mixed gender for the learners. In the same breath, it is expected that the teacher would be mixed gender. Figure 1 below shows the distribution of teachers of physical education for learners with visual disability by gender.

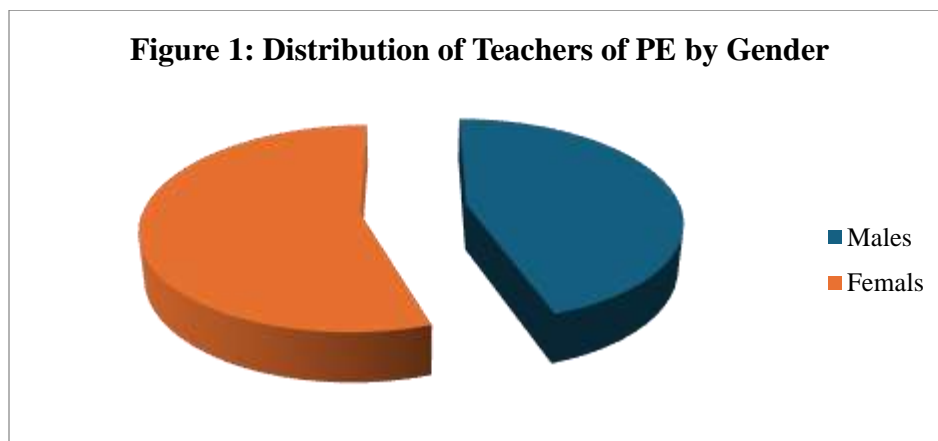


Figure 1: Distribution of Teachers by Gender

Diagram one indicates that slightly less than two thirds (61.76%) of the teachers engaged with teaching physical education for learners with visual disability are female. While slightly higher than one third (38.24) were males. This proved to be an interesting scenario since it is noted that on average males tend to be more involved in physical activity in Kenya (Munayi and Gathoni, 2022; Rintaugu, Munayi and Mwangi, 2011).

Teachers Academic Qualifications

Teaching of quality physical education is pegged on the academic qualification of teachers. The more academically qualified teachers are, the more confident they feel and are bound to teach better since they feel comfortable with the environment, they find themselves in. Hence, content and the students do not intimidate them. Table 1 indicates the results of the current study.

Table 1: Academic Qualifications of Teachers for Learners with Visual Disability

Highest Qualification	f	Percentage
Certificate	-	-
Diploma	19	55.88
Degree	13	38.24
Postgraduate	2	5.88
Total	34	100.00

The Teacher Service Commission (TSC) which is the statutory body managing all schoolteacher in Kenya has set the level of a what they popular call a P-1 certificate as the minimum requirement for teachers at the level of primary schools in Kenya. In this regard, it is imperative to note that all (100%) the teachers teaching at schools designated as primary schools for learners with visual impairment are above the requisite certificate qualification academically. Almost 56% have Diploma, 38% have a degree in education while almost six percent have postgraduate qualification. This is an indicator of how self-motivated these teachers are. It is significant to note, Munayi (2015) also noted that teachers for intellectual disability also had much higher than required credentials.

Special Education Qualification of Teachers

Having academic qualifications is very important. But for areas such as the case for learners with visual impairment, having professional qualifications in the field of teaching is even more significant. This study went out to try and establish the professional qualifications of the teachers involved in the teaching of physical education for learners with special needs. Table 2.0 captures the results of this objective.

Table 2: Qualifications for Teaching Special Education

Highest Qualification	f	Percentage
Diploma in Special Education	19	55.88
Degree in Special Education	13	38.24
Postgraduate Degree in Special Education	2	5.88
Total	34	100.00

As noted in Table 2 above, all (100%) of the teachers teaching physical education to learners with visual impairment in primary schools are trained in special education. Some have a diploma (55.88%), others an undergraduate degree (38.24%) while a few (5.88%) have postgraduate degrees in special education. This speaks volumes about the expectations for teaching at this level. The TSC appears to have done an excellent job in ensuring that institutions for learners with visual disabilities are staffed with appropriately qualified personnel. As a result, the quality of physical education instruction in these schools is expected to be of a high standard.

These results agree with a study by Miyauchi (2020) which noted that the teaching of physical education is one of the subjects where students with disability can feel excluded if the teacher is not professionally trained or is not keen. They also agree with another study by Maurya (2016) who asserted that there was need for adequate preparation for the teachers who handle learners with visual disability.

Experience of PE Teachers for Learns with Visual Disability

Alongside qualifications, the significance of experience of a teacher cannot be over emphasized. Teachers tend to use their experience to make physical education classes qualitative. This study sought to establish the experience of the teachers teaching physical education to learners with visual disability. Table 3.0 captures the results of the experience of teachers teaching physical education in primary schools for learners with visual impairments.

Table 3: Experience of Teachers

Experience in Years	f	Percentage
10-15 years	5	14.71
16-20 years	7	20.59
21-25 years	9	26.47
Over 25 years	13	38.23
Total	34	100.00

The study found that over 85% of the teachers teaching physical education to learners with visual disability had over 16 years of experience. This is an indication that their experience is sufficient to create a quality physical education lesson. This finding agrees with that of Haegele and Lieberman (2016) who established that in the United States of America schools, just as in Kenya, reported they employed certified teachers for the blind learners. This implies that the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in Kenya makes demands that are universally accepted world over in the development of learners with visual disability.

Discussion

In terms of gender there seems to be a tendency towards more women at the lower level of schooling. This could be attributed to the fact that women by nature are created to nature. Children at this stage of their lives tend to be do better with women as opposed to male teachers. This study found that two thirds of the teachers in schools for the blind are women.

Teacher training is essential as one of the fundamental pillars of education. Well-trained teachers exhibit confidence and competence in their roles. Teachers' qualification plays a significant role in creating an apt classroom climate. I well trained teacher gets comfortable in the teaching process. Indeed, the preparation of teachers recognizes that content and delivery are significant in making the teacher deliver. The study revealed that all the teachers had not only undergone general teacher training but also specialized training for instructing students with disabilities. This creates an ideal learning environment for students with visual impairments. Additionally, the teachers' service commission has ensured that students with visual impairments participating in physical education receive the necessary support and resources to thrive.

Teachers' experience plays a crucial role in effectively teaching physical education to learners with visual disabilities in Kenyan primary schools. Experienced teachers are better equipped to adapt instructional methods, create inclusive learning environments, and utilize specialized techniques to ensure students with visual impairments can actively participate in physical education. The study found that over 85% of the teachers had experience of over 16 years. Implying that Experienced teachers play a vital role in effectively teaching physical education to learners with visual disabilities in Kenyan primary schools. Their expertise enables them to adapt instructional methods, incorporating verbal cues, tactile learning, and peer-assisted activities to foster engagement. They also understand how to modify equipment and utilize accessible facilities, ensuring all students can participate meaningfully. Additionally, schools that provide adequate resources and training empower teachers to deliver quality education, reinforcing inclusivity and confidence among learners with visual impairments. A supportive learning environment, fostered by the dedication and positive attitudes of experienced educators, plays a crucial role in enhancing student engagement and overall development in physical education. Additionally, further research is recommended to explore the availability and effectiveness of resources provided to teachers working with learners who have visual disabilities.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concluded that the Teachers Service Commission in Kenya prioritizes the recruitment of qualified, experienced, and self-driven educators. This indicates that the fundamental elements of the infrastructure supporting physical education for learners with visual disabilities are in place.

However, it also highlights the need for further research into other essential components, such as teaching methodologies, instructional resources, and institutional support, to ensure a comprehensive and effective learning environment. The study emphasizes the importance of investigating these additional factors to enhance the overall quality of education for learners with visual disabilities.

REFERENCES

- Aydin, M. (2014). Assessing Knowledge levels of Secondary School Physical Education and Sports Teachers about Inclusive Education. *Academic Journal* Vol. 9 (21) , pp 1115-1124 Nov. 2014 Doi: 10.5897/ERR 2014.1902 Article No. 504E4DB48234.
- DeCastro, E. M., Paiva, A.C., Figueiredo, G.A., DeCosta, T. D., De Castro, M. R., and Campbell, D. F. (2013) Attitudes about inclusion by Educators of Physical Education. Effects of Participation in an Inclusive Adapted Physical Education Program. *Motriz, Rio Claro. Via.n.3.* pp649-661. September 2013.
- Haegle, J. A. and Lieberman, L. J. (2016). The Current Experiences of Physical Education Teachers of Schools for Blind students in the United States. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, Septembers – October 2016
- Haegle, J. A., Sato, T., Zhu, X., and Avery, T.(2017). Physical Education Experiences at Residential Schools for Student who are Blind: Phenomenological Inquiry . *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness. March-April 2017. Doi 10.1177/0145482X 1711100205.*
- Jakinda, R. A., Munayi, S. P., Chumba, J., & Gathoni, B. (2022). Effective Teaching of Physical education to learners with visual disability: A literature review.: *Journal of Education and Practice* ISSN 2520-467X (Online) Vol.6, Issue No.4, pp 48 – 55, 2022
- Lieberman, L.J., Lepore, M., Lepore-Stevens., and Ball, L. (2019) Physical Education for Children with Visual Impairment or Blindness. *Journal of Physical Education. Journal of Physical education, Recreation & Dance. 90:1, Pp. 30-38. Online ttps://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2018.1535340.*
- Maurya, H.K. (2016). Strategies for Teaching Students with Visual Impairment. *International Multidisciplinary Referred Research Journal. ISSN:2394-5*
<http://www.researchgate.net/publication/353013224>. Accessed on 1th August 2024 at 2.29PM.
- Miyauchi, H., (2020) A Systematic Review on Inclusive Education of Students with Visual Impairment. www.mdpi.com/journal/education. doi:10.3390/educsci.10110346. Accessed 9.19pm on 19th August 2021.
- Mncube, D. W., Hadebe-Ndlovu, B., and Uleanya, C. (2021). Novice Teacher’s Experiences Of Teaching Visually Impaired Learners in the Foundation Phase: A Case Study of Inclusive KwaWuswa Rural Schools. *Universal Journal of Education Research. 9(6), 1179-1187. Doi: 10.13189/ User.2021.090607.*
- Mullett, K. (2017). Teacher’s Experiences with Inclusion of Students with Special Needs in Physical Education. Unpublished Research Papers. Master of Teaching. University of Toronto April 2017
- Munayi, S. P. (1989). A study of the Classroom Interaction Patterns of Trained and Untrained Primary School Physical Education Teachers of the Northern Division of Nairobi Province. Unpublished M. Ed Thesis. Kenyatta University.

Munayi, S. P. (2015). Evaluation of Primary School Physical Education Teaching and Learning Process for Learners with Intellectual Disability. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Nairobi.

Tripp, A., Piletic, C., & Babcock, G. (2004). A Position Statement on Including students with Disability in Physical Education. Adapted Physical Activity Council of the American Association for Activity Lifestyle Fitness @Reston VA 2004.