

**EFFECTS OF MAINSTREAMING LEARNERS WITH AUTISM ON THEIR
EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN
NYAMACHE SUB COUNTY, KISII COUNTY, KENYA.**

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**Thesis submitted to the School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the
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DECLARATION

Declaration by Candidate

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted in any other university or institution for any certification. This research thesis has been complemented by references sources duly acknowledged where text, data, graphics or tables have been borrowed from other sources, including the internet, these are specifically accredited and references cited in accordance in line with anti-plagiarism regulations.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to express sincere appreciation and admiration for all those individuals who provided unwavering support and assistance during the research process. I am particularly grateful to my parents, Zachariah Onsare and Ann Bwari, whose vision for education and unwavering support have been instrumental in enabling me to attain my current level of academic achievement. I would want to express my gratitude to my sister, Teresa Gesare, and my kids, Juliet Nyabonyi, ClaudiahBwari, and Wendy Nyanchama. Their unwavering support and encouragement have been instrumental in providing me with the resilience to persevere, especially in times of vulnerability.

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ABSTRACT

Autism is neuro developmental disorder resulting into impairment in communication and social interaction. Mainstreaming of learners with autism in schools is a global trend and has been the subject of ongoing research and discussion in recent decades. There exists little documented evidence on various strategies used by teachers to improve education experiences of learners with Autism in the mainstreamed schools, and their effects on educational experience for the autistic learners. This study therefore, aimed to assess the effects of; learners Peer Interaction, learners' Self-management, Antecedent Procedures, and Peer-Mediated Interventions strategies on educational experience of learners with autism in primary schools in Nyamache sub-county in Kisii County. The study was guided by Vygotsky's theory and Autism Inclusive collaboration Model. A descriptive survey design was adapted in this study employing purposive sampling to select 47 respondents. The selected population was composed of 11 headteachers and 36 SNE trained teachers from mainstreamed schools with Autistic learners in Nyamache Sub County. Structured questionnaires and observation schedules were formulated and examined for validity and reliability by computing the validity coefficient index and using Cronbach alpha reliability test. The instruments had 0.67 and 0.8 validity index and reliability index respectively hence, they were considered appropriate for use in data collection. Data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptively, frequency and percentages were used while inferentially, the Spearman Correlation and Chi Square test were used. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25 and Microsoft Excel were used as appropriate tools in the analysis. It was established that most of the respondents (84.8%) agreed that; peer interaction plays a significant role in enhancing education experience of learners with Autism. Similarly, majority of the respondents (62.1%, 80.5%, and 69.5%) indicated that learner's self-management, use of antecedent procedures and the peer mediated Intervention respectively were important strategies for enhancing education experience for autistic learners. The Chi Square and Spearman correlation tests revealed significant association between the four selected strategies and educational experience of learners living with autism in mainstream primary schools reporting t values of 4.698, 5.393, 4.560, and 5.084 respectively. The study concluded that mainstreaming assists the learners with Autism as they learn new skills from their peers and hence their educational experiences were improved effectively. Based on the study findings, it was recommended that schools teaching model incorporated with antecedent procedures and peer mediated learning be considered as effective strategies in the mainstreamed schools to enhance the learning process and improve learning experience for autistic learners.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

- ASD** - Autism Spectrum Disorder
- ASK** -Autism society of Kenya
- CWA** - Children with Autism
- CWPT** -Class Wide Peer Tutoring
- EARC** - Educational Assessment and Resource Centre
- GoK** - Government of Kenya
- IDEA** -Individuals with Disability Education Act
- IEP** - Individualized Educational Plan
- KIE** - Kenya Institute of Education
- KICD** - Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
- KISE** - Kenya Institute of Special Education
- MoE** - Ministry of Education
- MOEST** - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
- NACOSTI** - National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
- SNE** - Special Needs Education
- SPSS** -Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
- UNESCO** -United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study's contextual background, problem statement, purpose, objectives, research questions, hypotheses, and importance. The aforementioned components include the examination's extent, boundaries, and constraints, alongside its underlying presumptions and practical elucidation of concepts.

1.2 Background to the Study

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 1997) provides a definition of autism as a developmental disorder that has a major impact on both verbal and non-verbal communication, as well as social interaction. This handicap is often observed before the age of three and has a negative effect on the individual's educational experience. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a prevalent developmental neurological illness (Autism Society Canada, 2010) that manifests via challenges in talking to new people, maturing socially, engaging in rituals, and resisting novelty (APA, 2012). Autism has considerable diversity in its characteristics and levels of severity, hence manifesting across all ethnic and socioeconomic strata, and impacting individuals throughout the whole age spectrum. Autism is commonly characterized as a neurological condition that generally manifests within the initial three years of an individual's existence, resulting in variations or disparities in the processing of information (Matasio, 2011). There are five distinct disorders that are commonly connected that fall anywhere on the Autism Spectrum. In this category, we find conditions such as autism, such as Asperger's syndrome, Rett's disorder, adolescent

disintegrative instability, and common developmental disorder. defined). Impairment in many functional domains is observed throughout all five regions.

According to Sansosti and Sansosti (2012), there has been a noticeable rise in the population of students with autism in inclusive educational settings. Consequently, this necessitates a greater level of engagement and comprehension on the part of instructors in order to effectively address the needs of these individuals. According to Hughes et al. (2011), there has been an observed increase in how common autism (and related disorders) are. It has been estimated that among a population of 110 learners, at least one individual is affected by autism. When Autism was determined to meet the eligibility criteria for assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a total of 5,415 learners were identified as recipients of these services. However, it is important to note that this figure accounted for less than 1% of the overall population of learners with disabilities.

According to McGillicuddy and O'Donnell (2013), it has been observed that instructing individuals with Autism necessitates the utilization of certain strategies that may be foreign to educators who often work with neurotypical students. This necessitates the use of suitable solutions that may address factors such as the age of the learners, the classroom setting, and the overall school atmosphere. Hence, it is imperative to provide educators with a wide array of instructional approaches. While instructors acknowledge the potential benefits of implementing these tactics in their classrooms, Unfortunately, many educators just don't have the knowledge or experience to help these students in the way they need.

Countries like the United States and the United Kingdom have implemented mainstream schools as a means of promoting the inclusion of students with disabilities into conventional educational settings (Hughes et al., 2011). The Chinese government has enacted legislation to address the provision of education for those with disabilities, with the aim of protecting and upholding their rights. In practical application, learners who have impairments, such as autism, within inclusive educational settings are often provided with the same curriculum as their non-disabled classmates. However, they are granted exemptions from participating in assessments that are specifically developed for students who are normally developing (Sun, 2018). Nevertheless, this approach hinders the adequate documenting and evaluation of remarkable improvements in autistic people's social conduct and schooling in the People's Republic of China.

Based on the findings of Elsabbagh et al. (2012), it can be observed that Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) constitutes around 4.97% of the total population of students with disabilities in African nations. The determination of Autism prevalence in African nations proved challenging due to limited research efforts and a scarcity of healthcare and educational experts equipped with the necessary information and experience to accurately identify Autism in individuals. Organizations in Africa's sub-Saharan region have challenges in providing special classes and rehabilitation programs due, in part, to the factors outlined by Kalabula (2010). Many problems, including insufficient learning and support resources, a shortage of qualified instructors, and inadequate teacher training facilities. The effective implementation of the mainstreaming idea necessitates the adoption of suitable techniques by schools and instructors.

The implementation of mainstreaming education in South Africa was a direct response to Act 108 of 1996. This legislation mandated the adoption of mainstreaming education and provided guidance through Education White Paper 6, issued by the Department of National Education in 2001. The proposed rules for the implementation of mainstreamed education were created by the National Department of Education, including specific duties and procedures to be followed. According to Mpofu (2004), there is no specific law in effect in Zimbabwe to help mainstream education. The Zimbabwe Education Act of 1996 is only one example of a governmental policy that supports the goal of bringing education into the mainstream. According to the Disabled Persons Act of 1996 in Zimbabwe, all children have the right to a free and appropriate public education through the seventh grade, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, gender, creed, or disability. Any school that discriminates against a student because of their disability is in violation of the Disabled Persons Act (1996) and may face sanctions from the local education authority.

Autism, an illness that lacks widespread recognition and comprehensive understanding, is seen to be somewhat unfamiliar in the context of Kenya. Historically, autism has been perceived as a mental condition, often associated with negative connotations such as being considered a curse or attributed to witchcraft. Historically, individuals with autism were often secluded within residential settings, confined within the confines of their houses, or subjected to physical restraints for extended periods of time. Some individuals were raised in conditions of isolation, such as mental hospitals or correctional facilities, as documented in a study conducted

in Kenya in 2018. Persons who fall on the autism spectrum have become more common and steadily rising; nonetheless, this topic has received limited societal and educational attention. There has been a lack of significant governmental investment in the establishment of inclusive educational institutions or support systems catering to individuals with developmental impairments, including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) (Stone-MacDonald, 2014).

According to Mbwilo et al. (2017), a significant number of parents of children with special needs have voiced frustration at the absence of specialized resources and strategies within the school system. These families believe that without the necessary support, their children are unable to fully benefit from the educational experience provided by schools. In the year 2003, Felicity Ndungu and a cohort of parents took the initiative to establish the Autism Society of Kenya (ASK), with the primary objective of advocating for autism to be recognized as a distinct category. In response to these concerns, the Kenyan Ministry of Education developed the first public special section for children with autism in the nation in 2018 at Nairobi's City Primary School (Kenya, 2018). The part is named after the city of Nairobi.

A same situation was observed inside schools in Kisii County, when students with developmental disorders were integrated into mainstream schools that lack the necessary infrastructure to adequately address their specific requirements. At now, there are a total of 11 educational institutions that have integrated students with autism into their mainstream programs. However, it is evident that these schools are currently facing a deficiency in the provision of adequate teaching and learning materials, hence hindering the effective support of both educators and autistic

students.

In Kisii County, more especially in the Nyamache sub-county, it was observed that out of the total of 102 elementary schools, only 11 were classified as mainstream. The number of schools in the region was relatively low in relation to the population and the diverse range of learners with varied issues requiring access to education. The educational institutions were similarly deficient in terms of adequately trained educators and the necessary infrastructure. Based on the reports from the county Education office, a significant number of students with disabilities were unable to attend school due to the schools' inability to provide suitable accommodations. The absence of adequately educated educators posed challenges in identifying situations requiring intervention and implementing appropriate techniques to support students in their academic progress. Because there was a lack of previously collected data on the state of autistic students in Kisii county, it was necessary to carry out this research. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effects that integrating students with autism into regular classrooms has on the educational path that these students take within primary that are public located in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii county, Kenya.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Disabilities remain a major barrier to equal educational opportunity in Kenya. In the context of Kenya, autism is a problem that has gotten scant attention, especially from academics in the field of education. Kenya has established an inclusive policy to improve the educational opportunities available to students with special needs.

Despite this progress, however, disabled people's access to education is still severely lacking. One of the most complex and underdeveloped areas in the world of education is the adaptation of regular schools to meet the needs of students, especially those with autism. Mainstreaming was not only the plain use of particular pedagogical strategies, though. Educator and parent perspectives, as well as student and peer talents, all had a role in shaping the final result. Only eleven schools in the Nyamache sub county were considered to be part of the mainstream education system. These institutions struggled to effectively adopt a system that meets the requirements of students with autism. When looking at 11 different schools, we discovered that autistic children made up fewer than 2% of the entire student body. The sub county's EARC administrators have provided the following data on the number of autistic students enrolled in regular classrooms (Table 1). According to the statistics, there were 33 students in the class.

Table 1: Population distribution of Autistic learners in 11 mainstreamed primary schools

School	Number of Enrolled Autistic Learners
A	4
B	2
C	3
D	4
E	3
F	4
G	2

H	3
I	3
J	2
K	3
TOTAL	33

SOURCE EARC 2022

Since it was simple to suppose such a tiny population in a classroom setting, the small population that creates the autistic learners may have an impact on their learning. Due to their limited population, it was also challenging to separate apart the students in order to provide them with specialized instruction. The overwhelming majority of teachers who work in such classes lack the necessary training to effectively interact with autistic pupils. According to data supplied by EARCs and an official from the Ministry of Education in Nyamache sub-county, the majority of the teachers at the schools had training in four different types of disabilities. These types of disabilities include hearing impairment, vision loss, cognitive impairment, and a physical disorder. According to the survey, just about a third of instructors in regular classrooms have received training on how to deal with students who have autism or other emotional or behavioral difficulties. This made it challenging for educators to address the demands of their students. As a result, their academic success is in jeopardy. As a result, many of them had little choice but to forego formal education due to a lack of direction. Therefore, the goal of this research was to investigate the impact of different interventions on the schooling of students with autism. Because of this knowledge vacuum, the current study set out to investigate how integrating students with autism into typically developing classrooms affected their learning in a public primary school in Nyamache sub-county.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The researchers in this study set out to examine how including students with autism into regular classrooms affected their performance in public primary schools in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii County, Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The following aims served as the basis for the research:

- i. To evaluate the impact of students' social relationships with their peers on their academic performance in Nyamache sub-county, Kisii County, public primary schools.
- ii. The objective of this study is to examine the impact of learners' self-management on the educational outcomes of students with autism in public primary schools within Nyamache sub-county, Kisii County.
- iii. The objective of this study is to examine the impact of Antecedent Procedures, namely Priming, Prompt Delivery, and Picture Schedules, on the educational outcomes of students with autism in public primary schools located in Nyamache sub-county, Kisii county.
- iv. The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of Peer-Mediated Interventions on the educational outcomes of students with autism in public primary schools located in Nyamache sub-county, Kisii County.

1.6 Research Questions

The purpose of the study was to investigate and provide solutions to the following inquiries:

- i. What is the impact of peer contact on the educational experience of learners diagnosed with autism in public primary schools within Nyamache sub-

- county, located in Kisii County?
- ii. In public primary schools in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii County, what impact does learners' self-management have on the educational experience of students with autism?
 - iii. When attending public primary schools in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii County, can students with autism benefit from the use of Antecedent Procedures (Priming, Prompt Delivery, and Picture Schedules)?
 - iv. In public primary schools in Nyamache, Kisii County, how do students with autism react to Peer-Mediated Interventions?

1.7 Hypotheses

In this study, the researcher posited the following hypotheses;

- i. The academic outcomes of students with Autism attending conventional schools were anticipated to exhibit improvement as a result of their participation in peer relationships.
- ii. There was no observed association between the self-management abilities of learners with Autism who were integrated into conventional classes and their academic performance.
- iii. The research hypothesis posited a potential association between antecedent acts and the subsequent consequences experienced by children with autism in their typical classroom environments.
- iv. Individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) who are enrolled in conventional school environments may not see advantageous outcomes from the implementation of peer mediation strategies.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The research was anticipated to serve as a supplementary resource to previous studies and address a current knowledge deficit in the field of integrating students with autism into normal education. The study's findings would provide valuable insights for government officials and policy makers seeking to enhance current education policies related to the inclusion of students with autism. The researchers anticipated that the outcomes of this investigation would be utilized by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), and other professionals in the field of education to facilitate the advancement of a specialized educational framework tailored to meet the needs of students with autism.

The anticipated outcomes of this study were also anticipated to support educators in modifying their instructional approaches and perspectives about the inclusion of students with autism in general education classrooms. The research also aimed to foster constructive collaboration among workers involved in service providing. The project also aimed to establish a basis for future research on the effective integration of learners with autism into mainstream schools, not only in primary schools in Nyamache Subcounty but also in other counties in Kenya. The objective of this study was to contribute to the current body of literature by deepening our understanding of mainstream schools that include students with autism.

1.9 Scope of the study

The present investigation was conducted in Nyamache sub-county, located in Kisii County, Kenya. The investigation was conducted in elementary schools that were considered to be "mainstream" in the Nyamache sub-county. The participants in this study consisted of head teachers and trained teachers specializing in Special Needs

Education (SNE). The primary objective of this research was to examine the educational experiences of individuals with autism, as their impairment presents additional obstacles in obtaining education compared to their non-disabled counterparts. This topic garnered attention as a result of prevalent cultural and societal biases towards individuals with autism in several parts of Kenya. The scope of the research was restricted to autistic students and instructors in normal educational settings due to their significant influence on the identification and implementation of effective instructional approaches. The research was carried out over a span of two years to examine the impact of different instructional approaches on the educational experiences of students with autism.

1.10 Limitation of the study

The researcher found constraints in the study, including a lack of willingness from respondents to engage and successfully complete the offered questionnaires due to personal reasons. In order to address these constraints, the researcher took measures to ensure the respondents about the protection of their data privacy and confidentiality. Additionally, a concise explanation was provided to the participants on the objectives and rationale for doing the study.

Furthermore, the educational experience of learners has created concerns regarding the level of dedication exhibited by instructors in fulfilling their duties. Consequently, teachers have displayed a reluctance to accurately assess the performance of their students. The researcher emphasized the importance of conducting the study as a means of uncovering the difficulties associated with integrating students with special needs into normal classrooms. The study encompassed Nyamache sub-county and a nearby sub-county for piloting purposes. However, the researcher took measures to

guarantee that the data obtained was representative and could be extrapolated to inform the conclusions of other researchers. Hence, it is important to use caution when interpreting research findings, as they may only pertain to the state of other mainstream schools within the country.

1.11 Assumptions of the Study

The research task was based on a couple of assumptions including;

- i. All participants in the study supplied replies that were both honest and dependable.
- ii. All educators possessed the necessary qualifications to instruct students in primary schools across various grade levels within inclusive educational settings.
- iii. The availability and accessibility of learners' educational records.

1.12 Operational Definition of Terms

Autism: A student who exhibits typical physical characteristics but displays developmental abnormality and behavioral changes prior to reaching 30 months of age. This study focused on an individual who had challenges in socializing, communication, and engaging in repeated activities, which subsequently led to a suboptimal educational experience.

Mainstreaming: This study pertains to the inclusion of learners, irrespective of age and handicap, in a mainstream classroom setting for instructional purposes. The objective is to observe enhancements in social skills and educational experiences among these learners.

Educational Experiences: In the context of this research, the focus was on the manner in which individuals were able to execute acquired tasks and abilities.

Strategies: In this study, the behaviors employed by a teacher were meant to enhance targeted learning outcomes.

Perception: This topic pertains to the subjective interpretation of information obtained from personal experiences within one's immediate surroundings.

Peer Interaction: The objective of this study was observing instances where a participant engaged in activities such as playing, sharing, and taking turns, while utilizing both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication with their peers.

Self- management: This topic pertains to the tactics, techniques, and approaches employed by a learner to successfully guide their actions and behaviors, therefore achieving their goals autonomously.

Antecedent procedure: This research examines the implementation of preventative methods in the classroom with the aim of reducing the occurrence of problematic behaviors.

Peer- Mediated Intervention: This study employed a methodology in which friends or classmates were instructed and prepared to offer essential tutoring in matters pertaining to education, conduct, and social issues.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section provided a systematic review of the literature that was relevant to the study's objectives. Here's how the researcher organized this particular section: The purpose of the research was to examine how social interactions with classmates affected students with autism. It also aimed to investigate how students' ability to direct their own learning impacted their outcomes. Additionally, the study intended to evaluate how much preceding procedures impacted the educational encounter for students with autism. Furthermore, the purpose of the research was to evaluate the effect that peer-mediated therapies had on the educational outcomes of autistic adolescents who attended elementary schools that were publicly funded in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii County, Kenya. In conclusion, the study provided a synopsis of the existing body of literature and identified gaps in the conceptual structure that needed to be addressed.

2.2 Effects of Peer Interaction on Educational Experience of Learners with Autism in Public Primary Schools

As has previously shown, autistic people have a major uphill battle when it comes to establishing meaningful interpersonal connections. People who have specific developmental or psychiatric problems may have difficulties with their social skills. These difficulties may include, but are not limited to, a lack of self-control and a grasp of social standards, such as the notion of taking turns while participating in conversational exchanges. According to Hunt et al. (2018), individuals displaying autistic tendencies frequently require instruction in peer interaction in order to acquire

the ability to independently initiate and respond to their peers, with minimum adult intervention. Furthermore, it is crucial for these learners to be able to transfer these acquired abilities to various peer contexts and novel circumstances. Learners diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) had a higher likelihood of acquiring knowledge and engaging in successful social interactions while under the guidance and support of a teacher or instructor. One instructional approach employed to facilitate interactive play was the utilization of image activity calendars. These plans included visual depictions of the steps required to carry out a certain task, like putting together a puzzle, in a logical order. Eldar (2017) suggests that this revision of the timetable may help autistic persons complete the task in a way that works best for them.

The goal of the study by Watkins et al. (2019), titled "Interventions for Individuals with Autism in Inclusive Educational Environments," was to increase social interaction between autistic students and their typically developing brained classmates, so the researchers made sure to select activities with clearly defined durations. In doing so, we hoped to have a positive impact on the lives of students with autism. The establishment of environmental conditions aimed at facilitating peer contact, such as the strategic matching of learners with and without autism, as well as the implementation of interactive play activities like role play, held significant importance. Moreover, it has been shown that individuals with developmental disabilities have higher levels of engagement in play while in the presence of generally developing peers, as compared to their interactions with peers who also have developmental impairments (Hundert, 2009).

According to Fein and Dunn (2007), one goal of encompasses is to help autistic kids

become more independent in the classroom. One strategy for achieving this goal is to have usually functioning classmates help these children with their intellectual and social growth so that they may spend less time under the watchful eye of adults. Conventional collaborative strategies for helping students with autism acquire social skills include having typically developing peers serve as instructors, tutors, or even just playmates. The utilization of peer participation as a pedagogical approach has demonstrated efficacy in facilitating the acquisition of socially appropriate behaviors among individuals with autism. This method not only promotes the emulation of peer behavior patterns but also fosters a more inclusive and welcoming attitude among typically developing peers towards those exhibiting autistic symptoms. According to Fein and Dunn (2007), it was found that the peer interaction strategy yielded the most favorable outcomes when peers were provided with supervision and instruction on how to effectively engage with individuals with autism, as opposed to just being instructed to play with them. In order to address this difficulty, it was necessary to establish effective peer connection to facilitate good learning experiences for autistic students.

According to Harrower and Dunlap (2011), the utilization of peer-tutors in educational settings for autistic learners serves the purpose of facilitating assistance, teaching, and feedback from the peer tutor. The implementation of peer-tutoring has been demonstrated to enhance the levels of academic focus, classroom participation, and peer relationships within autistic kids who are integrated into regular classes. According to Fein and Dunn (2007), individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) can derive advantages from the presence of a peer mentor. This is because the mentor can actively participate in play and communication with the individuals with

ASD, serving as a role model for appropriate social behavior. The peer mentor may remind the mentee of social norms and help with finding solutions via talks and recommendations.

It is crucial for educators to be aware that assigning the same individual as both a peer-tutor and mentor is not advisable, given that learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder struggle to transfer their social skills across different peers and contexts. Due to this rationale, educators were tasked with delivering comprehensive social skills instruction to the whole student body, so enabling all individuals to acquire the necessary competencies for proper interpersonal interactions.

Hundert (2018) provided empirical support for the efficacy of implementing a class-wide approach to foster peer interaction. In a first-grade classroom, Hundert observed that when the entire grade was instructed on various aspects of initiating interaction, giving and receiving compliments, offering assistance, participation, cooperation, and giving others a chance to shine by a brief duration of three times a week, significant enhancements were observed in the peer interaction within the classroom. Following the completion of a four-week social skills training program, the participants were subjected to observational assessment in order to evaluate their social interactions during a free-play session. Individuals who demonstrated successful interactions with their peers were acknowledged and incentivized for their positive activities. Over time, it has been noted that both learners with Autism and their typically developing classmates exhibit an increased duration of social contact during their time in school.

This finding illustrates that social skills training may be advantageous not just for learners with Autism but also for the entire class, so mitigating any potential stigma

associated with providing intervention only to learners with Autism. According to Goldstein (2018), the field of literature has provided valuable insights on the efficacy of peer interaction as an educational technique for enhancing the learning experience of individuals with Autism. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that these studies were undertaken in several nations, each with its own unique institutional framework. In Kenya, and especially in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii County, it was found that there has been a dearth of field studies. That's why we feel compelled to fill the aforementioned study vacuum by conducting the present investigation.

2.3 Effects of Learners Self-Management on Educational Experience of Learners with Autism in Public Primary Schools

People who suffer from ASD often struggle to manage their own behavior. During managing one's emotions training, participants learn to assess themselves and their behavior, maintain a record of their progress in displaying both autistic along with mainstreamed characteristics over time, and use rewarding mechanisms when predetermined goals are attained (Harrower & Dunlap, 2011). Students with Autism can benefit from classroom teaching in self-management skills, which can increase their independence and decrease their reliance on teachers and aides. Newman and Eyck (2005) investigated how a self-management intervention affected children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in a mainstream preschool class. According to the results of the study, both the pupils' conduct and their capacity for autonomous work improved significantly. Even after the intervention ended, the gains remained stable. This finding has showed a great deal of promise in helping autistic individuals succeed in mainstream classrooms. An example of a self-management strategy at work would be helping a student who struggles with autism perform sequential tasks.

By keeping track of how often a student remembered to raise their hand before speaking, we could assess how effective this technique was.

Teaching students how to employ self-reinforcing strategies to encourage them to participate in their chosen leisure activities during free time is a powerful way to improve their motivation and performance. Teachers need training in self-management strategies in order to guide students with Autism toward productive classroom participation (Hunt et al., 2004). Furthermore, by shifting the responsibility for managing student conduct from the teacher to the student, self-management tactics promote a sense of independence inside the classroom. This change in responsibility frees up the educator to focus on actually teaching the material. Having this level of autonomy will provide students a sense of belonging in the classroom and remove any stigma associated with needing a personal aide, allowing them to fully engage in all classroom activities alongside their peers. Self-management strategies have been used to improve social abilities and reduce disruptive behavior (Harrower & Dunlap, 2011). In order to encourage motivation and create a positive learning environment, teachers must help their pupils develop a healthy sense of self-confidence in their talents.

2.4 Effects of Antecedent Procedures on Educational Experience of Learners with Autism in Public Primary Schools.

The learner with autism would use antecedent methods before taking part in a mandated activity. Priming, prompting, and the use of image timetables were employed to reduce the prevalence of problematic stereotyped behaviors and to aid students in coping with the job at hand (Harrower & Dunlap, 2011). Learners who anticipate having trouble with a topic or activity might benefit from "priming," or pre-

practice, before diving into the primary activity alongside their peers (Harrower & Dunlap, 2011). For example, if a student struggled with an introductory text or basic concept in any subject, the teacher would need to introduce the subject to the class, and then introduce the subject to each student separately before introducing them to the subject as a group.

Due to its ability to bridge the gap between specialized teaching and classroom group activities, the priming method proved crucial in easing the mainstreaming of students with Autism (Hunt et al., 2004). This allowed students who exhibited autistic behavior to interact with their peers and hone their social skills. Students on the autism spectrum may tune out teacher lectures in a traditional setting, but teachers have found that using prompting tactics is an effective approach to persuade them to participate in a particular pedagogical or behavioral endeavor. Teenagers on the autism spectrum needed this in order to participate more actively in conversations in class and fully benefit from the mainstreaming process. An aide would position themselves underneath the autistic student (Hundert, 2012) so as not to draw attention towards the teacher.

According to Hunt et al. (2004), an ed tech's role is to provide students with suggestions and praise them when they react correctly. It is possible to reduce the amount of prompting given to a student with autism as they demonstrate improved participation. To get a student's attention, aides can briefly clap the person's face with both hands. draw it toward the teacher; as the student becomes more adept at attending to the teacher without prompting, the aides can remove one hand from the student's face. To ensure the student with Autism also learns to respond to the teacher, it was crucial for the instructor to provide as many prompts and reinforcements as feasible.

We made picture timetables to help our autistic student understand what we would be doing in class and help him adjust to the routine of a regular classroom. Some students with Autism had trouble switching gears between activities, although pictorial timetables might help them anticipate what was next. Hunt et al. (2004) found that this method was successful in reducing students' reliance on aides and teachers while increasing students' participation and performance in class activities. Researchers looked at how well a picture-activity plan helped autistic student stay focused and on time. Learners with autism were able to a) master the mechanics of the picture-activity schedule with the help of faded graduated guidance, b) demonstrate high levels of sustained on-task and on-schedule behaviors with the picture book alone, and c) generalize their performance to novel tasks (Newman & Eyck, 2005). Therefore, the purpose of employing a pictorial timetable was to aid in educating students with autism in a general education classroom, boosting students' self-esteem and providing them with more opportunities to engage with their classmates. It was important to do research to see if such practices are in place at Nyamache Primary School in Kisii County. This research aimed to address such lack of information.

2.5 Effects of Peer-Mediated Interventions on Educational Experience of Learners with Autism in Public Primary Schools

Peer-Mediated Intervention is a methodology designed to educate peers on effective strategies for assisting their classmates with autism. Chang and Locke (2016) propose that the use of peer-mediated therapies holds potential as an effective approach to promote the integration of students with Autism into mainstream educational environments. The problems in pupils' social relationships can be attributed to the prevalence of inadequate intervention strategies. The utilization of typically

developing peers as a means to enhance the education of students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) holds promise in reducing the need for continuous individualized adult support. This approach enables students with ASD to cultivate greater autonomy and engage in activities that align more closely with those of their neurotypical peers.

In the study conducted by Fuchs et al. (2007), the concept of “peer teaching” is described as a collaborative approach where two students, one with autism and one without, are paired together to engage in various educational activities. In this arrangement, the neurotypical student assumes the roles of a guide, instructor, and assessor. Research has provided data indicating that the integration of kids with Autism into mainstream classrooms with their normally developing classmates has positive outcomes in terms of enhanced improvements in focus, academic interest, and interpersonal relationships. In a Collaborative Writing and Peer Tutoring (CWPT) class, every student engages in simultaneous collaboration with another student. The objective of the Comprehensive Writing competency Test (CWPT) was to guarantee that every student was provided with sufficient instructional time, along with appropriate pacing, timely feedback, real-time error correction, a high level of competency, and comprehensive coverage of topics.

The assessment results indicated that there were enhancements in reading fluency and increased accuracy in responding to reading comprehension questions when Kamps et al. (2012) examined the effects of CWPT on reading instruction for three children with autism who were enrolled in regular education classes. Furthermore, the implementation of Cognitive-Weighted Peer Tutoring (CWPT) resulted in an

augmentation in the length of friendships between individuals with and without autism. This increase was observed not only during organized academic tasks but also during unstructured leisure activities. Based on the existing studies, it appears that just implementing CWPT programs to enhance social connections among students with Autism may not be sufficient in producing enduring impacts in unstructured contexts. Based on the aforementioned evidence, it is evident that Cognitive Writing Process Therapy (CWPT) exerts a beneficial influence on the educational encounters of individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Nevertheless, there is a lack of clarity regarding the utilization of this particular technique within the educational institutions in Kisii County, particularly in the Nyamache sub-county.

Odom and Strain (2013) set out to examine the impact of introducing peer support into conventional classrooms on students' learning outcomes. Multiple studies have examined the effectiveness of recruiting usually developing teenagers to act as peer advocates to learners with Autism. The goal of this approach was to help autistic people improve their social skills in the same way that often happens in group instruction situations.

According to the findings of Odom and Strain (2016), it was discovered that children diagnosed with autism had heightened social reactions in response to initiation from their normally developing peers. Furthermore, the researchers noted that when teachers actively facilitated social interactions, students with autism shown increased social responses and initiations. The findings of this study offer first indications that the implementation of multi-component intervention strategies might potentially yield positive outcomes in mitigating problematic behaviors shown by children with Autism in inclusive educational environments. Brady et al. (2017) conducted a study

which revealed that providing education to non-disabled peers on how to engage with classmates exhibiting autistic characteristics led to notable enhancements in both peer social interactions and the overall functioning of the autistic students. Furthermore, Goldstein et al. (2012) conducted a study which revealed that the presence of generally developing peers who actively observed, commented on, and recognized the autistic individual's actions that led to improved social contact.

The findings of the study indicated a noteworthy enhancement in the level of student engagement with their peers who possess impairments subsequent to the provision of training. This improvement coincided with the use of non-disabled peers in the implementation of social skills treatments and the use of self-monitoring instruments to record the frequency and quality of these encounters. With the possible limits of generalizing the results of the research to the present study area owing to the diversity of the geographical environment, the goal of this investigation was to see whether a similar scenario occurred in Kisii County.

According to the research conducted by Dugan et al. (2011), it was seen that fourth-grade students exhibited greater learning outcomes when engaged in cooperative learning strategies within the context of social studies. The study revealed that students shown enhanced learning while collaborating in small group settings as opposed to engaging in solitary work. Numerous studies have demonstrated that collaborative efforts between students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their neurotypical peers in inclusive educational environments have positive outcomes in terms of enhanced social interactions, including increased occurrence, prolonged

length, and improved quality. Cooperative learning groups have been implemented in mainstream classrooms as a pedagogical strategy aimed at enhancing students' academic and social achievements. Consequently, individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their neurotypical counterparts had heightened levels of academic engagement, demonstrated superior performance on evaluative measures, and engaged in increased social interaction. The existing body of literature exhibited a notable void, prompting this study to address it through the collection of novel evidence in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii county.

The educational influence of cooperative learning groups on the inclusion of individuals with Autism in normal courses was investigated in two studies conducted by Veerkamp et al. (2007). The implementation of cooperative learning groups encompassed several activities, including vocabulary-centric reading comprehension exercises, interactive learning activities, and peer tutoring. This study observed improvements in reading proficiency, educational involvement, and interpersonal communication among both adolescents diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their normally developing peers in mainstream educational environments.

Kamps et al. (2012) looked at how interacting in social groups affected the relationship between three autistic boys in a mainstream first-grade environment consisting of typically-developing peers. The group participants received instruction on the initiation, response, and sustenance of social interactions, along with guidance on engaging in turn-taking, sharing duties, and seeking and offering aid in various tasks. The results demonstrated enhancements in the mutual openness of learners and peers towards each other, as well as increases in the frequency, duration, and amount

of time dedicated to social interactions. The study's findings indicated that the implementation of a group-oriented contingency strategy effectively facilitated the engagement of peers in sharing, assisting, and coordinating play interactions with their classmates who have autism. The study conducted by researchers revealed that the implementation of peer-mediated treatments yielded positive outcomes in terms of facilitating the integration of children with autism into mainstream classes. Additionally, the findings indicated that these interventions were deemed socially legitimate. Previous studies have demonstrated encouraging outcomes for academically capable children who engaged in peer-mediated treatments (Cushing & Kennedy, 2017). The significant outcomes seen can be mostly attributed to the positive assessments provided by typical peers on their perceptions of peer-mediated interventions.

2.6 Summary and Gap to be Filled

This review has examined the many techniques aimed at facilitating the academic success of learners with autism within inclusive educational settings. Previous studies conducted by scholars have demonstrated that the performance of learners with autism in mainstreamed environments varies significantly. This suggests that the level of support required for these learners to effectively adapt to the mainstream classroom setting is contingent upon the functioning of the institutional system (Harrower & Dunlap, 2011). The findings derived from previous scholarly investigations on the topic of mainstreaming and autism have predominantly concentrated on diverse geographical contexts, with less attention given to the specific case of Kenya. The acquired data were not deemed suitable for adequately explaining the correlation between mainstreaming and the educational experience of autistic learners in Kenyan counties.

Fein and Dunn (2007), Hunt et al. (2004), and Goldstein et al. (2012) conducted research on various aspects related to autistic learners, including the attitudes and perceptions of peer-teachers, the social environment among other capable learners, the classroom environment, and additional support services. Regarding the use of peer-mediated methods and their advantages within inclusive classrooms for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Goldstein and Cisar (2012), and Kamps et al. (2012) have expounded upon the existence of a favorable correlation between the practice of mainstreaming and the educational outcomes of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder within the classroom setting.

While the primary focus of these research was on countries other than Kenya, they have contributed to the understanding that there exists a favorable correlation between the practice of mainstreaming and the educational outcomes of students facing various types of obstacles. There is a lack of comprehensive research on Autism in Kenya, as well as in many other countries. This has resulted in a significant vacuum in both academic literature and our understanding of the current educational experiences of autistic students in normal schools in Kenya. Hence, the present investigation has significant value in addressing the aforementioned knowledge gaps within the Kenyan context, with Nyamache Sub-County of Kisii County serving as a sample case study.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The topic of autism has emerged as a relatively recent field of scholarly attention and has been recognized as a disability. Consequently, there has been a limited amount of information and readiness in terms of integrating students with autism into standard educational settings. The learners also experience difficulties in social interaction, communication, and creativity. In order to mitigate these challenges, it may be

necessary to foster teamwork and coordinated endeavors among diverse specialists. The present study employed the Vygotsky theory of interaction and the Autism Inclusive Collaboration Model as the theoretical frameworks for learners diagnosed with autism.

2.7.1: Vygotsky's Theory of Interaction

The study utilized Vygotsky's theory of interaction (Moore, 2011) as the conceptual framework to examine the engagement and communication of students with Autism in inclusive educational settings. According to this theoretical framework, it is posited that cognitive growth is facilitated by social contact. Specifically, engaging in collaborative activities and interacting with peers who had greater proficiency proved to be a very successful method for skill and strategy development. According to Vygotsky, the learning environment exerts a significant influence on both the process of learning and the overall development of individuals. This idea, particularly the notion of the zone of proximal development, is defined as the gap between a learner's independent abilities and their potential capabilities with the direction of an adult. The theory proposed by Vygotsky places emphasis on the role of instructors in the classroom, specifically in regards to their responsibility for organizing and facilitating interactions among learners. Furthermore, it was their duty to provide guidance to the learners in navigating the activities related to the acquisition of a certain notion. Examining the participation and interaction of autistic learners in a general education classroom, as well as the many instructional approaches employed by teachers to facilitate learner engagement and interaction, has significant importance. The aforementioned idea was employed in the study to elucidate how peers with expertise and proficiency in a certain domain might effectively facilitate the learning process of autistic individuals. This was achieved by providing guidance and support to the

learners, encouraging them to engage in tasks that somewhat beyond their current abilities. This facilitates the development of competence and acquisition of skills for both parties, enabling them to engage in high-quality interactions. Vygotsky's theories also advocate for an emphasis on social contact and collaborative teaching and learning approaches, which can be beneficial for those with autism by fostering peer-mediated learning.

2.7.2 Autism Inclusive Collaboration Model

The research was conducted under the framework of the Autism Inclusive Collaboration Model, which was created by Rajotte et al. (2022). This paradigm necessitates the cooperation of the instructional and non-instructional personnel. The successful mainstreaming of learners with Autism was facilitated by a paradigm consisting of four components. The initial element encompassed environmental and curricular adjustments, as well as overall classroom assistance. The intervention encompassed the utilization of adequately educated support personnel, a decrease in class size, the implementation of collaborative problem-solving techniques, and the provision of paraprofessional assistance. The component also include cooperative learning, integrative teaching, learning techniques, and personalised education.

The second component pertained to attitudinal and social support, which aimed to facilitate the readiness of teachers, school personnel, and peers in cultivating constructive interactions with individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Positive attitudes may be cultivated through promoting shared values regarding teaching and learning, providing reassurance and support to educators in their instructional approaches, and facilitating the integration of students with Autism into mainstream educational settings. The assurance is provided by administrators, families,

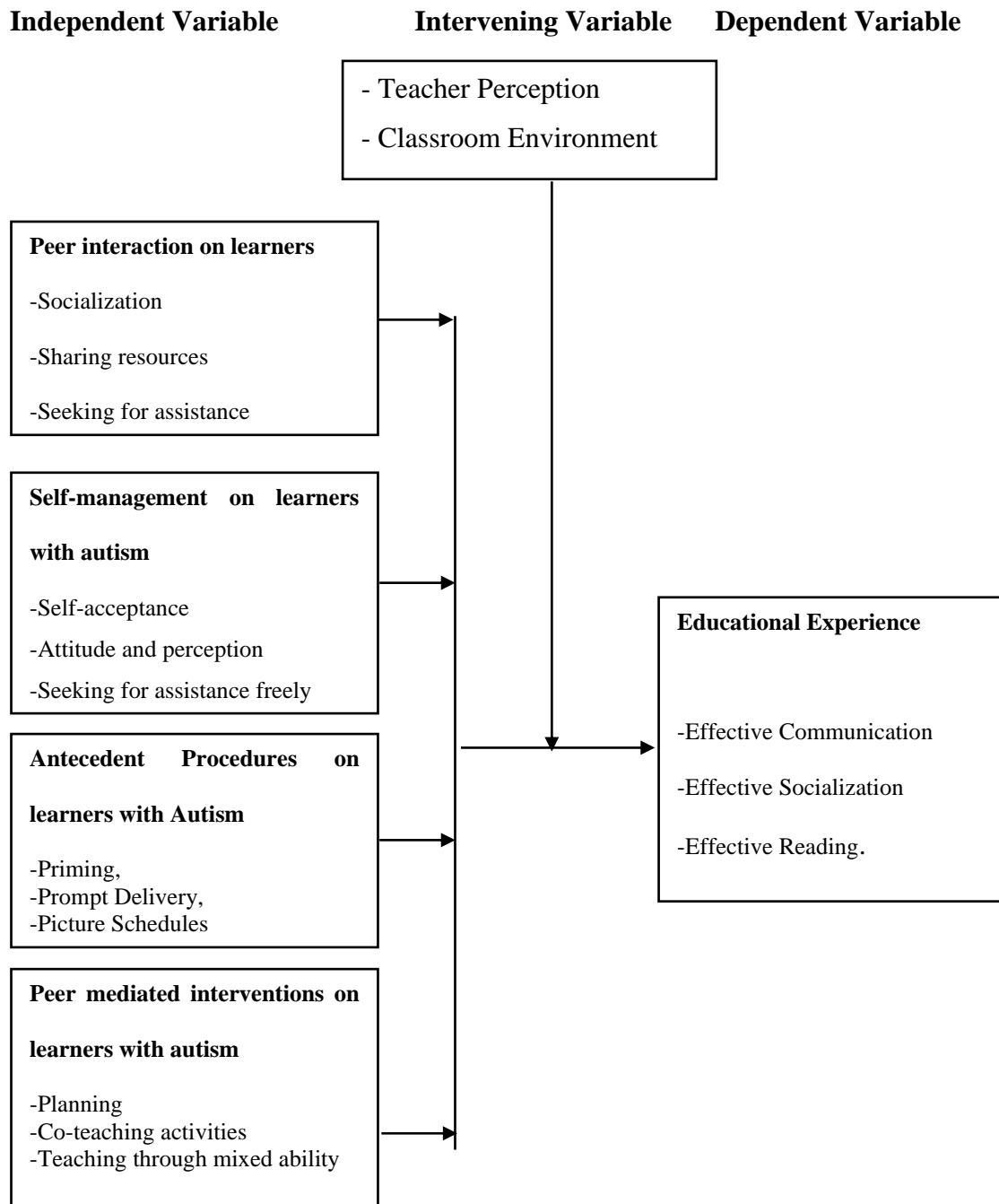
and specially qualified instructors.

The third element encompassed a synchronized team dedication, involving the collaborative resolution of problems among educators and the supply of relevant services and personnel. Additionally, it necessitates a sense of collective accountability, whereby both the specialized trained teacher and the regular teacher establish explicit benchmarks for monitoring the progress of students. This approach aims to integrate the observation of students' development into the regular classroom activities, while also holding teachers responsible for adapting their instructional or behavioral strategies within a predetermined timeframe. The last element was the collaboration between home and school, which facilitates the establishment of partnerships with families to execute programs in both educational and domestic environments. Each individual change was considered in relation to the broader social and cultural environment, and its significance was primarily observed in the educational experiences of learners with Autism in school, family, and community settings. These contexts are particularly important as they give rise to cultural conflicts, prohibited practices, penalties, and the provision of segregated education. The Autism Inclusive Collaboration Model highlights the viability of integrating students with Autism into standard educational settings. The model employed in this study was deemed suitable as it provided a framework for understanding how collaboration among different stakeholders contributed to the improvement of the educational experience for students facing difficulties in a regular educational setting. Increased collaboration with professionals, families, fellow learners, and communities has been found to dramatically enhance the educational experience of those with Autism.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

According to Wolfson (2014), a conceptual framework is a model that reflects the connections between the most important aspects of a research project. Its primary use was for making visible connections between concepts and relevant factors. The notion of educational experience served as the dependent variable, while the concepts of antecedent, which processes, and Peer Communicated Instruction, Peer Collaboration, and Self-Managed Learning interventions served as the independent variables. In Figure 1, we discussed the theoretical underpinnings of the investigation.

Figure 1: Conceptualization of effects of mainstreaming learners with Autism on Educational Experience in public primary schools.



Source: Researcher 2022

According to this theoretical paradigm, students with learning disabilities would benefit from mainstreaming since it would allow them to engage with their peers,

leading to improved social skills and a more enriching educational experience. As the picture also demonstrated, one of the goals of mainstreaming is to improve autistic students' self-management when they interact with their peers in the classroom. This approach also suggested that antecedent techniques, such as priming, prompt delivery, and visual timetables, significantly affect how students learn and their eventual educational experience. The framework also considered the impact of peer-mediated treatments including co-teaching, individualized lesson design, and mixed-ability instruction on the educational experience of students with autism.

Students with autism in regular classrooms had their learning environments and teachers' attitudes influenced indirectly by the study's conceptual framework. Students who have a favorable impression of their professors are more likely to have a rewarding learning experience, whereas those with a bad impression will have a less than ideal one. Additionally, the learning environment would have an indirect impact on the educational experience of students with autism.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the methodology of the study which indicated the plan of action for conducting the study. The chapter was organized to include the research design, location of the study, the target population, the sample size and sampling procedure, the data collection instruments, piloting research instruments, validity of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis, Operational definition of variables and Ethical principles.

3.2 Research Design

The research employed a descriptive survey methodology. The adoption of this design was motivated by its use in facilitating the identification of criteria by which the current circumstances might be evaluated. The selection of the design was based on the principle of collecting data from respondents without exerting any form of manipulation inside their natural environment. Using a descriptive survey design makes it easier to gather data (numerical and otherwise) about a given phenomenon for the sake of further investigation and, in certain situations, the derivation of valid generalizations on the basis of the existing data. Researchers conducted studies not just to learn more about a topic, but also to uncover new insights and propose novel approaches to old problems. The exclusive method employed for gathering perspectives, opinions, attitudes, and ideas aimed at enhancing educational procedures was the utilization of a descriptive survey design.

3.3 Location of the Study

The research was conducted within the context of public elementary schools located in Nyamache sub-county, which is situated in Kisii County, Kenya. The sub-county was surrounded by Gucha, Nyaribari Masaba, Bomachoge sub-counties within Kisii county, and Nyangusu sub-county within Narok county. The selection of an appropriate study location should be closely aligned with the researcher's specific area of interest. Hence, the researcher identified the sub-county that was most suitable for the study area based on the highest concentration of special units catering to learners with various disability conditions, including those with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This allowed the researcher to collect data directly from the natural environmental contexts of the respondents. Moreover, there exists a scarcity of research examining the impact of integrating students with autism into normal educational settings on their overall educational encounters.

3.4 Target Population of the Study

The sub-county included of 102 public elementary schools, each with its own headmaster. In all, there were 1232 teachers employed throughout these schools, out of which 65 were specifically qualified to cater to students with special needs (SNE). The study focused on 11 mainstreamed schools in Nyamache Sub-county, with a population of 11 head teachers and 36 SNE certified teachers in public elementary schools. According to the director of education for Nyamache sub-county in Kisii County in 2021, the sub-county had the largest prevalence of special units, suggesting a larger population of learners facing challenges inside mainstream primary schools, particularly those with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

3.5 Sample size and Sampling Procedures

3.5.1 Sampling procedure

Kothari (2014) employed sampling techniques in order to facilitate the researcher's selection of a representative subset from the whole study population that was both manageable and appropriate for producing the necessary information for analysis. Eleven schools with autistic students in their regular classes were chosen because they had been singled out by EARCs and Ministry of Education officials. The SNE-trained faculty at these 11 institutions had a total of 36 educators, who were intentionally sampled based on the specific information sought, its usefulness, credibility, and the available time and resources.

3.5.2 Sample size

Academic scholars have proposed that utilizing a sample size ranging from 10% to 30% of the population is deemed suitable for research purposes. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), it is recommended to have a minimum sample size of 100 participants in descriptive investigations. Out of the total population of 102 primary schools in the sub-county, 30% (equivalent to 30 schools) were found to have mainstreamed autistic learners, with a total of 11 schools offering this inclusive education approach. Consequently, the researcher opted to include a total of 36 instructors who had received Special Needs Education (SNE) training, as well as 11 head teachers from the 11 schools that had integrated students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). A total of 47 responses were obtained. In this study, the process of screening was not conducted to ascertain the precise occurrences of Autism. Instead, the researcher depended on the data supplied by instructors and head teachers on the

cases present inside their various educational institutions. The distribution is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Sample Sizes distribution

Schools	Head teachers	SNE trained teachers	Total
A	1	2	3
B	1	2	3
C	1	4	5
D	1	3	4
E	1	3	4
F	1	5	6
G	1	4	5
H	1	4	5
I	1	3	4
J	1	3	4
K	1	3	4
Total	11	36	47

Source: Researcher 2022

3.6 Data collection Instruments

The primary data collecting devices employed in this investigation were questionnaires and an observation schedule.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

The utilization of questionnaires was deemed appropriate for this study owing to its convenient administration process and capacity to efficiently reach a large number of

respondents within a limited timeframe. A questionnaire was distributed to head teachers who oversee mainstreamed classrooms as well as teachers who have received special needs education (SNE) training. The questionnaire consisted of a combination of closed, open-ended, and structured questions. The questionnaires administered to head teachers and SNE qualified teachers comprised sections A-E. Section A encompassed personal details and general information, whilst sections B-E were a series of systematically designed inquiries. A Likert scale consisting of five points was devised, wherein respondents are required to select one of the provided alternatives in response to a series of assertions. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was employed to assess the internal consistency dependability of the items within the B-E scale. This analysis proved to be valuable in ascertaining the varying levels of importance that the respondents attributed to different topics.

3.6.2 Observation Checklist

The researcher advocated the utilization of an observation checklist as a means to mitigate the presence of subjective bias. Additionally, the data collected pertains to the ongoing events within the educational institution. Lastly, during the observation, the researcher assessed the classroom learning environment and evaluated the adequacy and efficacy of the teaching and learning resources in facilitating the teacher's attainment of lesson objectives.

3.7 Piloting Research Instruments

In advance of the main study, a pilot study is a preliminary examination to evaluate the viability and efficacy of research methodology, data gathering technologies, sample recruitment strategies, and other research procedures. According to a 2006 study by Hassan, Schattner, and Mazza, the pilot study was useful in determining the

viability of the research by highlighting flaws in the research equipment, which served as a basis for making the necessary adjustments to improve the quality of the data collected. Kothari and Garg (2014) carried out research. The researcher was able to evaluate the validity and reliability of the study instruments thanks to the use of piloting. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), the recommended sample size for a pilot study should be between 1% and 10% of the sample size allotted for the primary research. A nearby sub-county's Magena Primary School was selected as the pilot testing location to examine the effects of mainstreaming autistic students on the educational experience. This school has mainstreaming procedures in place. This study aimed to evaluate the validity and reliability of the research instruments. In order to successfully accomplish the goals of the study, the questionnaires were correctly updated to include all pertinent elements of the investigation. Prior to conducting the main inquiry, the exercise helped the researcher become familiar with the instrument and gain the necessary skills for coding and scoring it.

3.8 Validity of The Instruments

According to Orodho (2012), construct validity refers to the extent to which a research tool accurately measures the specific construct it was designed to test. The utilization of face and content validity was implemented with the purpose of enhancing the dependability of the research instrument utilized in this study. The individuals selected to partake in the examination were the principal and faculty members from the educational institution that functioned as the initial trial site. To assess the validity of the instrument, the responses provided by the participants were compared. To ensure the instrument attains face validity, it was imperative to design it in a manner that is both unambiguous and comprehensive enough to capture the requisite data. Consequently, the head teachers and SNE-trained teachers were

requested to maintain a high level of objectivity when evaluating the tool. The structure and coherence of the question components also contributed to the achievement of face validity. Content validity in this study was assessed by the utilization of the Amin (2005) validity Index method. This calculation involved dividing the total number of questions on the questionnaire by the number of questions that respondents agreed with. The determination of content validity relied on the professional or expert opinion in the relevant subject area. The computation of the validity coefficient index (VCI), as created by Amin (2005), involved the utilization of responses provided by two experts.

$$\text{VCI} = \frac{\text{Average of number of common responses from the two experts}}{\text{Total number of question items on the questionnaire}}$$

The instrument was deemed genuine as the quotient (validity index) exceeded 0.6. In the present study, the validity test elicited responses from two experts. The ensuing section presents the feedback provided by these experts. The mean answer among the 34 statements was determined to be 23, resulting in a validity coefficient of $\text{VCI} = 0.67$ when calculated as 23 divided by 34.

The findings indicated that the instrument demonstrated validity, as evidenced by a VCI value over 0.6. This statement aligns with the argument made by Amin (2016) that a Validity Coefficient Index (VCI) equal to or greater than 0.6 is deemed appropriate for an instrument to be deemed legitimate.

3.8.1 Reliability of the Instrument

Orodho (2009) posits that dependability pertains to the ability of an instrument to yield consistent results or data over several iterations involving the same population.

The validity and reliability of the instruments were established via pre-testing the questionnaire using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 25 before commencing the real study. The objective of this study was to evaluate the internal consistency of items pertaining to peer interaction, self-management, antecedent processes, peer-mediated interventions, and educational experiences. This involves the administration of the designated instruments to both head teachers and SNE-trained teachers who possess similar characteristics to the participants in the current study. According to Kothari (2014), the credibility of a questionnaire was determined by the alpha coefficient index, which was considered satisfactory if it exceeded 0.7. The results of the SPSS analysis indicated that the questionnaire successfully passed the Cronbach alpha reliability test, with a Cronbach coefficient value of .820, so confirming the data's validity. The conclusion drawn was that the questionnaire has credibility due to the alpha coefficient index above 0.7.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher acquired an introductory letter from the postgraduate department of Maasai Mara University in order to expedite the application process for a research permission from the National Commission of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). Following the acquisition of permission, the researcher headed to the Kisii County Education Office. Subsequently, the researcher visited the Nyamache Sub-County Office to request further authorization prior to conducting visits to the selected primary schools for the study. The researcher thereafter conducted visits to the designated schools in order to obtain consent from the head teachers for data collection via questionnaires and observation schedules. Additionally, the researcher sought the participation of Special Needs Education (SNE) trained teachers as responders. The participants who were instructors at SNE (Special Needs Education)

schools were provided with a comprehensive overview of the study and its importance. They were then inquired about their willingness to engage in the research endeavor. The surveys were individually delivered by the researcher at schools, with each responder being obliged to provide the necessary information in the questionnaire. The completed questionnaires were afterwards collected. The researcher also guaranteed the participants that their replies would be treated with strict secrecy. Observation schedules were conducted concurrently with the retrieval of questionnaires for the purpose of subsequent analysis. The data gathering method was conducted over a duration of four weeks.

3.10 Data Analysis

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, using both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, to enhance the comprehensiveness of the findings and get a more comprehensive grasp of the research aims. The qualitative data in Section A of the questionnaires administered to head teachers and SNE certified teachers was obtained using open-ended questions. The data was then evaluated by examining the replies provided by the participants. The questionnaire was assigned a numerical code in ascending order, starting with one and ending with the final respondent, based on the sequence in which the filled questionnaires were received. The theme analysis method was employed to evaluate the qualitative data in alignment with the study's aims, as the responses exhibited diversity and could not be easily quantified. The analysis centered on the collective replies of people to each topic, encompassing all responders and their corresponding answers. Furthermore, the qualitative data collected during the observation schedule was in textual format.

Closed-ended questions in the surveys' Section B were used to acquire quantitative

data from principals and instructors with SNE certification. Analysis was performed on the quantitative data, and the results were shown in the form of figures and tables to aid in understanding and interpretation. To investigate the strength of the connection between the independent variables of interactions between peers, learners' managing one's emotions antecedent treatments, peer-mediated components, and the dependent variable of student's educational experience, this study employed Spearman correlation analysis, a non-parametric approach to the Pearson correlation. Using this approach, we were able to answer the study's research questions.

The elements (questions) were assigned numerical values ranging from 1 to 5, representing a spectrum from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The values ranging from 1 to 5 for each item in the questionnaire were compiled and inputted into the SPSS program for the purpose of conducting statistical analysis. The aforementioned software proved to be valuable in the domains of statistical analysis, data management, and data documentation. The aforementioned findings would prompt the emergence of debates and conclusions aimed at addressing the study inquiries. As a result, the researcher proceeded to provide recommendations.

3. 11Operational Definition of Variables

This section presents an overview of the variables under consideration and outlines the methods employed for their measurement. Additionally, the study demonstrated that the questionnaire items effectively assessed each variable. The findings were displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Operationalization of the Variables

Research questions	Variables	Scale of measurement	Data Analysis Technique
What is the impact of peer contact on the educational experience of learners diagnosed with autism in public primary schools within Nyamache sub-county, located in Kisii County?	-Peer interaction -Educational experience of learners	Interval	Descriptive analysis the non-parametric version of the Pearson
In public primary schools in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii County, what impact does learners' self-management have on the educational experience of students with autism?	- Learners Self-Management -Educational experience of learners	Interval	Descriptive analysis the non-parametric version of the Pearson
When attending public primary schools in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii County, can students with autism benefit from the use of Antecedent Procedures (Priming, Prompt Delivery, and Picture Schedules)?	-Antecedent Procedures -Educational experience of learners	Interval	Descriptive analysis the non-parametric version of the Pearson
In public primary schools in Nyamache, Kisii County, how do students with autism react to Peer-Mediated Interventions?	- Peer-Mediated Interventions -Educational experience of learners	Interval	Descriptive analysis the non-parametric version of the Pearson

3.12 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

Prior to embarking on data collection, the researcher obtained authorization from the Graduate School of Maasai Mara University. Subsequently, the researcher proceeded to the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) and subsequently ventured into the field for data acquisition. The researcher initially obtained the necessary authorization to carry out the study. Subsequently, the

researcher followed the appropriate protocol by seeking approval from the Kisii County Director of Education Office. Following this, the researcher proceeded to the Nyamache Sub-county Education Office and subsequently visited the schools to collect data. In order to ensure the integrity of the research, the researchers considered the interests of the respondents. The researcher took necessary precautions to ensure that all components of the data collection tool, including instructions, were designed in a manner that did not unintentionally reveal the identity of the respondents. Furthermore, the schools that took part in the study were anonymized through the use of a code system, which concealed their actual identities. The participants were provided with an explanation of the study's objective and were assured that the data collected would be solely utilized for educational purposes. The researcher adhered to all established criteria and was obligated to consider both logical and ethical considerations.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings collected in accordance with the research objectives are presented. The objective of the study was to assess the results associated with the integration of children with autism into inclusive educational settings within Nyamache Sub County, located in Kisii County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were to assess the influence of peer interaction on the educational encounters of children diagnosed with autism in public primary schools located in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii County. The objective of the study was to examine the performance of children diagnosed with autism who employed self-management strategies within conventional primary schools in Nyamache Sub-County, Kisii County. The objective of the research was to investigate the impact of antecedent techniques, including priming, rapid delivery, and graphic scheduling, on the academic achievement of pupils diagnosed with autism in primary schools under government operation in Nyamache sub-county, Kisii County. The objective of the study was to investigate the response of pupils diagnosed with autism in public primary schools located in Nyamache sub-county, Kenya, towards peer-mediated therapy.

4.2 Response Rate

Of the total 47 questionnaires distributed, the researcher successfully retrieved 46 (97.9%) completed questionnaires. These included 11 surveys from head teachers and 35 from teachers, all of which were utilized for the subsequent quantitative analysis.

The observed classroom visit was associated with a high percentage of response. The researcher did all the necessary observations inside the selected schools. The findings were displayed in Table 4.

Table 4: Response Rate

Category	Questionnaires Administered		Questionnaires Returned	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Head teachers	11	100	11	100
Teachers	36	100	35	97.2
Total	47	100	46	97.9

The distribution of replies, as presented in Table 4, reveals that 46 questionnaires (97.9%) were successfully returned by those who responded and then utilized for analysis. The responses were deemed sufficient for utilization in the study. Mugenda (2012) posited that an affirmative response rate of 70% or more was deemed satisfactory for the purpose of data analysis. Hence, the researcher deemed the replies to be very suitable for study. The observations were systematically undertaken and the findings were organized topically for presentation.

4.3 Findings of the study

The findings of the research were examined and afterwards divided into two distinct areas. The initial component encompassed the analysis and presentation of information regarding demographics, while the subsequent section focused on the goal of the research.

4.3.1 Demographic Profile of the Study Respondents

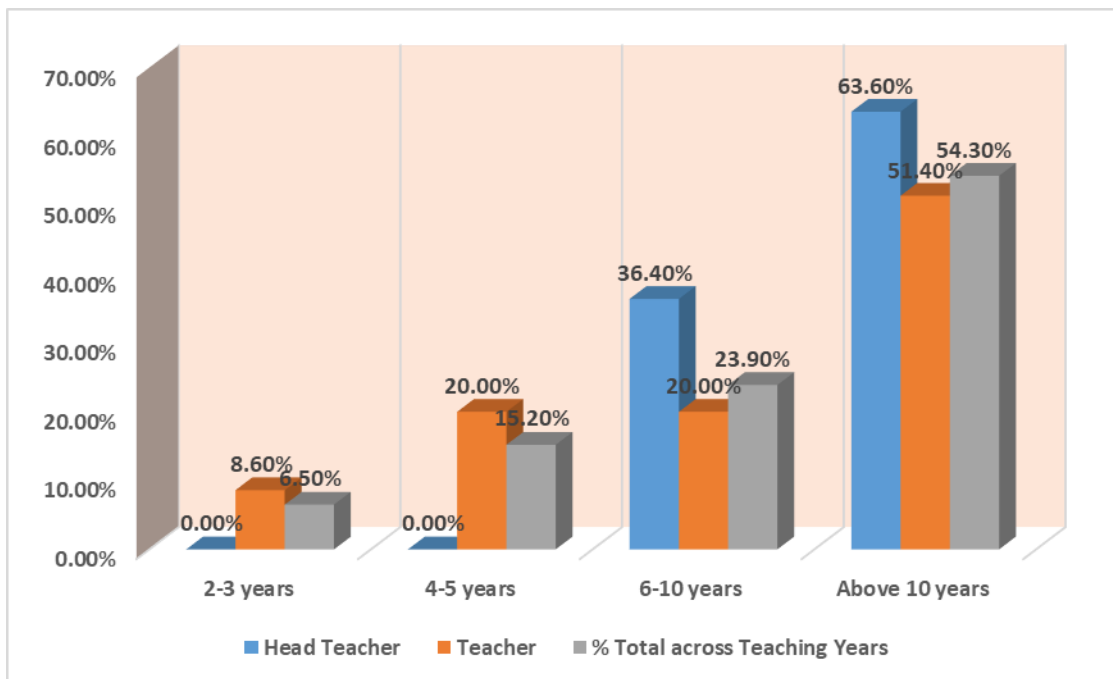
The study emphasized the characteristics of the participants since they played a pivotal role in defining their differences and influencing the outcome of the findings.

This study encompassed an examination of several demographic characteristics of the attendees, and including factors such as their duration of teaching experience, duration of teaching experience specifically within their current educational institution, level of training attained, and participation in courses or seminars pertaining to specialized needs.

4.3.2 Response on the number of years of teaching of the respondents

The study aimed to ascertain the duration of the subjects' teaching experience inside the educational institution. The findings obtained from the instructors and head teachers were depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Response on The Number of Years of Teaching of the Respondents



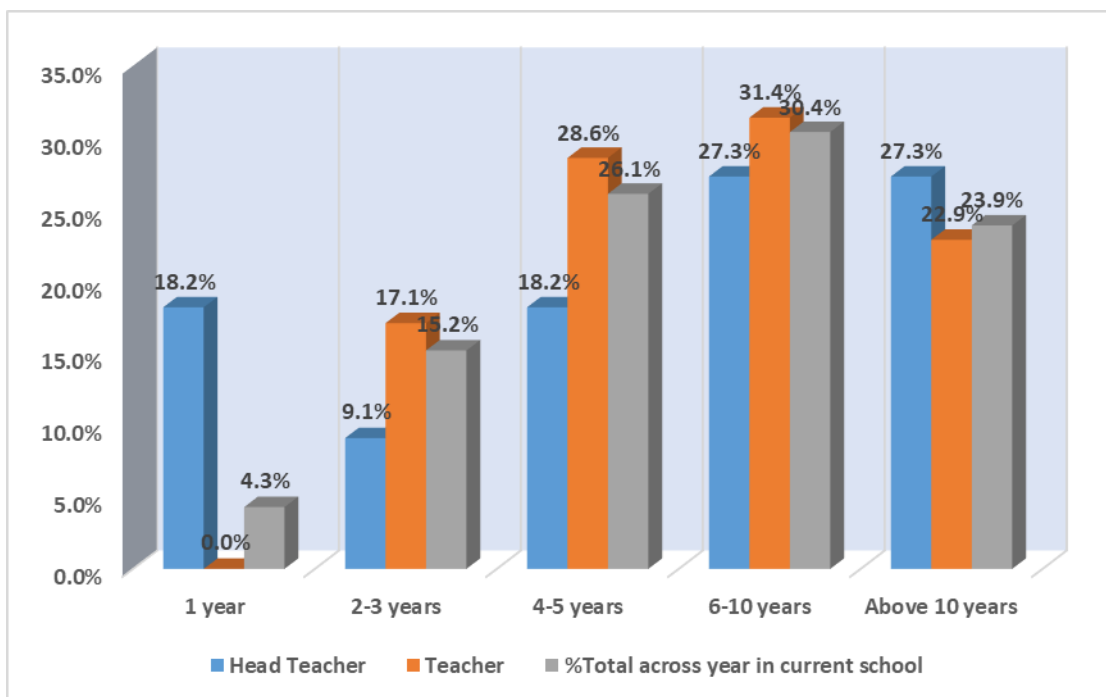
The findings depicted in Figure 2 indicate that a majority of the teachers in charge (63.6%) had served in the school's leadership for a period exceeding 10 years. Conversely, a smaller proportion (36.4%) had been employed in the institution for a duration ranging from 6 to 10 years. Among the teachers, the study revealed that 51.4% reported having worked in the educational institutions for a duration of 10

years or more, while 20% had a work experience of 6 to 10 years. A comparable number of teachers had a tenure of 4 to 5 years, and only 8.6% had a work experience of less than 4 years. This finding indicates that the participants had a sufficient duration of enrollment in the school and have a comprehensive understanding of the difficulties encountered by students with autism spectrum disorder in inclusive educational settings. This finding demonstrated that educators and school administrators who have prior teaching experience were more inclined to establish effective rapport with students who have disorders such as Autism. Educators possessing substantial expertise were more inclined to comprehend and adeptly address the many challenges encountered by students. This conclusion aligns with the results reported by Corrigan et al. (2017), who observed that experience emerged as one of the most significant factors in predicting awareness and utilization of educational techniques for individuals with autism. Therefore, providing educators and other educational practitioners the opportunity to engage with students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has the potential to enhance their understanding and implementation of inclusive education strategies.

4.3.2 Response on the Number of Years at Your Current School of the Respondents

The participants' perspectives on the duration of their enrollment at this particular educational institution are depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Response on number of years in current school of the respondents



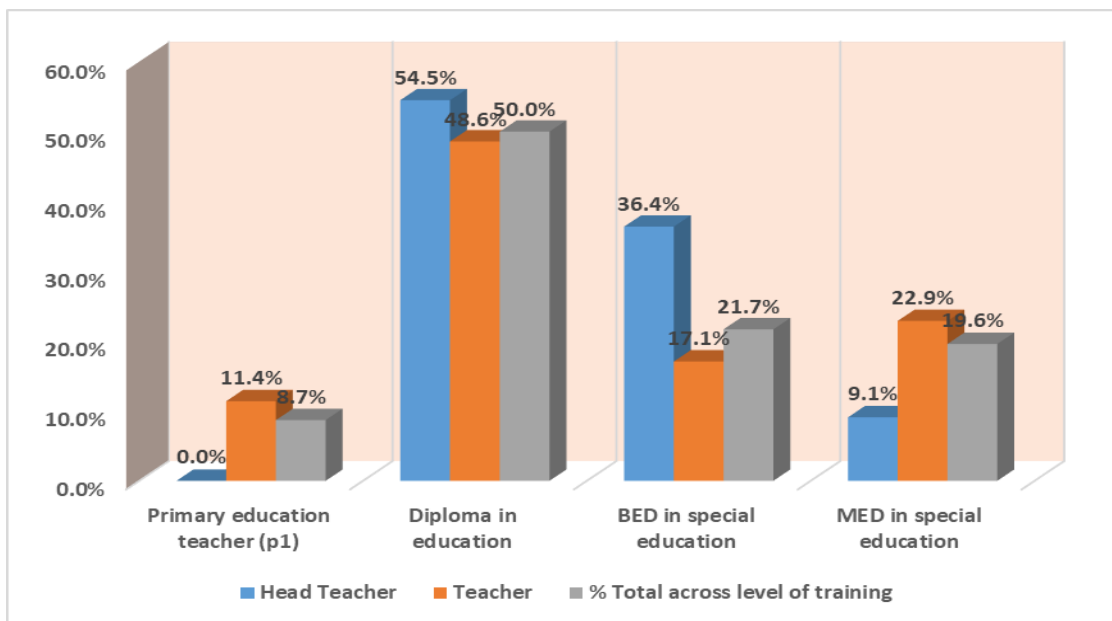
Based on the depicted figure, it is evident that a majority of the teachers in charge (27.3%) had served in their present school for over a decade. In contrast, the majority of instructors had been in their current school for a duration ranging from 6 to 10 years. Notably, just 2 head teachers (18.2%) had been in the institution of learning for a single year. Out of the total number of instructors, a mere 6 individuals, accounting for only 17.1% of the sample, reported having a tenure of 2-3 years in the present educational institution. This suggests that the rate of head teacher transfers across schools are greater than that of regular teachers. The findings indicated that teachers who consistently interacted with the learners have a deeper understanding of their students and their circumstances, hence demonstrating familiarity with their condition. When a teacher maintains a prolonged tenure with a student within the same educational institution, they are able to cultivate a harmonious professional rapport and attain a comprehensive understanding of one another. Consequently, this

facilitates the students' ability to integrate effectively with their peers and achieve optimal academic performance.

4.3.4 Response on Present Level of Training or Education

The study further aimed to evaluate the respondents' degree of training, since it was found to impact the approaches employed by instructors and head teachers in addressing the diverse needs of learners and facilitating their comprehension of their respective situations. The findings were illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Respondents present level of training or education



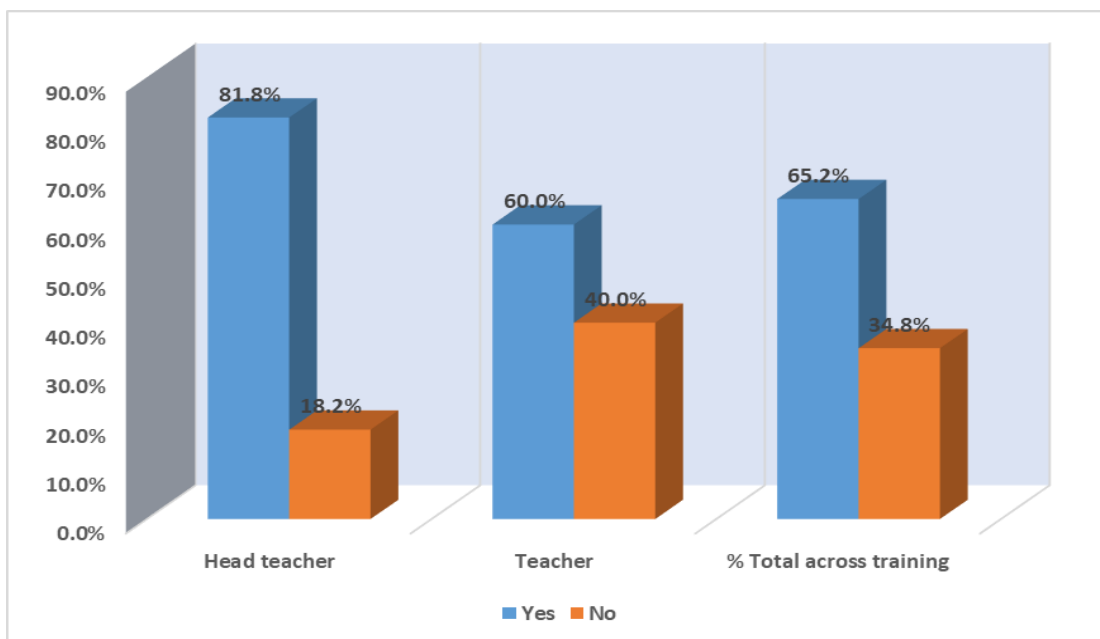
The findings presented above indicate that a majority of the head teachers (54.5%) possessed a diploma in education, while 36.4% held a BED in special education and 9.1% had a MED in special education. Among the teachers, the majority (48.6%) held a diploma in education, followed by 22.9% who possessed a MED in special education. This suggests that teachers with a master's degree in education specializing in special needs were responsible for instructing autistic learners. Additionally, 17.1%

of teachers held a BED in special education, while only 11.4% were primary education teachers (p1). These findings are significant as they contribute to the educational experiences of mainstreaming autistic learners within schools. The educational level of instructors has been found to contribute to the acquisition of diverse skills, knowledge, and a positive attitude. This enhanced educational background enables teachers to effectively manage students with varying needs and situations.

4.3.5 Attended Special Lessons/Seminar/Degree/Master Degree Regarding Teaching and Supporting Learners with Autism

The research further aimed to ascertain if educators had received specialized instruction pertaining to the instruction and assistance of students with Autism. The findings were depicted in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Respondents with special lessons/seminar/degree/master degree regarding teaching and supporting learners with Autism.



In Figure 5, it is evident that the majority regarding the head teachers (81.8%) responded affirmatively when asked if they had attended lessons, seminars, or masterclasses related to teaching and that promotes learners with autism. This engagement in professional development activities resulted in a positive deviation in their approach to educational experiences for autistic learners. Conversely, a minority of head teachers (18.2%) indicated that they had not participated in any such activities, suggesting a lack of significant impact in the support provided to these learners or in their role as administrators. Furthermore, among SNE (Special Needs Education) trained teachers, a majority of 21 individuals (60.0%) responded positively when asked if they had attended lessons, seminars, or masterclasses focused on imparting knowledge and that promotes learners with autism. This indicates a higher level of engagement in professional development activities among SNE trained teachers compared to head teachers. This demonstrates the extent of assistance in facilitating information acquisition for effective learning environments among autistic learners. Meanwhile, 16 out of the total number of instructors surveyed (34.8%) said that they had not attended any courses, seminars, or workshops related to teaching and assisting learners with autism. This suggests that a deficiency in instructors' understanding of Autism hindered their ability to successfully implement teaching strategies for students with autism in a regular classroom setting. The significance of higher education for educators lies in their ability to effectively address the diverse needs of learners with autism, encompassing variations in cognitive and behavioral capabilities, as well as cultural and socioeconomic contexts. The results of the study were consistent with the findings reported by Dunlap and Kern (2017). Previous research has identified notable disparities in educational outcomes between teachers who specialize and mainstream teachers. However, the present study posits that

improving educators' skills can enable them to identify the factors that influence the integration of learners with autism into mainstream classrooms.

4.4: Findings according to the objectives of the study

This part reported the findings in accordance with the study goals.

4.4.1 Effects of Peer Interaction on Their Educational Experience of Learners with Autism.

The main objective of this research was to examine the influence of peer interaction on the academic achievements among people who have been confirmed to have Autism. Participants were instructed to indicate their reaction by selecting the corresponding checkbox that best aligns with their perspectives on the statements presented in the table. Using a rating system ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree," 2 denotes "Disagree," 3 signifies "Not Sure," 4 indicates "Agree," and 5 represents "Strongly Agree." The optimal response entails a genuine reflection of one's personal perspectives. The findings were condensed and organized in accordance with Table 5.

Table 5: Response on effect of peer interaction

STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Effective peer interaction promotes social rules such as self-control and turn taking in conversation to promote education experience	0	0	2 (4.3%)	27 (58.7%)	17 (37.0%)	46 (100.0%)
A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework is in place at my school to ensure effective and efficient implementation of peer interaction to promote educational experience of learners with autism	2 (4.3%)	3 (6.5%)	11 (23.9%)	11 (23.9%)	19 (41.3%)	46 (100.0%)
Learners with Autism are likely to learn and interact effectively with their able peers when guided	0	5 (10.9%)	2 (4.3%)	28 (60.9%)	11 (23.9%)	46 (100.0%)
My school has environmental arrangements to promote peer interaction to improve educational experience	0	15 (32.6%)	7 (15.2%)	28 (60.9%)	6 (11.0%)	46 (100.0%)
Peer involvement is a good strategy to teach autistic learner to behave in a manner that resembles their peers positively	0	5 (10.5%)	7 (15.2%)	28 (47.8%)	6 (13.0%)	46 (100.0%)
My school uses class wide approach as a strategy for peer interaction where the entire class is taught how to initiate interaction	5 (10.5%)	2 (4.3%)	11 (23.9%)	22 (47.8%)	6 (13.0%)	46 (100.0%)
My school has established a coordinating organ whose responsibility is to ensure proper peer interaction coordination and effective interaction of learners with autism	5 (10.9%)	7 (15.2%)	0	29 (60.3%)	5 (10.9%)	46 (100.0%)

The question at hand pertains to the potential impact of successful peer interaction on the development and reinforcement of social rules, namely self-control and turn-taking in discussion, with the aim of enhancing the educational experience. The researcher found that a small proportion of participants (4.3%) expressed uncertainty, while a majority (58.7%) agreed and a significant portion of respondents, specifically 37.0%, expressed strong agreement with the given assertion. These results suggest that successful peer contact has a role in promoting adherence to social rules. This discovery corresponds to the outcomes of a study conducted by Harris et al. (2016), which aimed to examine the language proficiency of autistic learners in an educational setting characterized by racial segregation. The research investigation concluded that there was no significant difference in language development between learners who were enrolled in an inclusive classroom and those who were not.

When queried about the existence of a thorough the establishment of a robust accountability and assessment framework inside the educational institution is crucial in ensuring the effective and efficient execution of peer interaction initiatives, specifically designed to enhance the learning process of students having autism. Two participants (4.3%) expressed strong disagreement, while 3 respondents (6.5%) voiced disagreement. A total of 11 respondents, accounting for 23.9% of the sample, expressed uncertainty. Conversely, a total of 11 individuals (23.9%) expressed agreement with the aforementioned statement, while a majority of 19 individuals (41.3%) strongly concurred. This finding indicates the presence of a thorough monitoring and assessment structure inside the school, which is designed in order to optimize the learning process of pupils with autism, it is imperative to implement social interaction tactics that are both successful and productive. The research

outcomes of Kalabula (2010) and Mbwiloe et al. (2017) were corroborated by the results obtained in this study. Additionally, it was observed that a majority of educational institutions lack adequate monitoring mechanisms to assess students with disabilities, namely those with autism. This deficiency significantly hampers their integration into the mainstream educational system.

In relation to the assertion that individuals with autism were prone to acquiring and engaging in successful learning and social interactions with their neurotypical peers under appropriate guidance, it is worth noting that 5 respondents, accounting for 10.9% of the total, expressed disagreement with this statement. A total of 2 respondents, or 4.3% of the sample, expressed uncertainty. In contrast, a significant proportion of the participants, namely 28 individuals (60.9%), expressed agreement with the given statement, although 11 individuals (23.9%) highly endorsed it. This finding suggests that individuals with autism are more likely to acquire knowledge and engage in successful social interactions when provided with appropriate guidance and support. This conclusion aligns with the research conducted by Harris et al. (2016), which examined the integration of learners with autism into normal educational settings. The study revealed that when these learners engage in interactions with their peers, they have accelerated learning abilities and are more likely to successfully grasp and comprehend information. The findings of Panteliadou et al. (2013) were consistent with the results obtained in this study, suggesting that mainstreaming has a significant impact on facilitating the engagement of individuals with autism spectrum disorder in educational settings. The utilization of this inclusive strategy facilitates individuals in successfully participating and connecting with their classmates, ultimately leading to improved overall development and well-being.

The participants were queried on the presence of environmental provisions within the school setting that fostered peer interaction, hence enhancing the overall educational experience. The data revealed that a total of 15 participants, constituting 32.6% of the survey those who responded, indicated dissent towards this claim. In the population being studied, a proportion of 15.2% (n = 7) of participants indicated their preference uncertainty. On the other hand, a majority of the participants, namely 17 individuals (37.0%), expressed agreement with the given statement, with 7 individuals (15.2%) highly endorsing it. This suggests that the educational institution has implemented environmental measures aimed at fostering peer connection in order to enhance the overall educational experience. Previous research, such as the study conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO), has observed that autism is a disability characterized by significant heterogeneity in terms of functional abilities. Therefore, the extent and magnitude of assistance needed for an individual with autism is mostly contingent upon the specific attributes of the individual's cognitive and behavioral functioning (World Health Organization, (2022)).

Regarding the efficacy of utilizing peer participation as a pedagogical approach to cultivate positive behavioral resemblance to neurotypical peers among autistic learners, it is noteworthy that 5 respondents, including around 10.9% of the total participants, expressed disagreement with this assertion. A grand total of seven participants, including 15.2% of conveyed their opinions uncertainty. However, the majority of the respondents, namely 28 individuals (60.9%), expressed agreement with the statement, with 6 individuals (13.0%) indicating a great level of agreement. This finding demonstrated that incorporating peer interaction into instructional strategies is an effective approach for promoting favorable behavioral outcomes

among individuals with autism, fostering behaviors that align with those exhibited by their typically developing peers. The idea is reinforced by prior research conducted by Koegel et al. (2010), which suggests that individuals with disabilities are more likely to acquire a range of skills when they engage in interactions with others, as opposed to attempting to acquire these skills independently. This finding demonstrated that learners with autism were indeed influenced by peer support.

The responses to the questionnaire indicated that 5 participants, representing 10.9% of the overall sample, strongly disagreed with the claim that the institution had implemented a class-wide strategy to promote peer bonding, whereby the entire class received instruction on initiating interactions. Additionally, 2 respondents, representing 4.3% of the sample, showed disagreement with this statement. Out of the total sample size, 11 individuals, or 23.9% of the participants, expressed uncertainty over the matter. In contrast, a majority of the participants, namely 22 individuals (47.8%), expressed agreement with the given statement, with 6 individuals (13.0%) indicating a significant level of agreement. This implies that the educational institution adopts a comprehensive strategy as an organizational way to foster peer relationships, whereby everybody in the class is provided with guidance on initiating social connections. This approach has resulted in a notable enhancement in peer interaction inside the classroom. The research conducted by Mbwilo et al. (2017) and Panteliadou et al. (2013) is consistent with respondents' belief in the efficacy of using a class-wide strategy to facilitate interaction and learning among learners with autism. This finding suggests that while the technique may have been deemed suitable for facilitating successful learning, it was not implemented properly in the majority of schools.

Although asked regarding the presence of a governing entity inside the educational institution responsible for promoting the integration of peer interactions and successful inclusion among pupils with autism, a minority of 5 participants (10.9%) stated dissenting views. Furthermore, a total of 7 participants, accounting for 15.2% of the sample, expressed uncertainty, but the vast majority among respondents, specifically 29 individuals (63.0%), concurred with the assertion in question. Furthermore, 5 respondents (10.9%) strongly agreed with the statement. This statement suggests that the school has implemented a coordinating body with the purpose of facilitating appropriate coordination of peer interactions and promoting effective integration of students with autism. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Fein and Dunn (2007), who observed that when peers engage in productive interactions with other students who face learning challenges, it creates a conducive learning environment for these students. As a result, they become more comfortable and are able to gradually develop independent learning skills, similar to their peers in the classroom. This finding demonstrates the significant role that mainstreaming schools play in facilitating successful social interaction among learners, hence promoting optimal learning outcomes.

The participants were also requested to indicate the learners' attitude as positive or negative. The participants revealed that the learners' attitude was not positive due to a lack of appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitude among non-disabled learners in effectively managing autistic learners within the classroom setting. The findings were consistent with the research conducted by Avramidis and Norwich (2012), which demonstrated that the attitudes of learners towards individuals with Autism in

inclusive educational environments tended to be predominantly favorable. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Mesibov and Shea (2016), which demonstrated that instructors generally had positive opinions towards the overall idea of mainstreaming. Nevertheless, the findings of this study indicate that participants expressed reservations regarding the suitability of complete mainstreaming for all individuals with Autism. Moreover, the participants expressed many elements that would facilitate the effective integration of a student with Autism into mainstream education. These criteria encompassed the staff's attitude, the degree of the condition, and the assistance provided by an auxiliary teaching professional.

Based on the data obtained during the open-ended inquiries, it was noted that the expeditious identification of learners with autism by academics and other stakeholders in the field of classroom instruction is crucial for the effective implementation of incorporating initiatives. This early identification is necessary to ensure that these learners receive suitable and high-quality educational experiences and support within mainstream schools. The establishment of Education Assessment and Resource Centers (EARCs) can serve as an effective starting point for this process. Additionally, it is important to raise the promotion of awareness regarding the traits of autism across fellow students can be achieved through active engagement in communal activities and the provision of advice and psychological services, with the ultimate goal of fostering acceptability.

The research's implications were substantiated by the results of a study conducted by Odom et al. (2015), which examined the impact of peer initiations on the social interactions of preschool-aged children exhibiting characteristics similar to those of individuals with autism. The study observed that instructors had a prominent role in

encouraging and strengthening social interactions initiated by recognized peer supporters. The findings indicated a higher occurrence of pleasant social contact. The findings were consistent when the educators gradually reduced their use of reward for interactions started by peers. This finding demonstrated that peer contact exerted an impact on the engagement of learners with Autism, thereby influencing their educational attainment.

Additional study was conducted to investigate the potential existence of a significant link the present study aims to investigate the relationship involving relationships with peers and the educational trajectory of individuals who have been diagnosed with autism. The study utilized the Chi-square test of linkage to investigate the relationship between Peer Interaction as well as the schooling experiences among people identified as having autism. *Ho: The academic outcomes of students with Autism attending conventional schools were anticipated to exhibit improvement as a result of their participation in peer relationships*, was the hypothesis the experiment was conducted as well as the findings are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6: Chi square test

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	182.248 ^a	46	.000
Likelihood Ratio	116.073	46	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.133	1	.042
N of Valid Cases	46		

The findings indicated a highly substantial correlation between peer contact and the schooling experience of those diagnosed with Autism. The findings indicated a highly significant correlation between every variable, suggesting that the educational journey of individuals with Autism was impacted by peer contact. When individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) engage in positive interactions with their neurotypical peers within an inclusive educational setting, they are more likely to have enhanced opportunities for learning and the cultivation of beneficial developmental behaviors. The chi-square test, on the other hand, yielded a significantly high result of 182.248, indicating a strong association between the variables, exhibited a considerable level of statistical significance at a p-value of 0.000, indicated the findings of this study. The confirmation of this finding was supported by the use of the spearman's the inverse correlation magnitude, as depicted in Table 7, is observed.

Table 7: Spearman's correlation analysis

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal by Ordinal Spearman Correlation	.577	.121	4.686	.000 ^c
N of Valid Cases	46			

The findings shown in the table indicate a statistically significant moderate correlation ($r = 0.577$; $P < 0.05$) This study examines the relationship between peer interaction and the academic achievements of individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This finding demonstrated a highly substantial correlation. The t statistic gave strong evidence to support the statistical significance of the observed association, as indicated by a p-value below 0.05. The present findings are consistent with the research carried out by Simpson (2015), which similarly reached the same conclusion that peer support is a significant factor influencing the educational achievement of the students with Autism in traditional educational settings.

4.4.2 Learners Self-Management on their Educational Experience of Learners with Autism.

The supplementary objective is to explore the intriguing impact of learners' emotional self-regulation on the educational experiences of those diagnosed with Autism. The participants were given the responsibility of articulating their opinions by choosing the appropriate box that effectively represented their sentiments considering the well-structured arguments presented in the table. A numerical rating system was employed, encompassing a spectrum ranging from 1, denoted as "Strongly Disagree," to 5, represented as "Strongly Agree," with intermediate values of 2, labeled as "Disagree," 3, referred to as "Not Sure," and 4, designated as "Agree." The exemplary response is the one that accurately depicts your distinct perspectives. The response was carefully condensed and displayed on Table 8.

Table 8: Learners Self -management on educational experience of the learners with Autism

STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may have challenges in effectively regulating their own behavior and engaging in methods for self-management.	4 (8.7%)	6 (13.0%)	0	15 (32.6%)	21 (45.7%)	46 (100.0%)
The educators at my educational institution assist their students in developing self-assurance in their capabilities, so fostering motivation and cultivating a conducive atmosphere for studying.	0	0	5 (10.9%)	30 (65.2%)	11 (23.9%)	46 (100.0%)
The self-management intervention aims to instruct the learner in the process of discerning between behaviors that are deemed suitable and those that are considered unsuitable.	0	0	10 (21.7%)	30 (65.2%)	6 (13.0%)	46 (100.0%)
The implementation of self-management techniques has been found to yield notable enhancements in students' conduct and their ability to work independently within the educational setting, so enhancing their overall experience in school.	0	0	17 (37.0%)	17 (36.0%)	12 (26.1%)	46 (100.0%)
The managing one's emotions intervention aims to instruct individuals in monitoring their involvement and autism-related behaviors over a period of time.	0	2 (4.3%)	5 (10.9%)	34 (73.9%)	5 (10.9%)	46 (100.0%)
The acquisition of self-management abilities in the classroom has been found to enhance the independent functioning of learners with autism, hence reducing their dependence on professor or learning assistant support.	0	2 (4.3%)	8 (17.4%)	17 (37.0%)	19 (41.3%)	46 (100.0%)
The managing one's emotions intervention instructs a learner on how to employ reinforcement strategies to reward his or her actions upon meeting particular criteria.	0	4 (8.7%)	5 (10.9%)	26 (56.5%)	11 (23.9%)	46 (100.0%)

When we looked at how students with autism manage their behavior, we noticed some interesting things. First, four students, which is about 8.7% of the group we asked,

really didn't like the idea at all – they strongly disagreed with it. Then, six more students, around 13% of the group, disagreed too. But here's the interesting part: fifteen students, that's about 32.6% of the whole bunch, actually liked the idea and agreed with it. They were the biggest group. And finally, a whopping twenty-one students, which is a big 45.7%, really, really liked the idea and strongly agreed with it. So, most of the students were on board with the idea, especially those twenty-one who were super enthusiastic about it. This suggests that individuals with autism face challenges in effectively managing their own behavior, a notion that is substantiated by the fact that teachers allocate a greater amount of time to these learners. Harrower and Dunlap (2011) conducted a study that corroborated this finding, demonstrating that individuals with autism encountered difficulties in adapting and self-regulating while attempting to acquire skills similar to their neurotypical peers. However, the researchers also observed that for certain individuals, this challenge served as a beneficial opportunity for learning.

The goal of the research project was to ascertain whether the professors at the educational institution facilitate an enhanced sense of self-assurance among the learners they teach, and whether this heightened confidence contributes to sustained motivation and the establishment of a conducive learning milieu. A total of 5 respondents (10.9%) expressed uncertainty on this matter. The majority of participants, namely 30 individuals (65.2%), expressed agreement with the statement, with 11 individuals (23.9%) strongly agreeing. This finding suggests that educators inside the educational institution play a crucial role in fostering self-assurance among their students, hence enhancing their motivation levels and cultivating a favorable atmosphere for learning. Consequently, this aspect potentially contributes to the

overall quality of their educational journey. The findings align with the study undertaken by Sainato et al. (2013), which investigated the effects of a managing one's emotions strategy on the cultivation of independent work skills in pupils who had autism within a mainstream educational environment. The study's results indicated notable and expeditious improvements in the participants' behavior. Furthermore, it was seen that these changes were sustained even after the gradual removal of each intervention component. This suggests that learners who have acquired self-management skills exhibit increased motivation and confidence in their abilities, resulting in an enhanced educational experience.

When queried about whether self-management intervention facilitates the development of the ability to differentiate between suitable and improper actions, a total of 10 respondents (equivalent to 21.7% of the sample) expressed uncertainty. The majority of respondents, specifically 30 individuals (65.2%), expressed agreement with the statement, while 6 individuals' Thirteen percent of respondents expressed a strong agreement. The aforementioned observation suggests that the incorporation of individualized goals by educators, coupled with the encouragement of socially acceptable behaviors, has been recognized as a tactic for inclusively integrating pupils of all abilities, including those diagnosed with autism. This strategy facilitates the cultivation of focused attention and serves to reduce the occurrence of disruptive activities. The results of this study are consistent with the research carried out by Frea and Hughes (2017), who showed that the combination of self-management approaches and assessments of function in educational environments shows potential for conducting functional evaluations in order to determine the root causes of challenging behaviors in individuals with autism. Based on the results, the learner demonstrated the ability to differentiate between various behaviors after the

function was identified. Subsequently, the learner exhibited a reaction that was functionally similar to the issue behavior. This suggests that individuals with Autism who possess self-management abilities are more likely to make progress in adopting alternative behaviors, resulting in significant reductions in problem behavior.

The participants were queried on whether self-management demonstrates a noteworthy enhancement in the students' conduct and ability to operate autonomously in an educational setting, specifically in relation to their educational experiences. Of the answers, 17 individuals (37.0%) expressed uncertainty regarding this matter. Following this, a cumulative number of 17 participants, constituting 37.0% of the overall sample, indicated their concurrence with the provided statement, whilst 12 participants, corresponding to 26.1% of the specimen, showed significant disagreement. The results of this study suggest that the implementation of a managing one's own remedy for students with autism in inclusive classrooms led to a significant improvement in their behavioral self-regulation and the acquisition of autonomous learning abilities. This improvement not only fostered a sense of inclusion within the classroom environment, but also facilitated their active participation in activities alongside their peers, without the need for constant one-on-one assistance, thus reducing the potential for stigmatization. The findings of Hunt et al. (2004) align with the present study's results, indicating that individuals with autism face challenges in adapting to new environments and acquiring self-management skills. However, it is important to note that these individuals require additional time and considerable patience from educators and peers in order to achieve these goals. The findings revealed a significant correlation between the self-management techniques instructed to individuals with Autism and their academic achievement.

The results of the study indicated that a considerable percentage of the individuals who participated, specifically 34 persons, (73.9%), expressed agreement with the statement, while a smaller subset of 5 individuals (10.9%) strongly agreed. A mere 2 respondents, including 4.3% of the total sample, expressed disagreement with the notion that self-management intervention facilitates the acquisition of skills necessary for monitoring both mainstreamed and autism-related behaviors in learners, hence emphasizing the importance of longitudinal assessment. A total of 5 respondents, or 10.9% of the sample, expressed uncertainty. This finding suggests that the implementation of self-management intervention proved to be a successful approach in instructing individuals to consistently monitor their autistic behaviors, enabling them to successfully regulate and control them. Instructors play a crucial role in facilitating the development of learners' self-management skills. The absence of instructional support poses significant obstacles for learners in achieving significant progress in managing yourself. The results of the study conducted by Koegel et al. (2012) support their conclusion that self-management techniques were successful in improving the responsiveness of a total of four people diagnosed with autism to verbal commands from others in different environments, including society as a whole, home, and school. Notably, these improvements were observed even when a treatment practitioner was not present. The behavior exhibited by the learner was observed through the utilization of a wrist counter, employed to document their accurate replies to predetermined questions, afterwards resulting in reinforcement. The findings indicated enhancements in the learner's ability to independently respond to others.

The study's findings showed that only a small group of people, just 2 individuals, which is about 4.3% of all the people we asked, didn't think that students with autism

can become more independent and rely less on a teacher or helper by learning self-management skills in the classroom. There were 8 people, or about 17.4% of the group, who weren't quite sure about it. On the brighter side, 17 people, making up 37.0% of the group, agreed with this idea. But the majority, a big group of 19 people, which represents 41.3%, really believed in it and strongly agreed with the statement. So, most folks thought that students with autism can become more independent through self-management skills, especially those 19 who were really convinced about it. This finding suggests that the acquisition of self-management skills in the classroom by individuals with autism can lead to increased independence, reducing their need for teacher or educational assistant support. The results of this study align with the research done by Sainato and colleagues in 2015. Their research also looked into how self-management interventions can help students with autism become more independent in inclusive classrooms. So, it seems like both studies found similar things when it comes to the benefits of self-management for these students. The findings demonstrated a significant enhancement in the learner's conduct, with large benefits being sustained following the methodical withdrawal of each intervention component. The relevance of this finding suggests that once individuals with Autism were aided in acquiring self-management skills, they demonstrated the ability to function autonomously with less need on instructor guidance.

In response to the question of whether self-management intervention effectively teaches learners to reward their own behavior upon meeting specific criteria, the findings reveal a diverse range of opinions. A minor faction, comprising 8.7% of the surveyed individuals (4 respondents), expressed dissent, suggesting that they do not believe in the efficacy of this approach. Additionally, 10.9% of the respondents (5

individuals) fell into the category of uncertainty, indicating mixed feelings. In contrast, a substantial majority, constituting 56.5% of the participants (26 individuals), endorsed the idea that self-management intervention is indeed effective in instructing learners to reward their own behavior when certain criteria are met. Therefore, a significant portion of the respondents showed confidence in the value of self-management interventions for fostering self-rewarding behavior among learners. statement, with 11 individuals (23.9%) indicating strong agreement. This finding suggests that the implementation of self-management interventions enables individuals to learn how to effectively reinforce their own behavior upon meeting particular criteria. When the participants were requested to specify the point at which they believed the autistic learners had developed enough self-management abilities, a significant proportion of them reported that this occurred when the learners had learned the ability to autonomously govern their own behavior and engage in acceptable actions both inside the school environment and at home. However, it was seen that this constituted a protracted procedure necessitating the dedication of educators, parents, and peers alike. The results of the current study support the conclusions reached by two studies; Sansosti and Sansosti (2012) and Elsabbagh et al. (2012). Both studies highlighted the significance of implementing an effective mainstreaming strategy, which, over time, can positively impact the developmental progress and behavioral competence of individuals with autism.

The challenges that may impact the development of self-management skills in autistic learners include difficulties in coordinating their motor skills, issues with memory and attention span, and mood fluctuations that can disrupt their daily routines. These difficulties mostly pertained to personal matters, as they had a direct impact on

particular individuals. In addition, the participants also highlighted additional obstacles, such as environmental concerns and a lack of adequately skilled employees.

The study topic examined if there was a statistically significant connection between what students' abilities to manage themselves and their educational experience. Through additional analysis, an investigation was conducted to see if there was a correlation among the student can ability to handle themselves and their time at school. *Ho: There was no observed association between the self-management abilities of learners with Autism who were integrated into conventional classes and their academic performances* done using the null hypothesis was tested the results were presented in table 8.

Table 9: Chi Square Test

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	133.966 ^a	36	.000
Likelihood Ratio	100.913	36	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.502	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	46		

a. 49 cells (100.0%) had expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .09.

The findings indicate a robust and statistically significant correlation between the implementation of managing one's emotions instruction for individuals with Autism and their academic performance whereby the chi square represented the value of 133.966 and the p-value at 0.000. This discovery is consistent with Sainato (2015) research findings. Their research also showed a strong connection between using a self-management intervention and the growth of independent work skills in students with autism in inclusive classrooms.

Additional investigation was conducted in order to see if there was a statistically significant correlation between the development of managing one's emotions skills in participants and its impact on their understanding in school. The task was completed and the findings were displayed in Table 9.

Table 10: Association between teaching learners with Autism self-management skills and education experience

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal	by				
Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.631	.089	5.393	.000 ^c
N of Valid Cases		46			

The findings reveal a strong connection between the factors under investigation, as evidenced by the data in the table with chi-square value of 0.631 and p-value less than 0.05. The t value of 5.393 that was obtained shows a significant correlation between the variables, indicating that teaching strategies for self-management to learners with autism is closely linked to their overall educational progress. These results are in line with what Elsabbagh and their team found in 2012, as they also observed a significant correlation between teaching self-management methods to learners and their educational achievements. The relevance of this finding is that individuals with Autism possess the capacity to acquire and develop self-management abilities, which play a crucial role in fostering positive interpersonal relationships and ultimately boosting their educational journey.

4.4.3 Antecedent Procedures (Priming, Prompt Delivery and Picture Schedules) On Their Educational Experience of Learners with Autism.

The obtained t value of 5.393 indicates a significant correlation connecting the variables, suggesting that instructing learners with Autism in strategies for self-management is strongly linked to their overall teaching outcomes. These results

support what Elsabbagh and their team discovered in 2012, where they also found a significant link between teaching self-management methods to learners and how well they do in their education. What's important about this finding is that individuals with autism have the ability to learn and improve their self-management skills. These skills are really important because they help them build better relationships with others and make their educational journey smoother. In our study, we used a rating system from 1 to 5, where 1 means "Strongly Disagree," 2 means "Disagree," 3 means "Not Sure," 4 means "Agree," and 5 means "Strongly Agree." It's important to choose the response that truly matches your own thoughts. The responses we got were summarized and presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Response on the antecedents' procedures and educational experiences

STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	Total
The utilization of the priming method is crucial in promoting the successful integration of students with autism into normal educational settings.	0	9 (19.6%)	0	19 (41.3%)	18 (39.1%)	46 (100.0%)
The utilization of antecedent procedures serves the purpose of proactively averting the manifestation of troublesome stereotyped behavior, while concurrently assisting learners in effectively managing the assigned work.	0	0	11 (23.9%)	28 (60.9%)	7 (15.2%)	46 (100.0%)
Autistic individuals can be seen as engaging in pre-practice, a strategy in which they preview knowledge or assignments that they may encounter challenges with before to participating in the activity alongside their peers.	2 (4.3%)	0	9 (19.6%)	32 (69.6%)	3 (6.5%)	46 (100.0%)
Prompting strategies refer to techniques used to elicit an acceptable response within a certain educational context or behavioral task.	0	5 (10.9%)	13 (28.3%)	25 (54.3%)	3 (6.5%)	46 (100.0%)
The facilitation and reinforcement of an individual with autism by the instructor are crucial in fostering the learner's ability to effectively react to the teacher's prompts.	4 (8.7%)	0	0	26 (56.5%)	16 (34.8%)	46 (100.0%)
A visual timetable is designed to provide autistic learners with information on the anticipated events and activities that will occur throughout a typical school day.	4 (8.7%)	0	0	22 (47.8%)	20 (43.5%)	46 (100.0%)
The utilization of an antecedent technique has been found to be a successful approach in fostering individual engagement and performance during classroom activities, hence reducing reliance on instructor guidance.	0	2 (4.3%)	7 (15.2%)	32 (69.6%)	5 (10.9%)	46 (100.0%)

In relation to the assertion that the utilization of the priming method is crucial in promoting the integration of students with autism into mainstream education, a total of 9 respondents, constituting 19.6% of the sample, indicated that they disapproved. A majority of the participants, namely 19 individuals (41.3%), expressed agreement

with the given statement, while 18 individuals (39.1%) highly endorsed it. This suggests that the utilization of the priming method is crucial in promoting the integration of students with autism into normal educational settings. Regarding the use of antecedent procedures as a means of mitigating the manifestation of stereotyped behaviors and facilitating learners' ability to manage the assigned job, it was found that a total of 11 respondents, constituting around 23.9% of the sample, expressed uncertainty. In contrast, a notable percentage of those who participated, specifically 28 participants (60.9%), indicated their concurrence with the statement given statement, while a smaller subset of 7 individuals (15.2%) highly endorsed it. This demonstrates the utilization of antecedent procedures as a means of mitigating the manifestation of difficult stereotyped behaviors and facilitating learners' ability to manage the assigned activity. Elsabbagh et al. (2012) found that autistic individuals tend to have low self-esteem. However, their study revealed that when these individuals are included in inclusive educational settings, their self-esteem tends to improve. This improvement is attributed to the support provided by both peers and teachers, enabling them to effectively adapt and acquire new skills.

When queried about whether Autistic learners may be seen as engaging in pre-practice, wherein they preview information or tasks that they may struggle with before to participating in the activity with the rest of the class, a minority of participants of 2 individuals, accounting for 4.3% of the overall sample, conveyed their opinions significant disagreement with this assertion. A total of 9 individuals, or 19.6% of the sample, expressed uncertainty over the matter. However, the majority of the respondents, namely 32 individuals (69.6%), expressed agreement with the statement, with 3 individuals (6.5%) strongly agreeing. This demonstrates that

individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) might be conceptualized as engaging in pre-practice, wherein they evaluate information or activities that they are anticipated to encounter challenges with prior to actively participating in the classroom setting. The findings of Zanolli et al. (2016) are consistent with the results obtained in this study, as they highlight the significance of Pre-practice in promoting the inclusion of students with autism. Pre-practice serves as a bridge between individualized teaching and the collaborative activities that are commonly observed in general education classes. Previous research has demonstrated the significance of pre-practice in enhancing social interactions among students with autism in inclusive educational settings. This approach has proven highly efficacious in augmenting the frequency of social initiations with neurotypical peers and enhancing the overall educational experience for these individuals.

The participants were queried on whether prompting tactics serve as effective means of eliciting a suitable response in a certain educational context or behavioral undertaking, and a total of 5 individuals (10.9%) expressed disagreement with this assertion. Thirteen participants, including 28.3% of the sample, indicated a state of ambivalence. In contrast, a majority of the participants, namely 25 individuals (54.3%), expressed agreement with the given statement, although a smaller proportion of 3 individuals (6.5%) highly endorsed it. This suggests that prompting tactics refer to techniques employed to elicit a suitable response within a certain educational context or behavioral undertaking. The obtained results align with the research conducted by Sainato et al. (2017), which demonstrated the effectiveness of prompting tactics in promoting the integration of individuals with autism into mainstream educational settings. The utilization of prompts has been recognized as a

significant factor in the education of individuals with autism, as it facilitates the elicitation of a suitable response in a specific academic or behavioral task, hence enhancing the overall educational process. The implementation of diverse prompting tactics has significance in promoting the integration of students with autism into regular educational environments, since these individuals may not exhibit a favorable response to conventional instructional methods commonly employed in general education classes.

The results of the study indicate that a significant proportion of those who participated, specifically 26 persons (56.5%), expressed agreement with the aforementioned statement. Additionally, a significant proportion of participants, specifically 16 individuals (34.8%), strongly agreed with the statement, emphasizing the importance of the teacher's role in prompting and reinforcing learners with autism in order to facilitate their responsiveness to the instructor. Conversely, a grand total of four people surveyed, representing for 8.7% of the overall sample, voiced strong dissatisfaction. This demonstrates the significance of the teacher's role in initiating and reinforcing the learner with autism, hence facilitating the learner's ability to effectively engage and respond to the instructor.

When queried about the use of image schedules in providing information to learners with autism on their anticipated activities and routines throughout a typical school day, a majority of respondents, namely 22 individuals or 47.8%, expressed agreement, with an additional 20 individuals or 43.5% strongly concurring. Conversely, a minority of respondents, specifically 4 individuals or 8.7%, strongly disagreed with this notion. This suggests that image schedules are designed to provide individuals

with autism with information on the anticipated events and activities that will occur during a typical school day. According to a research conducted by Hall et al. (2015), image schedules were frequently employed as a means of enhancing predictability and serving as a substitute for spoken and textual teaching in individuals with Autism. The research findings indicate that individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder encounter difficulties while shifting between different activities. The research study observed that the utilization of picture schedules can be an efficacious strategy in providing learners with autism with timely indications regarding forthcoming transitions in activities. The findings indicated that the learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) exhibited a significant decrease in prompt utilization by classroom aides. Additionally, these learners revealed a high level of attention, ranging from around 90% to 100%, while engaging with various temporal events.

Regarding the efficacy of employing the antecedent technique as a means to enhance autonomous participation and performance in classroom activities, as well as reduce reliance on the instructor, a total of 2 individuals (equating to 4.3% of the sample) expressed disagreement with this assertion. Out of the whole sample, 7 individuals (15.2%) expressed uncertainty. In contrast, a notable fraction of the those who participated, specifically twenty-two people (69.6%), demonstrated concurrence with the provided statement, but a smaller subgroup of 5 persons (10.9%) exhibited strong endorsement of it. This suggests that employing an antecedent technique is an excellent approach to enhance students' autonomous involvement and performance in classroom activities, while simultaneously reducing their reliance on the teacher. The findings of Sansosti and Sansosti (2012) provide support for the results, since they

similarly suggest that individuals with autism may exhibit improved performance and acquisition of new abilities when engaged in successful social contact with others, particularly through participation in diverse activities such as sports.

The examination of the participants' answers to the unrestricted questions unveiled a dominant conviction among educators that active involvement in activities outside of school, such as athletics, exerts a beneficial influence on individuals with autism. It was observed that increased participation in such activities leads to heightened levels of activity, facilitating enhanced learning and developmental progress. The respondents also observed that those who are well trained in working with these learners will be better equipped to assist them in acquiring new skills prior to introducing more ones. The study suggests that the implementation of antecedent procedures can serve as a valuable means for facilitating learning and comprehension of everyday life changes among individuals with Autism. This can be achieved through the utilization of various cues, such as visual stimuli in the form of pictures.

The research topic was to investigate if there was a significant connection between Antecedent methods and the educational experience. Further investigation was undertaken to assess the correlation between Background processes as well as experiences in academia, utilizing the chi-square test of association. The null hypothesis posited by the study was that; *Ho: The research hypothesis posited a potential association between antecedent acts and the subsequent consequences experienced by children with autism in their typical classroom environments was tested where the results were presented in table 11.*

Table 12: Chi square Association between Antecedent procedures and education of learners with Autism.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	128.783 ^a	30	.000
Likelihood Ratio	86.238	30	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.554	1	.059
N of Valid Cases	46		

a. 41 cells (97.6%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .09.

The data presented in the table indicate a significant correlation among the variables where chi square = 128.783; and p value < 0.05. This suggests that the utilization of several circumstances in the instruction of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Additionally, the researcher aimed to evaluate the robustness of the relationship by employing the Spearman correlational coefficient. The findings were displayed in Table 12.

Table 13: Association between the Antecedent procedures and education of learners with Autism.

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal by Spearman	.567	.113	4.566	.000 ^c
Ordinal Correlation				
N of Valid Cases	46			

The findings indicate a statistically significant correlation of moderate strength between the prior teaching experience of individuals with Autism and their performance in school. This observation is further supported by the t statistic of 4.566, indicating a very significant correlation that is unlikely to have arisen randomly. Koegel and Koegel (2012) as well as Taylor and Levin (2018) conducted research that demonstrated a significant and favorable correlation between the use of Antecedent techniques and the educational outcomes of individuals with autism. The researchers' findings indicate that antecedent approaches, such as priming, timely delivery, and picture scheduling, have been employed to overcome the educational difficulties experienced by students with autism in inclusive educational settings. According to the study, these solutions were only a fraction of the methods that aided. The findings of this study suggest that educators should possess a comprehensive understanding of the diverse antecedent strategies that are effective in supporting individuals with Autism. Consequently, it is recommended that these findings be integrated into instructional materials and in-service presentations to benefit educators who currently collaborate with Autistic students in prevalent educational settings.

4.4.4 Peer-Mediated Intervention on Their Educational Experience of Learners with Autism.

The primary aim of the fourth goal was to examine the impact of Peer-mediated psychotherapy on the educational outcomes of individuals diagnosed with Autism. Participants were instructed to indicate their reaction by selecting the box that best represents their opinions on the statements presented in the table. Using a rating system ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree," 2 denotes "Disagree," 3 signifies "Not Sure," 4 indicates "Agree," and 5 represents "Strongly Agree." The optimal response is one that accurately represents your perspectives. The response was succinctly described and afterwards displayed in Table 14.

Table 14: Peer mediated intervention

STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	Total
My school has advocated peer-Mediated Intervention for facilitating the participation of learners with autism in general education classroom	4 (8.7%)	7 (15.2%)	14 (30.4%)	10 (21.7%)	11 (23.9%)	46 (100.0%)
Peer-Mediated Intervention minimizes exclusion differences among learners who need special education	0	0	8 (17.4%)	26 (56.5%)	12 (26.1%)	46 (100.0%)
I have found pairing learners works in my school because it helps the non-disabled to see disabled learners just like them and it has a lot of educational experience success in it	0	0	0	27 (58.7%)	19 (41.3%)	46 (100.0%)
Peer tutoring strategy is effective in enhancing on-task behavior and social interaction for learners with autism in mainstreamed classroom	0	0	0	34 (73.9%)	12 (26.1%)	46 (100.0%)
Utilizing typical peers to support the educational functioning of learners with autism has the potential to reduce the need for continuous one-on-one adult attention	0	0	14 (30.4%)	27 (58.7%)	5 (10.9%)	46 (100.0%)
Peer-mediated intervention reveals that there is increase in frequency of interaction which offers more learning opportunities	0	0	14 (30.4%)	22 (47.8%)	10 (21.7%)	46 (100.0%)
Cooperative learning groups is being used in mainstreamed classroom setting for increasing both educational experience success and social interaction	0	0	8 (17.4%)	38 (82.6%)	0	46 (100.0%)
Teaching social and educational skills to learners with autism and their non-disabled peers in cooperative groups in increased frequency duration and quality of social interaction	2 (4.3%)	0	0	31 (67.4%)	13 (28.3%)	46 (100.0%)

In the context of applying peer-assisted techniques to boost the participation of students with Autism in regular school environments, it was noted that a total of 4 respondents, equivalent to 8.7% of the group, voiced substantial opposition to this approach. Moreover, 7 respondents, making up 15.2% of the sample, signaled dissent regarding the aforementioned concept. Among the entire sample, 14 individuals (30.4%) appeared to be uncertain or hesitant in their stance. In contrast, a sum of 10 respondents, constituting 21.7% of the group, expressed alignment with the statement, while 11 respondents, or 23.9%, passionately concurred. This revelation suggests that the school has actively embraced the utilization of peer-supported interventions to foster the inclusion of students with Autism into mainstream educational settings. These findings harmonize with the investigation carried out by Putnam in 2013, which drew the conclusion that peer-mediated approaches have been recommended as efficacious strategies for promoting the integration of students with autism into conventional educational environments. These approaches effectively address the social challenges commonly faced by these learners. The study indicates that individuals within the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) demonstrate improved learning outcomes when they engage with their peers through the application of proficient mediated methodologies.

The participants were queried on the extent to which peer-mediated interventions mitigate disparities in educational inclusion among students requiring special education. According to the findings, a total of 8 respondents (17.4%) expressed uncertainty in their responses. However, the majority of participants, specifically 26 individuals (56.5%), expressed agreement with the given statement, while 12 individuals (26.1%) strongly agreed. This finding suggests that the use of peer-

mediated interventions can effectively reduce disparities in exclusion rates among students requiring special education. This observation aligns with the conclusions drawn by Eskay et al. (2012) in their study, where they found that the implementation of Peer tutoring, a strategy involving the pairing of two learners to collaboratively engage in instructional activities, The implementation of a peer-mediated intervention, involving one learner providing assistance, teaching, and assessment to another, resulted in favorable outcomes in relation to the improvement of focused engagement and interpersonal exchanges among students with Autism in comprehensive educational environments.

According to the research findings, it was found that participants, specifically 27 individuals (58.7%), expressed agreement with the notion that pairing learners in their school setting is beneficial. They believed that this practice enables non-disabled students to perceive disabled learners as equals and contributes to significant educational achievements. Furthermore, a total of 19 individuals, accounting for 41.3% of the sample, expressed significant agreement with the aforementioned statement. This implies that the strategy of partnering students in educational institutions is efficacious in promoting inclusiveness, as it enables students without disabilities to regard students with disabilities as equals. Moreover, this approach has been found to yield significant educational benefits. This conclusion aligns with the research conducted by Locke and Fuchs (2015), who also observed that pairing individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with neurotypical peers facilitated their active engagement in activities and enhanced their learning outcomes.

When inquired about the impact of peer tutoring on improving the focus and social interaction of students with Autism in a regular classroom, a significant majority of

the participants, precisely 34 individuals (comprising 73.9% of the group under scrutiny), voiced their concurrence with the earlier assertion. Furthermore, 12 individuals (amounting to 26.1% of the sample) ardently supported this statement. The outcomes of this study indicate that the utilization of peer tutoring proved to be effective in bolstering on-task behavior and fostering social interaction among students with Autism who were integrated into mainstream classrooms. This deduction aligns with the discoveries of Ismail et al. in 2016, whose research underscored the successful application of peer tutoring in mainstream classrooms as a means to enhance student behavior, especially in educational settings.

Concerning the idea that involving typical peers to support the educational progress of individuals with Autism could reduce the need for constant one-on-one adult supervision, there were differing views among the respondents. A group of 14 individuals, making up 30.4% of the sample, appeared uncertain about this concept. On the other hand, a substantial majority, specifically 27 individuals (accounting for 58.7% of the participants), expressed agreement with the statement. Among these, 5 individuals (constituting 10.9%) strongly endorsed this idea. This implies that involving neurotypical peers to aid in the educational progress of individuals with Autism could reduce the need for continuous one-on-one adult supervision. This conclusion aligns with the research conducted by Hastings and Oakford (2013), which provides support for the utilization of peer support as a means to enhance the educational experience of individuals with Autism.

The results of the study indicate that a notable percentage of the participants, specifically 14 persons (30.4%), expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that

peer-mediated intervention leads to an augmentation in the frequency of encounters, hence providing enhanced learning chances. Conversely, a majority of the participants, namely 22 individuals (47.8%), expressed agreement with the aforementioned remark, with 10 individuals (21.7%) strongly endorsing it. This finding suggests that the implementation of peer-mediated intervention resulted in a notable rise in the number of encounters, hence providing an enhanced range of learning opportunities. The findings presented in this study are consistent with the investigations undertaken by Ismail et al. (2016), which also indicated that peer-mediated interventions have a substantial impact in enhancing the educational outcomes of those diagnosed with Autism. Having the support of peers fosters an environment that promotes rapid skill learning among learners, as their confidence levels increase.

Among the responses, 8 individuals, which is about 17.4% of the group, seemed unsure about using cooperative learning groups in a regular classroom setting. On the flip side, a large majority of the respondents, 38 individuals (making up 82.6%), agreed with the idea. This finding suggests that using cooperative learning groups in a typical classroom is meant to boost learning and foster social connections. Locke and Fuchs (2015) shared a similar viewpoint. The results also showed that a small number of participants, specifically 2 individuals (4.3%), strongly disagreed with the idea that teaching social and educational skills to learners with autism and their non-disabled peers in cooperative groups within inclusive settings leads to more frequent, longer, and better-quality social interactions. In contrast, most participants, specifically 31 individuals (67.4%), agreed with the statement, and 13 individuals (28.3%) strongly agreed. This study revealed that implementing cooperative group settings in inclusive

environments, where learners with autism and their non-disabled peers learn social and educational skills together, does indeed lead to a significant increase in the frequency, duration, and quality of social interactions. These results are in line with the research conducted by Brady et al. (2017) and Goldstein et al. (2012), both of whom shared the view that, under certain conditions, providing training to typically developing peers on how to interact with classmates with autism can enhance natural social interactions between individuals with autism and their peers, regardless of whether the peers received training or not. Additionally, it was found that the mere presence of peers, along with their involvement, feedback, and recognition of the behavior displayed by their classmates with autism, contributed to improved levels of social interaction.

The participants were requested to provide an account of their experiences in developing programs that promote inclusive learner engagement, with the aim of fostering a diverse appreciation for each individual, including their involvement in co-curricular activities. The researchers stated that they made a concerted effort to demonstrate to the other learners that these individuals had challenges, but were capable of achieving similar outcomes with appropriate help. On some occasions, educational institutions extend invitations to External Advisory and Resource Consultants (EARCs), specialists, parents, distinguished individuals including politicians, and alumni with disabilities. The purpose of their involvement is to foster awareness by providing guidance and counseling to other parents and students at educational events. This intervention facilitated a sense of belonging and normalcy among the learners, fostering their integration into society.

In order to investigate the link between peer-mediated interventions and academic achievement, a research question was formulated to see if there exists an important correlation between these two variables. The study aimed to investigate the relationship between peer-mediated instructional methods and the educational encounter of participants having Autism. In order to ascertain this the research hypothesis that; *Ho: Individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) who are enrolled in conventional school environments may not see advantageous outcomes from the implementation of peer mediation strategies* was tested using the chi square test and the spear man correlation. The results were presented in table 14.

Table 15: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	147.583 ^a	36	.000
Likelihood Ratio	109.991	36	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.590	1	.002
N of Valid Cases	46		

The findings indicated an independently significant and robust relationship between peer-mediated knowledge for individuals with autism and their school-related encounters where the chi square = 147.583 and p-value < 0.05. This finding was also substantiated by the robust correlation coefficient of the spearman's rank correlation and the t-statistic, as outlined in Table 15.

Table 16: Spearman's Correlation

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal	by Spearman				
Ordinal	Correlation	.608	.091	5.084	.000 ^c
N of Valid Cases		46			

The findings indicated a significant correlation between peer-mediated knowledge and the lifetime experiences of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This finding was further substantiated by the statistical value of 5.084, indicating that the observed relationship between the factors in question was not only a result of random chance. This suggests that peer-mediated learning substantially impacts the educational experiences of those with Autism. The results presented here align with the findings reported by Kamps et al. (2012), which also saw an increase in the amount of time, and level of involvement in social interactions, as well as an improved reaction among students and their classmates. Kohler et al. (2015) utilized a centered around groups contingency approach to motivate peers in supporting and structuring play relationships with preschooler peers who have been given the diagnosis of autism. It has been shown that there was a notable rise in these professional and supportive connections. The study's results indicate that Peer-mediated treatments have been consistently demonstrated to be beneficial in enhancing the educational outcomes of individuals with autism. Furthermore, these interventions have been found to be significantly associated with the academic achievements of individuals with autism.

4.5 Qualitative Results from The Observation Sheet

The author of the paper conducted an observation to determine the reliability of the replies obtained from the questionnaire for making inferences about the entire study. The subject of the study aimed to investigate the environmental conditions within schools to determine their suitability for learners. Additionally, the examiner aimed to observe and assess the instructional practices employed in the classrooms.

The researcher aimed to evaluate many environmental elements, including air conditioning, lighting, classrooms size, furniture appropriateness, floor state of affairs, and the existence of learning centers. The findings indicate that a majority of the schools had adequate ventilation in their classrooms, mostly attributed to the inclusion of spacious windows and ventilators. The construction of most classrooms adhered to the specifications mandated by the Ministry of Education in order to guarantee the safety of students.

It was observed that the number of teachers were deemed sufficient, but, the quantity of students was found to be overbearing. The presence of a considerable number of students in most classrooms posed a significant challenge to the effective delivery of instruction in inclusive settings. The high class sizes hindered teachers from allocating additional time to provide necessary support to students with autism.

Additionally, it was noted that the furniture exhibited signs of poor condition, with several items being somewhat aged and insufficient in quantity to adequately accommodate the learners. The condition of the floors was poor, as several classrooms were found to have earth or marram floors. The cemented surfaces

exhibited a lack of visual coherence due to the presence of numerous potholes, rendering the presence of cement less apparent. The learning circumstance resulted in an unfavorable atmosphere for both the pupils and the educators.

It is important for educational institutions to provide a designated area for learning, sometimes referred to as a "learning corner," which serves as a platform for learners to exhibit various materials and artifacts that facilitate successful learning, particularly for those facing problems such as autism. The study observed that the educational environment in the majority of schools was not particularly conducive to the needs of autistic learners, particularly in the context of mainstream education. This suggests that individuals with autism may encounter difficulties in engaging in effective communication with both their teachers and peers due to inadequate resources and an unfavorable classroom environment.

The researcher aimed to investigate the implementation and efficacy of instructional material and activities in schools, specifically focusing on their impact on the learning outcomes of students with disabilities. The researcher noted that the scheduling of daily life activities was absent in the majority of schools, and in the few establishments where such scheduling existed, it was not well implemented. When questioned about the reasons for their limited dedication to certain operations one of the professors provided an explanation;

Given the current workload that I am managing, it is unlikely that I would be inclined to undertake any more responsibilities. As evident, our classrooms are experiencing overcrowding due to a high number of students, resulting in restricted availability of resources such as books and time. Consequently, I am

compelled to prioritize my focus on what I perceive as essential. Additionally, she expressed that. When considering the characteristics of the students in these classes, there is a perceived need for assistance. However, the existing workload poses a challenge in incorporating additional instructional elements.

The researcher determined that the curriculum demonstrated a high degree of adaptability, as it effectively incorporated all necessary content within a well-structured timetable. Furthermore, this adaptability was observed across all levels of learning, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the curriculum. The absence of visual aids was seen in the majority of educational institutions, with no designated schedule allocated for this particular activity. The teachers made efforts solely to facilitate the development and presentation of instructional materials for integration into their classes, rather than for the purpose of supplementing their teaching. The absence of visual aids had a detrimental impact on the efficacy of learning for individuals with autism, since they often exhibit improved learning outcomes when visual aids are present. Consequently, the absence of such aides occasionally rendered the comprehension of basic ideas more challenging. In a similar vein, the researcher noted a prevailing absence of tailored education programs in the majority of schools, a crucial component for addressing the unique requirements of students facing obstacles. According to a study conducted by Kamps et al. (2012), it was observed that in mainstream schools, both learners and instructors had significant obstacles related to aspects such as arranging school events to accommodate all students. It was observed that a significant portion of crucial tasks were not scheduled in a certain timeframe. Additionally, the teachers faced constraints in terms of the limited time

available to handle the various challenges experienced by pupils with Autism. One of the educators made a statement;

As educators, we possess a genuine desire to support individuals with autism as well as other disabilities in order to facilitate their ability to effectively stay up with their peers. However, our efforts are constrained due to the substantial workload we bear. This circumstance presents challenges in allocating more time for the creation of instructional materials such as visual aids, facilitating the establishment of learning nooks, and providing additional support to learners who require assistance.

The aforementioned findings provide convincing evidence that the implementation of mainstreaming has shown to be a significant method in facilitating the educational acquisition process for learners with autism spectrum disorders. This approach enables these learners to engage in classroom interactions with their peers, hence enhancing their educational experience. The study observed that the integration of these learners with their peers resulted in a reduction of the stigma associated with their condition. As a result, many of them exhibited improved learning abilities and achieved better outcomes. Additionally, they demonstrated increased self-management skills in other aspects of their life that they previously struggled to coordinate. The study's results indicated a correlation between the teacher's proficiency in managing students with Autism. This implies that the possession of requisite skills and knowledge by teachers increases the likelihood of exerting a favorable influence on the educational achievements of students with Autism. The results of Goldstein and Cisar's (2012) research are consistent with the findings of the current study, suggesting a beneficial association between the practice of encompasses and the educational encounters of individuals diagnosed with Autism.

Goldstein and Cisar (2012) conducted a study in which they noticed that when students who have problems are educated in the same environment as their non-challenged peers, they receive a boost in conviction through the process of mutual learning. This, in turn, leads to improvements in their skills and comprehensive experiences with education.

The findings of this study suggest that the school environment has a significant role in influencing students with Autism. As a result, it is recommended that this knowledge be included in training curriculum and in-service presentations for instructors. Educating individuals with Autism is a complex endeavor that necessitates a comprehensive and precise comprehension of the illness, specifically in relation to its symptoms and therapies. The identification of reward schedules as a crucial element for the effective integration of learners with Autism into mainstream settings is a noteworthy discovery. Additionally, behavior management tactics were found to be well recognized and commonly employed approaches in this context. The aforementioned result is consistent with the findings of Simpson's (2015) research, which indicates that the effective transmission and implementation of knowledge pertaining to Autism should span multiple dimensions and be comprehensive in nature. It is imperative to acknowledge that the educational achievements of students cannot be solely anticipated by the proficiency and background of educators.

In their study, Anagnostopoulos and Hantzi (2011) found that the level of experience among teachers has a crucial role in determining their knowledge and application of instructional practices specifically designed for students with Autism. Furthermore, providing teachers and other educational professionals with opportunities to engage with learners diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has the potential to boost their understanding and proficiency in implementing inclusive educational approaches. The research suggests that incorporating individuals with Autism into the education of teachers is essential for improving their interactions with this group, leading to the development of more positive attitudes towards these learners.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, an overview of the study's findings is provided, which were derived from the research questions. The initial segment of the chapter presents the findings in connection with the existing body of literature. Subsequently, the study proceeded to present conclusions that were drawn from the findings, as well as recommendations and ideas pertaining to potential avenues for further research. The research findings were centered around the study's aims, which aimed to establish and address the following inquiries:

- i. What is the impact of peer contact on the educational experience of learners diagnosed with autism in public primary schools within Nyamache sub-county, located in Kisii County?
- ii. In public primary schools in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii County, what impact does learners' self-management have on the educational experience of students with autism?
- iii. When attending public primary schools in the Nyamache sub-county of Kisii County, can students with autism benefit from the use of Antecedent Procedures (Priming, Prompt Delivery, and Picture Schedules)?
- iv. In public primary schools in Nyamache, Kisii County, how do students with autism react to Peer-Mediated Interventions?

5.2 Summary of Research Findings

- According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), the study's percentage of respondents was considered adequate as it above 70%, suggesting that it accurately represented the actual sample.
- The user's text exhibits a deficiency in the utilization of academic terminology and adherence to academic structure. The study examined the socioeconomic status of the those involved, as these variables were essential in understanding the differences that were found in their responses. The results comprehensively represent the viewpoints of both tutors and administrators' individuals from various typical schools. In the teaching professional's survey sample, it was observed that a significant proportion of those who responded were individuals who held occupations in the field of education. Additionally, it was noted that a significant proportion of participants fell into the demographic of individuals aged 30 years and older.
- The survey further determined that a significant proportion of the participants possessed diploma and certificate level educational credentials, and had accumulated over a decade of teaching experience.
- It was determined that the individuals have expertise in the field of special needs education, enabling them to comprehend the unique requirements and obstacles faced by learners with various issues, such as Autism.

5.3 Effects of peer interaction on their educational experience of learners with autism in public primary schools

The findings of the study indicated that peer contact, when employed as a technique for mainstreaming, had a significant role in enriching the educational experience of the learners.

- The significance of this method in improving the learning experience for Autistic learners was acknowledged by the majority of instructors and head teachers.
- The study furthermore observed a noteworthy correlation between peer contact and the academic achievement of learners alongside autism in public kindergartens.

5.4 Effects of Learners Self-Management on Their Educational Experience of Learners with Autism in Public Primary Schools

The primary objective of the study was to investigate the effects of learner self-management as a strategy on enhancing the educational outcomes of persons diagnosed with Autism.

- The study's findings suggest that the use of methods for self-management enables learners to autonomously discover their own talents and subsequently employ them to enhance their learning process.
- The user's text does not provide any information to be rewritten in an academic manner. The chi-square test was employed to evaluate the statistical significance of the relationship between the variables being examined.

5.5 Effects of Antecedent Procedures (Priming, Prompt Delivery, Picture Schedules) Affect Their Educational Experience of Learners with Autism in Public Primary Schools

The study further aimed to evaluate the impact of antecedent procedures on the learning process of students with Autism in inclusive educational settings.

- The user's text lacks any content or information to rewrite in an academic manner. The findings indicated that a significant proportion of the learners demonstrated successful learning outcomes through the implementation of these procedures. This may be attributed to their ability to capture the learners' attention, which was often limited in duration.
- The user's text does not contain any information to rewrite in an academic manner. Both educators and administrators concur that antecedent practices significantly contribute to the enhancement of the educational experience for learners diagnosed with Autism. The statistical analysis using the chi-square test provided evidence supporting the presence of a significant connection between the variables.

5.6 Effects of Peer-Mediated Interventions on Their Educational Experience of Learners with Autism in Public Primary Schools

The study further aimed to investigate the impact of peer-mediated treatments on the educational outcomes of individuals with Autism.

- The participants expressed consensus with the majority of the statement, suggesting that the strategy effectively enhances the educational experience of learners.
- The findings demonstrated a significant and robust statistical correlation

between the variables, indicating that the strategy is a viable approach for managing the educational experience of learners with autism.

5.7 Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, it was determined that learners with disorders such as autism had greater learning potential when integrated into normal educational settings with their non-disabled peers, as opposed to being segregated in specialized schools.

With respect to the primary goal, the study determined that peer engagement learning proved to be an effective technique in augmenting the educational experience of individuals with Autism. The majority of participants acknowledge concurrence with the proposition that learners possess the ability to effectively enhance their talents through these exchanges. The results of the chi-square test indicated a robust and statistically significant positive association between interaction with others development and educational experience among individuals with Autism.

Regarding goal two, which aimed to evaluate the impact of a learner after examining the impact of a managing one's emotions approach on the educational pursuits of individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), it was found that an overwhelming majority of those who participated agreed with the assertion, suggesting that the implemented strategy effectively enhanced their educational engagement. Consequently, the study reached the conclusion that educational institutions should employ learners' self-management strategies to facilitate the acquisition of information among individuals with Autism.

The study also found that the use of Antecedent Procedures, such as Priming, Early Delivery, is what and Picture Schedules, had a significant impact on the educational outcomes of individuals with Autism. The utilization of these instructional tactics by educators yielded a substantial impact on the learners, as evidenced by the considerable statistically significant effect observed by the chi-square analysis.

The primary objective is to assess the effects of peer-mediated interventions on the educational outcomes of individuals who have been given the diagnosis of Autism. The findings indicated a highly substantial correlation between the variables, leading to the conclusion that the inclusion of both abled learners and those with autism in the same educational institutions significantly contributes to the improvement of academic performance among all students. The effectiveness of mainstreaming in facilitating the acquisition of learning skills for students with diverse circumstances has been duly acknowledged. This approach has been found to promote the development of their varied skills, enabling them to learn on par with their peers.

5.8 Recommendation

The findings of the research and inferences are founded on the collected data, it is recommended that primary school teachers should endeavor to foster peer connection among students in order to provide support for learners with Autism. The MoE should consider providing teachers with additional training opportunities, such as seminars and workshops focused on inclusive education. These initiatives would aim to provide teachers with the necessary skills, knowledge, and positive attitudes required to effectively manage diverse learners within classroom settings.

It is recommended that government officials as well as other relevant stakeholders, such as the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), collaborate to develop a curriculum that emphasizes the utilization of learner self-management strategies by instructors. This approach aims to promote the educational attainment of students with Autism. This also necessitates increased government investment in enhancing educational facilities in order to ensure the successful implementation of the approach.

It was suggested that schools should consider implementing the Precedents Protocols (Priming, Prompt Delivery, and Picture) teaching approach in order to facilitate meaningful learning for students with autism. It has been observed that a majority of these learners had a limited attention span. Therefore, employing these antecedent approaches can aid in capturing their attention and enhancing the learning process.

Moreover, it is recommended that the incorporation of peer-mediated knowledge be taken into account as a feasible strategy in conventional educational environments to enhance the classroom encounter. This may entail the implementation of sensitization programs aimed at fostering collaboration among learners, instructors, and parents in order to provide support for individuals with Autism. Hence, the study suggests the necessity of a collaborative effort by head teachers, instructors, parents, and peers to provide appropriate support for learners with this condition in their educational pursuits.

5.9 Areas of Further Research

Based on the research results and subsequent conclusions of the study, there are several areas of concerns that warrant further investigation.

- This study solely focused on a certain region inside Kisii County, where mainstreamed schools were present. Broadening the scope of this study would provide a deeper understanding of the topic and facilitate the application of findings.
- Additionally, it was necessary to undertake a comparison research in order to examine and evaluate the many types of problems faced by learners. This would provide a comprehensive understanding of how to effectively address these challenges within a mainstream educational environment.
- The assessment of the impact of intervening variables on the research is an important aspect of interest, as it would contribute to the existing information on the factors that influence the integration of intellectually challenged learners into mainstream education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTRODUCTION LETTER.

**MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O BOX 861_20500
NAROK**

**THE RESPONDENTS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NYAMACHE
SUB-COUNTY, KISII COUNTY.**

THE HEADTEACHER AND TEACHERS.

Dear Sir/Madam,

REF: APPOINTMENT AS A RESPONDENT IN RESEARCH

Dear respondent, my name is Leonidah Moraa Onsare, a master's student in the Department of Special Education at Maasai Mara University. I am in the process of collecting data for the purpose of research. You have been identified as a key stakeholder in the field of Special education in Autism to participate in this study. Kindly fill the attached questionnaire.

The questionnaire is designed to gather information on autistic learners. The information obtained will be used for the purpose of research only and will be treated with utmost confidence. Please respond to all the items as honest as possible. Kindly take the shortest time possible in filling and returning the questionnaire.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sign.....

Leonidah Moraa Onsare
Maasai Mara University.

THANK YOU

**APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEAD TEACHERS AND SNE
TRAINED TEACHERS.**

This questionnaire aims at getting your opinion in relation to the educational experience of learners with Autism in mainstreamed schools. The information you give will remain confidential and will be used only for its intended purpose. Kindly fill the questionnaire with honesty and individuality. Your identity will remain confidential and you need not write your name on the questionnaire.

Section A: General Information

Please tick the bracket which most represents your views of the following statements. There is no correct or wrong answer. The best answer is the one that honestly reflects your views.

1.How many years have you been teaching?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| 1 or less than one year () | 2-3 years () |
| 4-5 years () | 6-10 years () |
| Above 10 years () | |

2.How many years have you been at your current school?

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 year () | 2-3 years () |
| 4-5 years () | 6-10 years () |
| Above 10 years () | |

3.Please indicate your present level of training or education.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| (i) Primary education teacher (p1) | () |
| (ii) Diploma in education | () |
| (iii) BED in special education | () |
| (iv) MED in special education | () |
| (v) Support teacher | () |

Any other specify.....

4.Have you taken any Special lessons/Seminar/Degree/Master degree regarding teaching and supporting learners with Autism? **YES.....NO.....**

If YES in question 3 above

When.....

.....

Where.....

5.How many years have you been using mainstreamed educational practices in which you have been formally trained?

.....

6. In your own words who are autistic learners?

.....

.....

7.How many identified autistic learners are in this school?

.....

8.How many hours do you spend with the autistic learner per

day?.....

9. In your own views what is mainstreamed classroom?

.....

Section B: Effects of peer interaction on their educational experience of learners with Autism.

Using the guide to response given below, please tick the box which most presents your views of the following statements in the table on the statements given. On a scale of 1-5 (Where 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Not Sure, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree). The best answer is one that honestly reflects your views.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. Effective peer interaction promote social rules such as self-control and turn taking in conversation to promote educational experience.					
2. A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework is in place at my school to ensure effective and efficient implementation of peer interaction to promote educational experience of learners with Autism					
3. Learners with Autism are likely to learn and interact effectively with their able peers when guided					
4. My school has environmental arrangements to promote peer interaction to improve educational experience.					
5. Peer involvement is a good strategy to teach autistic learner to behave in a manner that resembles their peers positively.					
6. My school uses class wide approach as a strategy for peer interaction where the entire class is taught how to initiate interaction					
7. My school has established a coordinating organ whose responsibility is to ensure proper peer interaction coordination and effective integration of learners with Autism.					

2. In your own views would you say the peers' attitude towards mainstreamed classrooms with autistic learners is positive? (please elaborate)

.....

3. Give any other suggestion that can ensure learners with Autism are put in mainstreamed set up appropriately.

Section C: Learners’ Self-Management on their educational experience of learners with Autism.

Using the guide to response given below, please tick the box which most presents your **views** of the following statements in the table on the statements given. On a scale of 1-5 (Where 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Not Sure, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree). The best answer is one that honestly reflects your views.

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1. Learners with Autism have difficulty with self-management with their behavior.					
2. Teachers in my school help their learners gain confidence in their abilities which will ultimately keep them motivated and create a positive learning environment.					
3. Self-management intervention teaches a learner to discriminate between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors.					
4. Self-Management shows a significant improvement in the learners’ behavior and independent working skills in school environment for educational experiences.					
5. Self-management intervention teaches a learner to monitor their inclusion and Autism behaviors over time.					
6. If learners with Autism are taught self-management skills in the classroom, they can function more independently with minimal reliance on a teacher or educational assistant.					
7. Self-management intervention teaches a learner to reinforce their behavior when specific criteria are met.					

2. In your own opinion when can you say that autistic learner has achieved self management skill?

.....

.....

practicing the skill of self-management to be effective?

.....

.....

Section D: Antecedent procedures (priming, prompt delivery and picture schedules) on their educational experience of learners with Autism.

Using the guide to response given below, please tick the box which most presents your views of the following statements in the table on the statements given. On a scale of 1-5 (Where 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Not Sure, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree). The best answer is one that honestly reflects your views.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.The priming strategy is imperative in facilitating mainstreaming of learners with Autism.					
2. Antecedent procedure are used to prevent the occurrence of challenging stereotypical behaviors and also helps learners cope with the task.					
3.Autistic learners can be thought of as pre-practice, where learners preview information or activities that they are likely to have difficulty with before they engage in the activity with the class.					
4.Prompting strategies are ways of eliciting an appropriate response in a targeted educational experience or behavioral activity.					
5.Its important for the teacher to prompt and reinforce the learner with Autism so that the learner learns to respond to the teacher as well.					
6.Picture schedules are created to inform the learner with Autism about what to expect on a regular school day and the type of activities they will be doing.					
7.Antecedent strategy is effective strategy to promote the independent engagement and performance of classroom activities and decreasing dependence on a teacher.					

2. What can be done differently to improve the strategy of antecedent procedures to learners with Autism and improve their educational experience in school?

.....

.....

.....

Section E: Peer-mediated intervention on their educational experience of learners with Autism.

Using the guide to response given below, please tick the box which most presents your views of the following statements in the table on the statements given. On a scale of 1-5 (Where 1=Strongly Disagree,2=Disagree, 3=Not Sure, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree). The best answer is one that honestly reflects your views.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. My school has advocated peer-mediated intervention for facilitating the participation of learners with Autism in general education classroom.					
2. Peer-mediated interventions minimizes exclusion differences among learners who need special education					
3. I have found pairing learners works in my school because it helps the non-disabled to see disabled learner just like them and it has a lot of educational experience success in it.					
4. Peer tutoring strategy is effective in enhancing on-task behavior and social interaction for learners with Autism in mainstreamed classroom					
5. Utilizing typical peers to support the educational functioning of learners with Autism has the potential to reduce the need for continuous one-on-one adult attention					
6. Peer-mediated intervention reveals that there is increase in frequency of interactions which offers more learning opportunities.					
7. Cooperative learning groups is being used in mainstreamed classroom setting for increasing both educational experiences success and social interaction.					
8. Teaching social and educational skills to learners with autism and their non-disabled peers in cooperative groups in integrated settings results in increased frequency, duration, and quality of social interactions.					

2. Having learners with Autism in your school, explain briefly on how you create disability awareness or acceptance to non-disabled learners to issues surrounding diversity and tolerance.

.....

.....

.....

.....

THANK YOU

APPENDIX C: INSTITUTIONAL OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Category of observation	OBSERVATION SCALE			
	1	2	3	4
1. Ventilation	Poor	Fair	Good	
2. Lighting	Poor	Fair	Good	
3. Classroom Size	Poor	Fair	Good	
4. Furniture	Not adequate	Adequate		
5. Floor	Rough and tidy	Rough and untidy	Smooth and Tidy	Smooth and untidy
6. Learning Centers (shop corner, garden corner, curiosity centers etc.)	Not available	Available and not relevant	Available and relevant	Available and not relevant

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION OBSERVATION

Category of observation	OBSERVATION SCALE		
	1	2	3
Activities of daily living	Not time tabled	Time tabled and not practiced	Timetabled and practiced
Adapted curriculum	Not timetabled	Time tabled and not practiced	Timetabled and practiced
Picture schedules	Not timetabled	Time tabled and not practiced	Time tabled and practiced
Individualized Educational Program (IEP)	Not timetabled	Time tabled and not practiced	Available and in use

THANK YOU.

APPENDIX D: INTRODUCTION LETTER FROM THE SCHOOL OF
EDUCATION



Maasai Mara University
BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

P.O. BOX 861 – 20500
Narok, Kenya www.mmarau.ac.ke

Tel: +254 – 20 -2066042
+254 – 20 - 8081874

22nd April, 2022

RESEARCH PERMITS SECTION
NACOSTI
UTALII HOUSE

REF: LEONIDAH MORAA ONSARE – EM09/S/9000/2015

We wish to confirm that the above named is a *bona fide* Masters student at Maasai Mara University pursuing an Med in Special Education in the School of Education. Her proposed research is '*Effect of mainstreaming learners with autism on educational experience in public primary schools in Nyamache Sub – County, Kisii County, Kenya*'. She would like to apply for a research permit from NACOSTI before she can proceed for field work and data collection.

We further confirm that the candidate has adhered to all research protocol requirements of Maasai Mara University and the proposed research has been rated as having no known adverse impacts on the environment and does not pose any ethical concerns.

This is therefore to request your office to issue her with a research permit.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Abila".

Prof. Romulus Abila, PhD.

DIRECTOR, BOARD OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES
abila@mmarau.ac.ke, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8762-7153>

**APPENDIX E: RESEARCH AUTHORISATION LETTER FROM
THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT**



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

State Department of Early Learning and Basic Education

Telegram: "EDUCATION"
Telephone: 058-30695
Email address: cdekisii@gmail.com
When replying please quote

**COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
KISII COUNTY
P.O. BOX 4499 - 40200
KISII.**

REF: CDE/KSI/RESEARCH/V/8/134

Date: 06th June, 2022

LEONIDAH MORAA ONSARE
MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY
P.O.BOX 861- 20500
NAROK.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION.

Following your research Authorization vide your letter Ref.NACOSTI/P/22/17305 to carry out research in Kisii County, this letter refers.

I am pleased to inform you that you can carry out your research in the County on "Effects of mainstreaming learners with autism on educational experience in public primary schools in Nyamache Sub County, Kisii County, Kenya" for a period ending 06th May, 2023.

Wish you a successful research.



Pius Ng'oma
County Director of Education
Kisii.

**APPENDIX F: RESEARCH AUTHORISATION LETTER FROM THE
SUBCOUNTY GOVERNMENT**

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

STATE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION



SUB COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICE

NYAMACHE,
P.O. Box 8-40203
NYAMACHE.

E-mail Address: scdenyamache@gmail.com
When replying please quote
Phone no. 0713892770

DATE: 22/06/2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH BY LEONIDAH MORAA ONSARE -
EM09/S/9000/2015**

The above named person has been given permission by the NACOSTI to conduct research on "The effect of mainstreaming learners with autism on educational experience"

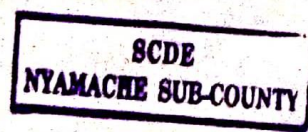
The following schools will be targeted for;

- | | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| 1. Bendere | 2. Goroba |
| 3. Ebiosi | 4. Kionyo |
| 5. Masisi | 6. Nyachogochogo AIC |
| 7. Chiengu | 8. Riosugo |
| 9. Nyaronge | 10. Omosaria |
| 11. Kegochi | |

The research will commence immediately and end on 6thMAY .2023.

Any assistance accorded to her will be appreciated.

Wish you a successful research.



LINET ONDUSO
SUB-COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NYAMACHE

APPENDIX G: RESEARCH PERMIT FROM NACOSTI



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 229356

Date of Issue: 06/May/2022

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Ms.. LOENIDAH MORAA ONSARE of Maasai Mara University, has been licensed to conduct research in Kisii on the topic: EFFECT OF MAINSTREAMING LEARNERS WITH AUTISM ON EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NYAMACIIE SUB COUNTY, KISHI COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 06/May/2023.

License No: NACOSTI/P/22/17305

229356

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION

Verification QR Code



NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

APPENDIX H: MAP OF NYAMACHE SUB COUNTY



APPENDIX I: RESEARCH WORKING SCHEDULE

ACTIVITY	Se p 20 21	No v 20 21	Ja n 20 22	M ar 20 22	M ay 20 22	Ju n 20 22	Au g 20 22	Se p 20 22	Oc t 20 22	Nov2 022	Ja n 20 23	M ar 20 23	May & July 2023
Concept Paper Writing													
Proposal Writing													
Submission of Proposal to Supervisors													
Proposal Corrections													
Proposal Defense													
Piloting of Instruments													
Data Collection													
Data Analyzing and Interpreting													
Thesis Writing													
Submission of Thesis to the Faculty													
Thesis Defense													
Submission of Final Report													

APPENDIX J: BUDGET

ITEM	RATE	KSHS
Stationery-Photocopy Papers, flash disc, Pens.		25,000
Secretarial Services		15,000
Draft Proposal Printing and Binding .	4 Copies	8,000
Internet		10,000
Transport		15,000
Accommodation		20,000
Telephone calls		5,000
Subsistence		8,000
Miscellaneous		5,000
Statistician		15,000
Report Drafting Printing and Binding.	4 Copies.	8,000
Final report Printing and Binding .	4 Copies	12,500
Report publication		20,000
TOTAL		166,500