

**ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNICATION ADJUSTMENT IN ORAL LANGUAGE
PRODUCTION AND USE IN SOCIAL CONTEXTS AMONG CHILDREN WITH
MENTAL DISABILITIES IN SPECIAL UNITS IN VIHIGA COUNTY**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL
SCIENCE IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTERS IN LINGUISTICS IN THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL
SCIENCES OF MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

SEPTEMBER, 2023

DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

I declare that this research project report is my original work and has not been presented for the award of degree to any other university.

Signature: 

Date: 17/03/2023

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APPROVAL BY THE SUPERVISOR

I confirm that the work reported in this research project was carried out by the candidate under my supervision

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Allan Indangasi, and family, who instilled in me the importance of perseverance and religious faith. Sincere gratitude is extended to them.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would want to extend my gratitude to Mount Kenya University for affording me the chance to acquire this academic degree. Furthermore, I would want to express my gratitude towards my supervisor, Dr. David Wafula Lwangale, for his unwavering support and patience during the duration of this research endeavour. Thirdly, I would want to express my gratitude to my family members for their unwavering support and encouragement. I am sincerely thankful to them. I derived strength and inspiration from the aforementioned individuals. May divine blessings be bestowed upon us.



ABSTRACT

Effective communication has a pivotal role in the fundamental aspects of human existence. Language serves as the fundamental framework for facilitating communication. Communication adjustment is the act of modifying one's communication style in accordance with the interlocutors and contextual factors in order to enhance comprehension. Children with mental impairments experience a delay in their overall development, particularly in their cognitive ability, as compared to typically developing children. As a result, individuals experience difficulties in speech and language, resulting in impaired communication effectiveness. Consequently, they experience discrimination. The present study aimed to investigate the efficacy of communication adjustment in oral language use among children with mental disorders. The study was conducted with the aim of achieving three objectives: firstly, to evaluate the various communication adjustment activities that impact speech production and utilisation; secondly, to establish the correlation between these adjustment activities and the oral language use in social settings; and finally, to assess the impact of care givers on the language use in social contexts of children with mental disabilities. The utilisation of communication accommodation theory was employed to establish the connection between the variables and to fulfil the stated objectives. The research utilised a descriptive survey design. The sample for this study was selected from the specialised units of Vihiga County. The primary instrument employed for data collection was the observation schedule. The timetable was augmented through the inclusion of interviews, questionnaires, and focused discussion groups. The study instruments' validity was evaluated by professionals from the languages department at Mount Kenya University. The gadget produced data of both qualitative and quantitative kind. The data was subjected to analysis utilising descriptive statistical techniques, such as frequency counts and tabulation. The research revealed that engaging in communicative adjustment activities had a positive impact on the speech production and usage of children with minor mental disorders residing in Vihiga County. This necessitated language educators to possess a comprehensive understanding of several communicative adjustment actions. The teachers' comprehension of the adjustment activities and their effective implementation consistently contributes to the improvement of speech production and utilisation in mentally challenged youngsters. The study revealed a significant correlation between communicative adjustment skills and oral language usage among children with mental disorders in Vihiga County. The study revealed that individuals who utilised interactive activities within a home setting to facilitate the development of communication skills in children with modest mental disorders had notable improvements in their spoken language proficiency. Research has revealed that the implementation of early intervention programmes aimed at enhancing language skills in children with modest intellectual impairments has resulted in notable improvements in their oral language proficiency. The study further observed that language instructors and care givers exert a significant impact on the language production and use of children with mental disorders in Vihiga County. The impact of language instructors and care givers on the language production and usage of children with mental disorders can be either beneficial or detrimental. The linguistic patterns employed by care givers exert a significant impact on the language creation and utilisation of children who have mental disorders. The proficiency and expertise of the language instructor have a significant impact on the linguistic development and use of children with cognitive impairments. The significance of both the number and quality of care givers' verbal interactions is crucial in facilitating language creation and use among children with mental disorders, since these factors work together synergistically.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASHA: American Speech Language and Hearing Association.

EMR: Educable Mentally Retarded

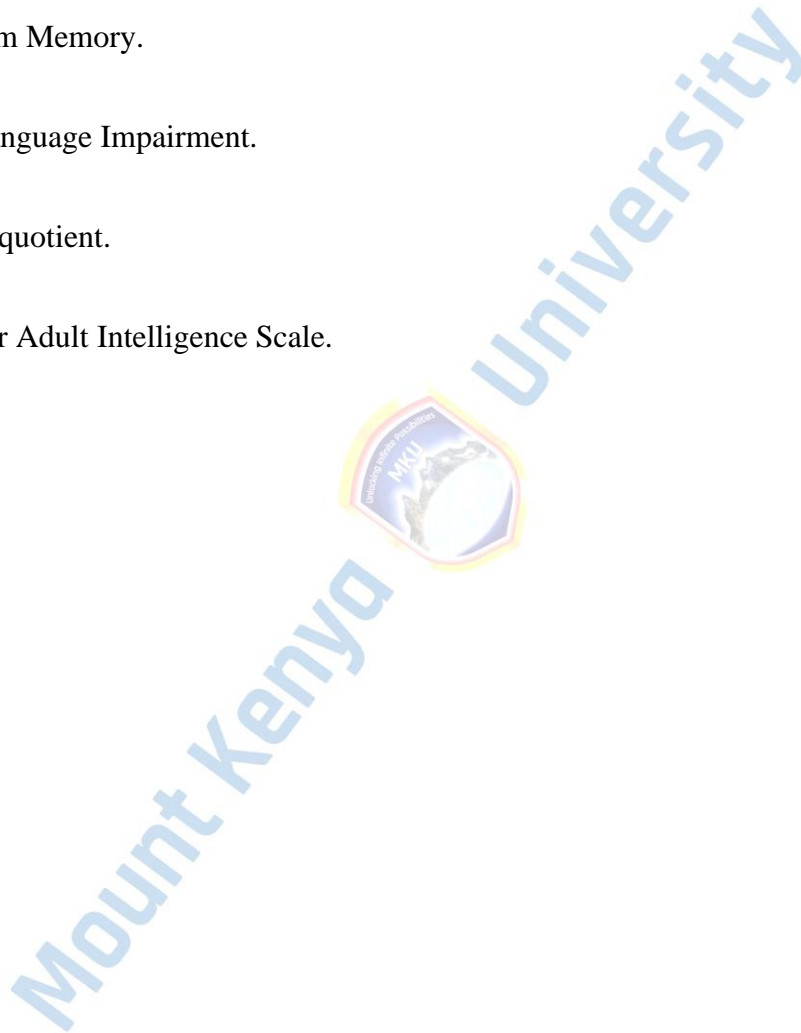
LTM: Long Term Memory.

STM: Short Term Memory.

SLI: Specific Language Impairment.

IQ: Intelligence quotient.

WAIS: Wechster Adult Intelligence Scale.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study's background, statement of the problem, research objectives and research questions, as well as their significance, scope, limits, delimitations, underlying assumptions, and operational definitions of important terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

Communication is a fundamental mechanism by which individuals convey their thoughts, emotions, and disseminate information to others. Speech is often regarded as the most expeditious mode of communication in any given engagement. Effective communication is essential as it facilitates the transmission of knowledge and information between individuals. According to Omulimi (2006), Carl Rogers asserts that behaviour change is a dynamic process that involves both input and output. Rogers further suggests that individuals have the potential to develop in a good and constructive manner when they are exposed to situations that are favourable to their growth. This statement holds true in the context of communication contexts. Consequently, this phenomenon has an impact on the acquisition and production of language, resulting in individuals experiencing both internal and external influences. Moreover, the environment itself exerts various pressures and influences that ultimately shape the process of learning. The study focuses on individuals with mental disorders who encounter various barriers in their pursuit of growth and development. According to Roulstone's (2002) research, which examines the impact of language on educational achievements among children in England, it is found that around 15% of students entering school have speech and language impairments. However, she also asserts that the acquisition of language and speech abilities in the majority of children occurs naturally, without explicit teaching, albeit with significant individual differences. In agreement with Chomsky's (1957) assertions, the author echoes the

notion that children possess an inherent capacity for language acquisition. Additionally, the author asserts that a human possesses the capacity to generate an inexhaustible array of phrases. Consequently, this study attempts to address the inquiry regarding the veracity of this assertion in youngsters who have mental disorders.

The concept of communication accommodation pertains to the act of modifying one's speech or altering one's speech style in accordance with the specific situation and others involved in order to enhance comprehension. The term "it" pertains to the dynamic interaction between language, context, and identity. This phenomenon encompasses convergence tactics, in which individuals adjust their language behaviour to align with one another, as well as divergence techniques, in which individuals emphasise spoken and nonverbal distinctions to create more gap between them. The teacher has a crucial role in establishing a supportive and inclusive atmosphere for persons with speech difficulties, particularly those who are mentally handicapped. This setting should be designed to facilitate effective communication and minimise any potential feelings of intimidation or anxiety. According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Education in 2008, it was found that individuals with special needs have not been adequately engaged in activities that promote their overall development, particularly in the area of language acquisition. Moreover, it posits that their engagement is constrained as a result of the lack of accessibility to amenities. Bryan (1996) supports these thoughts, as seen in his study on the impact of patronising speech and over accommodation, whereby he asserts that individuals with disabilities encounter unfavourable attitudes due to their disability. According to the individual, this leads to the utilisation of condescending language that is rooted on stereotypes rather than factual accuracy. However, the examination of additional elements influencing speech, such as the environment and context in which individuals engage in communication, has not been addressed by his research. This study aims to provide an explanation for these aspects.

Based on the Vihiga Constituency strategic plan publication titled "Strategic Plan (2008)", it is indicated that the constituency is home to four specialised schools and four specialised institutions catering to individuals with mental disabilities. In contrast to the enrollment figures for these units, it is seen that out of the approximately 600 children who initially registered in these institutions, a total of 264 learners, about 44% of the total, discontinued their education due to challenges in social integration resulting from language barriers. There is a growing body of data suggesting that a lack of communication between peers, instructors, and children with mental disabilities is associated with increased rates of school dropout (Sabatia strategy plan book, 2008). Hence, a potential correlation may be established between communication challenges and the elevated rate of school abandonment among children with mental problems in Vihiga County. There has been a lack of research conducted in Vihiga County to ascertain this correlation. This statement implies that persons with mental disabilities may not have had their linguistic requirements adequately addressed. One aspect that has been overlooked is to the absence of community support in facilitating their self-expression. Based on the aforementioned discoveries, the primary objective of the current study was to investigate the influence exerted by language teachers and care givers, as well as the contextual setting in which they work, on the speech development of these individuals.

According to Ziv (2007), there is a tendency to misread or overlook the means of expression employed by persons with mental disorders. The author suggests many strategies to mitigate this issue, including the adoption of a deliberate speaking pace, the establishment of a welcoming atmosphere, and the judicious use of repetition. To a certain degree, he expressed agreement with the necessity of accommodation, although he failed to establish a clear correlation between these activities and the development of language proficiency. The research was conducted in the country of Israel. The present study focused on examining the degree to which this assertion holds true for learners with impairments in Vihiga County.

Thomas and Loxley (2007) argue that the practise of special education results in the segregation of kids with special needs, which in turn negatively impacts their self-esteem and hinders their interpersonal skills. The use of language is diminished by this phenomenon. It is within this perspective that the environmental conditions in which these persons are situated should be optimised to facilitate their social development. Language development has a crucial role in the learning of many social values, in addition to facilitating educational attainment. This research aimed to investigate the influence of the immediate surroundings on children's language production and usage.

Based on the first findings of the National Survey for Persons with disorders (NCAPD) conducted by the Kenya Bureau of Standards in 2008, individuals with mental disorders are classified into four distinct groups, namely mild, moderate, severe, and profound. Individuals with minor intellectual impairment can be classified into one of the following groups. Individuals possess the cognitive ability to acquire knowledge and demonstrate adaptability in social settings, hence fostering positive interpersonal relationships. They are commonly identified as individuals with educable intellectual disabilities. The group under investigation in this study is the subject of focus. The Koech report (1999) made a recommendation about the provision of special education and linguistic support for students with communication difficulties in schools. However, a limitation of this study is the absence of adequate special services and programmes to aid these children. If individuals are capable of adapting to their surroundings, what measures may be taken to support their adjustment? The involvement of significant persons played a crucial part in the lives of these individuals. Thus, this study aimed to investigate whether these learners exhibit varying responses based on the manner in which they are guided or instructed..It is in this view that the study sought to find out what either hinders or promotes oral language development against the communication accommodation background.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Individuals who have mental impairment rely on language as a means of communication, which serves as a tool for facilitating social interactions. While children acquire fundamental language skills prior to starting formal education, their language abilities continue to progress throughout their school-age years. According to statistical data, around 10% of youngsters who enrol in educational institutions have speech and language difficulties. Among the total, 8% of the accounts are attributed to individuals with mental impairments. More than 85% of these learners are integrated into regular courses. The remaining individuals are enrolled in specialised educational institutions and programmes, where distinct tactics are used to facilitate their progress in language acquisition, particularly in the domain of speech development. Exceptional children refer to individuals who exhibit deviations from the typical age and grade norms in relation to different aspects of their personal growth and development. Children with intellectual disabilities exhibit atypical growth and development patterns, deviating from the typical developmental trajectory. They exhibit a reduced rate compared to their typical counterparts. One of the domains that saw an impact is the realm of speech and language use. According to the Kenya Bureau of Statistics (2008), the Kenya National Survey for persons with disabilities reported an estimated population of 1.6 million individuals with disabilities in Kenya. Among the surveyed population, a total of 15,840 individuals, constituting 0.3% of the entire population, were identified as having mental disorders. These individuals originate from the western region of Kenya, specifically Vihiga County. According to statistical data, it has been observed that around 10% of children who reach the age of attending school have speech and language difficulties. Among the total population, 8% represents youngsters who have mental impairments. Certain youngsters are sent to specialised units with the intention of utilising isolation as a means to more effectively address their perspectives. Paradoxically, the outcome of this situation does not align with initial expectations, with speech and language

development being one of the domains most impacted. In this regard, individuals possess a legitimate entitlement to receive guidance that facilitates their linguistic development.

In light of this context, the researcher has suggested to conduct a study on the adaptation of communication in the production and use of spoken language within social settings among children with minor mental disorders in Vihiga County. The inquiry pertained to the impact of significant people on the linguistic abilities and social relationships of these youngsters, and how it influenced their overall well-being. The county comprises four educational units catering to children with modest mental disorders, whose communication and language usage has not been subject to empirical investigation.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to assess communication adjustment in oral language production and use in social contexts among children with mild mental disabilities in special units of Vihiga county.

1.4 Objectives of the study

This study was guided by the following objectives:

- i) To assess the communication adjustment activities used to enhance speech production and use among children with mental disabilities in Vihiga County.
- ii) To determine the relationship between communication adjustment skills identified and oral language use in children with mental disabilities in Vihiga County.
- iii) To evaluate the influence of language instructors and care givers on language production and use on children with mental disabilities in Vihiga County.

1.5 Research questions

The study attempted to answer each objective using the following research questions:

- i. What are some of the communication adjustment activities used to enhance language development?
- ii. Which accommodation activities are likely to encourage or discourage language production and use among children with mental disabilities in Vihiga County?
- iii. What is the role of language instructors and caregivers in language production and use in children with mental disabilities?

1.6 Significance of the study

The objective of this study was to provide support to language policy makers in devising effective measures to improve communication among children with mental impairments. The study aimed to provide support for children with mental disorders in enhancing their communication abilities within social situations, fostering the development of self-esteem, and gaining various social values and skills. The researcher stood to gain from the acquisition of a certificate in the discipline of linguistics, while this investigation was intended to provide novel insights within the realm of linguistics.

1.7 Justification of the study

Typically, children who possess mental problems are commonly placed in specialised units or educational institutions. The purpose of this endeavour is to ensure the achievement of their educational objectives. However, a significant proportion of these youngsters either discontinued their education prematurely or failed to attain their expected level of academic success. One contributing factor was the presence of speech and language problems, which hindered their capacity to effectively communicate their thoughts and ideas. The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the underlying factors contributing to the identified issue and provide potential strategies to assist individuals in achieving their goals. The study has yielded valuable insights into the improvement of speech production and comprehension

in children with minor intellectual impairments through the implementation of the research findings by language teachers and care givers.

1.8 Scope of the study

This study primarily examined the evaluation of communication adjustment in the production and use of spoken language within social situations among children with mental disorders in special facilities located in Vihiga County. The study focused on several key aspects, including the utilisation of communication adjustment strategies to improve speech production and usage, the correlation between communication adjustment abilities and oral language utilisation, and the involvement of language instructors and care givers in facilitating language production and usage among children with mental disabilities in Vihiga County.

1.8 Limitation of the study

The present investigation was subject to many limitations. Due to limitations in the theoretical framework and methodology employed, as exemplified by the utilisation of a small sample size derived from a limited number of units within Vihiga County, the findings of this study may not possess sufficient reliability to warrant generalisations at a national or international level. In order to address this concern, the study included rigorously tested and validated tools for data collection, as well as established techniques of analysis. These measures were implemented to enhance the credibility and objectivity of the findings, hence increasing their potential for generalizability. The focus was primarily on the use and progression of oral language, encompassing the domains of hearing, speaking, and nonverbal communication abilities. The intervention would be restricted to individuals with modest intellectual disabilities who are enrolled in specialised educational institutions within Vihiga County. The necessity of conducting a thorough investigation and gathering further insights from others in close proximity to these youngsters arises from the observation that they had difficulties in

specific domains. The reason for this is because the attention was directed on mentally disabled pupils inside the specific setting in which they have been restricted.

1.9 Assumption of the study

This study had the following assumptions:

- i) Various communication adjustment actions can be implemented to promote speech output and utilisation.
- ii) There exists a correlation between engagement in communication adjustment activities and the creation and utilisation of language.
- iii) Language educators and care givers are actively involved in facilitating the development and use of language skills in children with mental impairments.



1.10 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Communication adjustment: The act of adjusting speech styles or altering speech patterns in accordance with the specific situation and individuals engaged in a discussion, with the aim of enhancing comprehension.

Convergence: The proposed approach involves the adaptation of a person to the verbal behaviour of others.

Divergence: The method involves individuals emphasising variations in speech patterns and nonverbal cues in order to create a greater sense of separation between them.

Educable mentally retarded : Individuals who have cognitive limitations yet possess the capacity to accept and articulate educational instruction.

Expressive skills: Active abilities that encompass language creation include oral communication, such as speaking.

Interlocutors: The participants engaged in a discourse or communicative exchange.

Intelligence quotient: The total score is obtained by aggregating the results of many standardised tests that have been specifically developed to evaluate human intelligence.

Children with mental disabilities: Those children whose cognitive abilities aren't up to pace with typical children.

Patronizing speech: A way of talking that makes the speaker sound more and more knowledgeable than they actually are, while making the listener feel stupid.

Receptive skills: Language abilities that do not actively engage in communication, such as listening.

Secondary baby talk: Adult-to-adult slang is a shortened form of language used by adults to communicate with one another, including linguistic alterations based on stereotypes.

Oral language: Language is the medium via which we convey our thoughts, feelings, and ideas to one another.

Social contexts: Contexts when standards of proper English use are not necessary.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the literature, organised into several subsections. The first subsection examines the development of language skills in children, focusing on how language acquisition progresses. The second subsection explores communication adjustment activities and their impact on oral language use. The third subsection investigates the relationship between these activities and oral language proficiency. Lastly, the role of language instructors and care givers in facilitating oral language production and use among children with mental disabilities is examined. The literature was systematically examined, encompassing scholarly publications, theses, online sources, and relevant books.

2.2 Review of Empirical literature

The current investigation conducted a comprehensive analysis of scholarly literature pertaining to the topic of expressive language impairment. Children who have mental disabilities experience challenges related to expressive and receptive language issues. It is assumed that these difficulties arise in the absence of any neurological, sensory, or physical abnormalities that might potentially impact their language ability (Morgan, 2013). Morgan posits an additional proposition that a correlation exists between a child's behaviour and their ability to effectively communicate. This correlation may have implications for their interpersonal connections with peers, and if left unaddressed, might potentially persist into adulthood. The individual perceives formal therapeutic approaches as intricate, demanding, and lacking in specificity for children. Hence, the present study aimed to provide an alternate form of support. When analysing the impact of parents or guardians on the development of communication issues in children with speech and language impairments, it is evident that limited engagement during the early years and a lack of early intervention treatment are the primary factors

contributing to the persistence of language usage challenges. According to Faith (2012), The prominence of parental and guardian influence has been disproportionately emphasised, neglecting the contributions of other influential individuals in the lives of children residing in constrained environments.

According to Marja (2005), children who experience specific language impairments (SLI) are unable to attain typical language proficiency, although possessing normal auditory capabilities and nonverbal intelligence. However, with appropriate support, these children can develop communication skills that are sufficient for their everyday needs. While it is true that these youngsters may not possess long-term memory (LTM), it is beneficial to leverage their short-term memory (STM) and cultivate a functioning memory in order to afford them an opportunity for communication. Consequently, the current investigation examined the strategies employed by care givers and language teachers in their efforts to accomplish this objective. In his study on the correlation between language disorders and behavioural problems, Curtwright (2007) observes that children with language disorders often exhibit behavioural issues that are linked to their language difficulties. These issues include using shorter utterances, struggling to maintain a consistent subject, and providing inappropriate replies. Nevertheless, she maintains that these youngsters would not benefit significantly by being enrolled in school. However, previous research conducted by Cullinan and Epstein (2001), as noted by Curtwright, suggests that the majority of studies have mostly focused on children and students in clinical and hospital settings, with limited attention given to those in school or educational environments. The exclusion of children with mental disorders was seen in this study, and it is suggested that further investigation be conducted in this specific area. The primary objective of this study was to investigate the veracity of this claim in the context of children with mental disorders.

2.3 Development of language among children

According to Mangal (2009), language may be defined as a kind of verbal communication employed by humans. Oral language may be described as a linguistic system comprising spoken sounds and words, as opposed to written forms of communication. When examining oral language, we are specifically referring to the process of speech development. Language has several components, namely phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. The primary focus of this study was on pragmatics, which pertains to the proper use of language within social situations to accomplish certain objectives, get particular information, satisfy a demand, or convey a notion. Furthermore, it is important to consider how these situations have contributed to the development and advancement of speaking skills.

Following the birth of children, it is anticipated that they will undergo growth and development, including the acquisition and progression of linguistic skills. The process of language development in children adheres to a predictable sequence, characterised by distinct phases of language acquisition that often occur around the same age, but with some degree of individual variance. Language, as defined by the American Speech Language and Hearing Association (ASHA), encompasses a set of regulations governing the semantics, phonetics, and syntax of a given code. These regulations dictate the meanings of words, the construction of words, and the arrangement of words within a linguistic framework. The study of language development thus focused on the optimal word combinations for certain contexts and examined how this ability evolved, remained static, or declined as children progressed in age.

The field of oral language development focuses on the acquisition and refinement of speech skills. It encompasses both receptive language, which involves comprehending the meaning and usage of words, and expressive language, which involves the ability to employ acquired vocabulary effectively in various contexts.

According to Jerome Brunner's (1983) assertion, the acquisition of spoken language skills equips children with essential cognitive capabilities. The ability to think is significantly hindered in youngsters who lack linguistic skills. According to the majority of experts, it is widely acknowledged that while language acquisition is a natural process, it is essential to use strategies that foster and enhance this learning. This is regardless of whether the youngsters are typically developing or have impairments. This study was thus conducted in light of this context.

2.4 Communication adjustment activities and oral language use.

The acquisition of language is a significant milestone in the growth and development of children. As children progress in their development, they undergo a shift from engaging in cooing and babbling to becoming proficient communicators. In her study conducted in the United Kingdom, Roulstone (2000) examined the impact of language on children's early educational outcomes. The research specifically investigated the influence of the communicative environment during a child's early years on their language development in subsequent years. The findings of this study indicate that a rich communicative environment has a significant role in facilitating language development among learners, independent of their socioeconomic origins.

The communicative environment, characterised by various communicative and linguistic activities, has a greater influence on early learning outcomes compared to social background factors, hence impacting language development. According to Roulstone (2010), Ramsden et al argue that children with speech and language impairments exhibit variability in their language development progress, which is influenced by their exposure to different linguistic environments. Roulstone examines the extent of available literature, television shows, and spontaneous language activities as components of a robust communicative environment. However, this assertion may not hold true in the case of individuals with cognitive impairments.

Despite being immersed in a communicative environment, certain individuals make low or no advancements in terms of speech development. Consequently, it may be inferred that there existed a deficiency within the communication milieu, leading to the occurrence of this phenomenon. The linguistic activities that were expected to be present in this context were found to be deficient. This finding demonstrated a potential correlation between language-related activities and the development of speech. Some individuals with mental disorders may have deficits in their information processing abilities, such as difficulties in categorising items. Individuals with a narrow attention span are commonly observed to have a restricted range of interests and tend to engage in repeated behaviours that they have learned from their immediate social environment. According to Mangal (2009),...The potential issue in the communication environment might be attributed to a dearth of diverse activities aimed at fostering its development. Roulstone's analysis did not encompass this particular aspect. This study aimed to investigate the impact of communication accommodation activities and their prevalence in a communicative setting on the speech development of children with impairments. Moreover, youngsters who experience mental disorders encountered several obstacles. According to Robinson and Robinson (1976), individuals may encounter challenges in utilising short-term memory or employing organisational tactics such as grouping. In addition, it is worth noting that their vocabulary was limited or diminished, resulting in a lack of linguistic resources to articulate their thoughts. On the contrary, there were individuals who had deficiencies in their ability to memorise information and shown a tendency to employ language in an inappropriate manner. The aforementioned challenges posed significant obstacles to their socialisation, particularly in terms of utilising language as a means of engagement and communication. Consequently, it became imperative to implement appropriate activities aimed at assisting them in overcoming these issues. The majority of individuals employed language primarily for the purpose of expressing their desires rather than effectively communicating ideas. In order to facilitate effective communication and foster personal development, it is imperative to cultivate

a harmonious integration of speaking, learning, and listening skills. According to Anastasion (1993), language exercises for these learners should encompass the enhancement and comprehension of verbal ideas and communication skills. These exercises may involve activities such as listening to tales, engaging in discussions about visuals, exploring rhymes, participating in dramatisations, and engaging in games. The implementation of behavioural support strategies serves to provide the learner with alternate communication structures within the communicative context, therefore effectively handling problematic behaviour. There is a contention that language acquires a greater degree of naturalness when it is utilised inside a natural setting. Fowler (2000) is a scholarly source that should be consulted for further information. This study aimed to investigate the degree to which this assertion held true for children with mental problems in Vihiga county. It is worth noting that no prior research had been conducted on learners with disabilities in this particular region.

According to Gauri (2001), the National Council of Education Research and Training has identified that children with mental disorders have a notable level of below-average intellectual functioning, typically measuring at roughly 70% or below on the intelligence quotient (I.Q.) scale. However, these individuals are categorised into different groups based on their cognitive capacities. Consequently, mild cases will encompass individuals whose intelligence quotient (I.Q.) falls within the range of 50-55%. According to the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS), an individual diagnosed with mild intellectual disability has an intelligence quotient (IQ) ranging from 50 to 69. According to Rosenberg (1993), it is argued that children with intellectual disabilities adhere to a comparable set of universal principles in the process of acquiring word meaning, similar to their typically developing peers. Difficulties that surpass their levels of cognitive and verbal abilities only arise in the later stages. With appropriate assistance, individuals are capable of engaging in many activities that can facilitate their progression to a higher degree of language proficiency.

Rosenberg's implication is that individuals with cognitive impairments possess the capacity for speech development, albeit hindered by their mental handicaps. According to Peterson (2002), it is reiterated that the linguistic deficiencies observed in these youngsters might have a separate impact on the development of behaviour problems, as well as hinder their capacity to effectively communicate and comprehend others. The development of spoken language should be seen as a fundamental and remarkable achievement that children have the opportunity to undergo. Hence, the imperative is in the recognition of communication accommodation practises that foster a natural atmosphere, which was the primary objective of the current study.

2.5 The relationship between Communication adjustment activities and oral language development

The concept of communication adjustment arises from the theoretical framework known as communication accommodation theory, which was originally proposed as the speech accommodation theory by Howard Giles in 1973 and then expanded upon in 1991. This study specifically examines the cognitive and emotional processes that influence changes in individuals' speech patterns throughout social interactions, as well as the resulting outcomes. According to Giles and Coupland (1991), accommodation can either facilitate effective communication and promote speech development, or impede an individual's progress by emphasising their limitations. Communication adjustment activities are language-based activities that are utilised or accompany spoken communication throughout any form of engagement. These actions are designed to achieve a mutually agreeable degree of compromise between the speaker and the recipients. According to Coporaël (1995) and Ryan et al. (2005), their investigation on secondary baby talk suggests that it serves as a means of adaptation. They argue that secondary baby talk, a modified version of infant-directed speech, has the potential to affect the emotions and conduct of its recipients. The activities within this context are characterised by an approach that treats the kid as an infant, resulting in a tendency towards

excessive simplicity in both language and the nature of the activities. The use of this intervention on persons diagnosed with mental disorders resulted in an unfavourable outcome, characterised by little to nonexistent advancements in oral language production and utilisation, as reported by the individuals themselves. When engaging in communication with children who have mental disorders, it is important to avoid using simplistic language, since it might potentially be seen by the children as a form of acknowledging their weaknesses. Corporael and Ryan's study primarily concentrated on the phenomenon of over convergence actions within the context of accommodation, while neglecting other facets such as divergence. The study, nevertheless, unveiled a correlation between language activities and the development of language skills. This study aimed to investigate the impact of accommodation on speech development, specifically focusing on communication accommodation activities and their implementation during communicative events involving children with impairments.

In their seminal work, Gallois et al. (1995) provide a comprehensive analysis of the theory, with a particular focus on the notions of convergence and divergence. The authors present seventeen assertions that exert a significant effect on these ideas, so enhancing our understanding of them. One of the factors to consider is the current context, which pertains to the events and circumstances that occur during the actual time of communication. The events that occur during this period might either facilitate or impede the progress of speech development. During this period, the objectives and behavioural strategies are taken into account. This finding suggests that the language-related activities engaged in may have a direct influence on the development of language skills. Additionally, the researchers examined the process of assessment and potential future encounters. It is well acknowledged that current communication practises can have varying effects on speech production and use. This statement reflects the viewpoint of Vygotsky, as referenced by Woolfolk (2004), who asserts that scaffolding activities facilitate the connection between prior knowledge and new

information within a specific interaction. Hence, a potential correlation existed between accommodation activities and the development of linguistic skills.

Individuals with cognitive impairments experienced challenges in their ability to focus and remember information. These activities may lack significance for individuals unless they are adapted to accommodate certain interactions. In accordance with Galois's perspective, the manner in which individuals conduct themselves during conversation or engagement will have a direct impact on their speech. Consequently, this necessitated the implementation of distinct planned actions tailored to specific circumstances. The thesis posits that language development may be facilitated by engaging in various activities that are tailored to certain contexts. Morris (2007) conducted a study that explored the significance of employing convergence and divergence tactics in interactions with individuals with cognitive impairments in Georgia, specifically focusing on the function of patronising speech. According to the individual, patronising speech refers to a kind of communication in which the speaker conveys a sense of superiority and self-importance over the receiver. The phenomenon in question falls under the realm of hyperconvergences, which, according to the individual, has also been associated with adverse outcomes when employed by those without disabilities on individuals with disabilities. The activities conducted in this context revolved on the speaker, who assumed a central role by issuing commands. Similar to infant-directed speech, patronising speech puts the recipients in a disadvantaged position, leading to a diminished level of engagement in linguistic interactions. A number of communication correction efforts are proposed. The activities encompass animal games, imitation exercises, interactive guessing games, puppet performances, and object and picture matching tasks. However, he does not explicitly indicate the manner in which they influenced and the potential consequences they may have on these youngsters. Furthermore, Morris did not investigate the role that individuals with disabilities play in the overall relationship. Consequently, the current investigation aimed to tackle this

issue. According to Colorado (2007), there is a belief that individuals are more inclined to engage in conversation when they acquire knowledge through practical application, namely through imitation and connecting it to personal significance. The act of imitation in the context of patronising discourse is often seen as having been unsuccessful. The examination of the correlation between these activities and the development of spoken language was also conducted by observing the learners' interactions with their peers. Additionally, the investigation explored the suitability of these activities for different occasions and how they might be adjusted to enhance language production and utilisation.

2.6 The role of language instructors in oral language development

Children that have mental disorders have many features that serve as indicators of their language problems. Language plays a crucial role in the whole development of individuals, since it impacts other facets beyond only the realm of communication, in addition to any other problems they may have. According to Ndani (2010), children who experience mental disabilities exhibit notable impairments in their cognitive capacities as well as in two or more areas of adaptive functioning, such as communication and self-care. The majority of these aforementioned traits in speech had an impact on their capacity to articulate effectively.

Consequently, it was imperative to provide assistance to them, thereby highlighting the importance of the presence of other individuals in their life. In a research conducted by Wilson (1995), the objective was to assess the efficacy of speech therapy in improving the communication skills of educable mentally handicapped (EMR) children residing in St. Louis County. The findings of the study indicate that there was no significant disparity seen between the experimental group and the control group, based on the analysis of data collected from a sample of 777 participants.

The findings of this study indicate that the field of speech pathology fell short of anticipated outcomes. Hence, there existed a potential for direct interaction between educators of children with mental problems and the youngsters under their instruction. This study thus centres its attention on an alternative methodology known as communication adjustment, with a special emphasis on language teachers, encompassing care givers within this context. This implies that the emphasis would be placed on those who engage with children in a social capacity, as opposed to professionals with specialised training such as speech therapists. This technique demonstrated a divergence in the field of speech pathology.

In her study, Mwihaki (2003) examined speech pathology as a component of applied linguistics and aimed to identify the constraints associated with the management of speech problems in the special education domain in Kenya. As per her assertion, any speech that exhibited consistent deviations from anticipated qualities was deemed abnormal, hence qualifying as a speech disorder. The nature of the phenomenon might manifest as either receptive or expressive.

The proposed solution was the implementation of speech pathology, a discipline aimed at enhancing communication abilities among persons with cognitive impairments. This approach involves several interventions such as music therapy, counselling, the organisation of conferences, and the establishment of resource centres. The absence of such resources in Kenya was highlighted as a significant gap that might be addressed by the adoption of speech pathology. It may be inferred that Kenya had a shortage of speech therapists, as well as a scarcity of both trainees and trainers in the field of special education. Mwihaki's exclusive focus on speech pathology prompted consideration of the potential consequences in the event of its absence. Consequently, the inquiry arises as to the fate of infants afflicted with speech problems in such circumstances. The current study addresses the necessity for recognising the function played by these teachers, which has been disregarded in their absence.

According to Mwihi, Tranth (1976) and Holland (1984) are speech pathologists who emphasise that speech abnormalities should not be automatically associated with generalised mental retardation or intellectual disability. The inadequate handling of these individuals might impede the development of speaking skills. The presence of negative societal involvement, as well as the influence of cultural environment, both contribute to this phenomenon. This implies that the manner in which these children are managed, engaged with, and educated will impact their progress in terms of speech development. The research did not propose any modifications to the context or surroundings that may potentially assist persons who are susceptible. Consequently, the present work sought to address this matter.

According to Acholla (2012), in his unpublished thesis examining the factors that contribute to dropout rates among learners with learning impairments in Kenyan schools in Kisumu East Kenya, it was proposed that a common reason for communication avoidance among these learners was a lack of desire, which stemmed from a fear of failing. He further proposed that in order to mitigate this issue, it is imperative to utilise specialised people and material resources. Acholla concurred with the notion that educators had a significant role in the linguistic progress of those with cognitive impairments. Cholla concurred with the notion that the lack of capacity to effectively communicate had a significant role in the higher dropout rates observed among students with mental disorders in comparison to those with other disabilities. This phenomenon was attributed to a dearth of motivation exhibited by their educators. However, he did not examine the kind of incentive provided by teachers and the dynamics of the teacher-learner interaction. Furthermore, Acholla directed his research efforts on the city of Kisumu. The primary focus of this study was Vihiga County, an area where no previous research of this nature had been conducted. This study aimed to address the existing gap in the literature. The results of this study suggest a correlation between social engagement and the acquisition of linguistic skills. According to Vygotsky (1962), the process of language

acquisition is analogous to the acquisition of cognitive skills, and the presence of other individuals in a child's surroundings plays a significant role in facilitating language development. This study focused on examining the practical role that they fulfilled. In a research conducted by Okuta (2011), the author examined the impact of inclusive education on the learning outcomes of learners with moderate mental retardation in inclusive primary schools located in Rachuonyo district, Kenya. The findings of the study suggested that adequate parental support is crucial for learners with mental impairments. In contrast to certain individuals who argue that parents have a detrimental impact by excessively safeguarding learners with cognitive impairments from demanding assignments under the guise of safeguarding their well-being, he held a divergent viewpoint. According to Mangal (2009),...

Okuta acknowledges the significance of individuals in close proximity to young children, particularly parents, in fostering the development of communication skills. However, he did not assert that inclusive learning inadvertently facilitates language acquisition and therefore enhances educational achievement. He prioritised excellence in education and believed that if a kid excelled in other areas of school, language proficiency will also improve. The author's study failed to adequately consider the pragmatic perspective of language and the particular influence that teachers exert on these learners. In order to provide assistance to this individual, it is important to first identify and analyse the specific setback they are facing. This will enable us to effectively support them in achieving speech production and utilisation. The process of identification may entail the observation of linguistic deviations or irregularities. The initial step involves conducting an assessment, which is subsequently followed by the formulation of a case history in order to get insight into the characteristics and extent of the issue at hand. The examination of individuals' speaking and hearing apparatus, such as their eyes, ears, and teeth, together with their behavioural patterns in their native surroundings, was also of utmost importance. The language instructors were tasked with fulfilling these obligations. According

to Okuta, it was recommended that teachers use an inclusive approach by treating learners with mental disorders in the same manner as their non-disabled classmates, in order to assess their potential for academic achievement. However, this approach was not universally effective, highlighting the necessity for language instructors to employ other strategies in order to facilitate the linguistic development of children with mental impairments. This study sought to ascertain this information.

2.7 Theoretical framework

The present study utilised the Communication Accommodation hypothesis, which was originally known as the speech accommodation hypothesis proposed by Howard Giles in 1973 and further developed in 1991. Based on the theoretical framework, individuals engage in a process of modifying their speech, voice patterns, and gestures in order to adapt to the communication styles of others during interpersonal interactions. Hence, the determination of one's speech patterns is influenced not only by their social status and level of attentiveness, but also by their perception of the others they are communicating with. Additionally, this study investigates the underlying factors that motivate individuals to modify the social distance existing between them. The fundamental principles of this philosophy are articulated through the process of accommodation. Convergence refers to a linguistic phenomenon in which speakers reduce the social disparity between them, either in an upward direction when a speaker from a lower social level attempts to align with a speaker from a higher social level, or in a downward direction when a speaker from a higher social class adjusts their speech to match that of an individual from a lower social class. It also encompasses the concept of divergence, when speakers intentionally create more spatial separation between themselves. The present study aimed to investigate the impact of these processes on children diagnosed with mental impairments. According to Giles' argument, the observed shift in speech style may be attributed to varying reasons and the resulting consequences. The primary objectives of this study were

communication, personal identity, and social identity. The primary objective of these persons was to maintain a state of comfort or cultivate a favourable sense of belonging.

2.8 Chapter summary

The objective of this chapter was to analyse research pertaining to communication patterns among children with mental disorders in the context of communication adaptation. Given the observation that children with mental disorders face disadvantages in several domains, there arose a necessity for intervention and support. Several solutions had been proposed. The majority of previous research have focused on formal and intricate interventions, such as speech therapy, which have demonstrated limited efficacy in regions lacking access to qualified practitioners in this field. According to the researchers mentioned, it is proposed that not all language exercises may be effective. Consequently, it became imperative to identify and isolate suitable activities for the purpose of evaluating their impact on language use. This chapter delved into the examination of the role assumed by those in close proximity to youngsters within the social environment, as they endeavoured to foster language use and facilitate its development. According to the assessment, the participation of other persons in the lives of these children has been either too formalised or primarily focused on aspects such as educational attainment. Consequently, this study aimed to examine the strategies employed by care givers and language instructors while interacting with young children within social settings. The review also examined the broader interaction between communication, the activities linked to it, and the involvement of capable persons in their own lives.

2.9 Knowledge Gap

Children who experience mental impairments are typically enrolled in specialised units or schools with the belief that isolation can facilitate their adaptation process. It was further posited that individuals would receive improved treatment and acquire knowledge from their peers, given their association with those with comparable traits. Paradoxically, the outcome of

this situation did not align with initial expectations, with speech and language usage being identified as one of the areas most significantly impacted. This is the reason why they need direction. The objective is to seek communication modification in order to solve this issue. The significance of language and speech behaviour lies in its role as indicators of both group affiliation and personal identity. The lack of effective communication hindered the ability of children with impairments to establish harmonious relationships with their classmates. The study primarily examined the interaction between various activities and their influence on the creation and use of speech and language. The assessment of the impact of this phenomenon on children with mental disorders encompassed several stakeholders, including their care givers, language teachers, and classmates. Considerable attention has been devoted to facilitating language development in typically developing children, but comparatively little emphasis has been placed on supporting language acquisition in children with extraordinary abilities. Considerable attention was also devoted to the difficulties encountered in the process of acquiring language. Moreover, the utilisation of language has predominantly been associated with educational attainment. The omission of language creation and its utilisation within social situations has been observed. During the course of their educational journey, several individuals exhibited little or negligible progress in terms of their speech development. This issue arose in relation to the means through which individuals should attain more social values, prompting the present study to address this knowledge deficit.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research methods utilised in the investigation. The examination encompassed an evaluation of the research design, study site, target population sample, sampling methodology, data collecting tools, and data analysis.

3.1 Research design

The inclusion of the research technique employed in this study serves as a reference to the research design implemented. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach, focusing on the examination of human experiences and behaviours. Therefore, a qualitative research approach was employed. The concept of research design, as proposed by Orodho (2003), refers to a structured framework or blueprint employed to systematically address research inquiries and resolve research problems. The research utilised a descriptive survey design. This study examines the depiction of the current condition of affairs. Consequently, it was deemed suitable for enabling the gathering of data from participants on their perspectives on the impact of communicative accommodation on the development of speech. According to Oso and Onen (2005), survey research is a methodological approach that is focused on investigating a population by choosing representative samples for analysis in order to uncover patterns and occurrences. The primary objective of this endeavour was to furnish both quantitative data and descriptive information pertaining to a certain segment of the population. This design was chosen due to its consideration of factors such as efficient data gathering and the capacity to comprehend a certain population. The data gathering process involved the utilisation of interviews and questionnaires administered within facilities housing persons with intellectual disabilities.

3.2 Area of study

The research was carried out inside the geographical boundaries of Vihiga County. Vihiga County was established in the year 2008. The reason for this might be attributed to the fact that the region was formerly located in the western province of Kenya. The adjacent counties consist of Kakamega to the northern direction and Nandi County to the western direction. The company's headquarters are located in Mbale, which is the most populous town within the county. According to the 2009 census, the population of the area in question was recorded as 554,622 individuals. The region possesses a total size of 563 square kilometres. The region consists of five distinct electoral districts, specifically Sabatia, Hamisi, Emuhaya, Vihiga, and Luanda. The Maragoli ethnic group holds a prominent position within the local region. Tiriki, Idakho, and Banyore represent other ethnic groups within the given geographical area. This jurisdiction encompasses a collective of five specialised educational institutions and four specialised facilities catering to individuals with intellectual disabilities. The educational institutions encompassed under this list comprise Kaimosi, Chamakanga, Womulalu, Wandechi, and Ebusiratsi. The special units encompass Madegwa, Ikhuvu, Isikhu, and Kaptis. A target audience was identified and a sampling procedure was implemented. According to Singleton (1993), it is important for the setting of a study sample to be easily accessible to the researcher and to allow for immediate rapport with the informant. In the realm of social dynamics, the majority of individuals identify as adherents of the Christian faith, while a minority segment aligns themselves with the Islamic faith. The weather conditions in this region are considered favourable due to an annual precipitation range of 1200mm-1800mm and an average temperature of 23 degrees Celsius. Consequently, a significant portion of the local population engages in agricultural activities, with a particular focus on food production. The current state of unemployment is characterised by a high rate, while the average income for people stands at around shs3000 on average. The poverty index was at 62.5% in the year 2008.

In addition to their geographical proximity to the researcher, these institutions also accommodated students from diverse backgrounds and regions beyond the county. Furthermore, their population and popularity saw rapid growth, accompanied by the establishment of numerous communication facilities that played a pivotal role in supporting effective communication. There has been a lack of study conducted in this county pertaining to the domain of communication and speech development in children with mental impairments. Consequently, this rendered it a suitable location for academic investigation.

3.3 Target population

The population under study encompasses all individuals, events, or objects, whether actual or imaginary, that are of interest to the researcher. The research focused on a sample size of 110 participants, comprising 80 children diagnosed with mental disorders, 10 language instructors, and 20 care givers. According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (2000), children who exhibit moderate intellectual impairment are categorised based on their behaviour and intelligence quotient (IQ) scores, which typically range from 50-55% to 70%. These entities were capable of verbal communication and were frequently described as being receptive to instruction.

3.4 Sample and Sampling techniques

In this context, a sample refers to a smaller subset of individuals that have been chosen from a broader, accessible, and representative population. According to Kline (1993), it is generally recommended in social science research to employ the biggest sample size possible in order to enhance the generalizability of findings, regardless of the geographical dispersion of the sample. According to the recommendation of Kombo and Tromp (2006), it is suggested that a sample size ranging from 10-30% of the research population is sufficient to ensure representativeness.

Consequently, the research selected a sample size equivalent to 30% of the total population of the unit. The researchers employed purposive sampling as a method of participant selection. The researcher employed subjective selection methods to choose the sampling units, aiming to achieve a sample that is seen to be representative of the population. The sample approach was used due to the presence of varying levels of children with mental disabilities throughout the units. Out of the four schools and three units, only one school and all four units were chosen. Adequate information was supplied on the impact of adjustment on the development of speech.

Table 1.1: Sample Frame

| CATEGORY | POPULATION | SAMPLE | PERCENTAGE |
|--|------------|--------|------------|
| Language instructors | 35 | 10 | 30% |
| Care givers | 65 | 20 | 30% |
| Children with mild mental disabilities | 260 | 80 | 30% |

Source: Researcher, (2023)

3.5 Data collection instruments

The study employed several research instruments, namely interviews, questionnaires, and observation. The development of these methods was based on the parameters and objectives outlined in the study. An interview schedule was established as a guide to facilitate the interview process. The inventory included of ten items that provided data on the emotions and developmental advancements of the youngsters. A checklist for observation was developed to serve as a reference tool during the assessment of behavioural modifications in communication among children with mental disorders.

3.6 Reliability and validity of the instruments

3.6.1 Validity of the instruments

Validity, as defined by Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), pertains to the precision and significance of conclusions derived from collected results. The questions were formulated in a manner that resulted in sufficient and relevant information being obtained. During the piloting phase, the functioning status of the instruments was assessed to verify their validity. Borg and Gall (1989) argue that the enhancement of validity may be achieved through the utilisation of expert judgement. In light of this consideration, the content validity of the study was established through the evaluation of the research materials by supervisors and language specialists affiliated with the Department of Languages at Mount Kenya University. The objective of this study was to assess the adequacy of the content and logical arrangement of the materials in order to ascertain their ability to produce the intended outcomes. The assessment of face validity was conducted in order to ascertain the extent to which the questions accurately reflected the aims at hand.

3.6.2 Reliability of the instruments.

According to Serekan (2010), the concept of dependability in a study pertains to the extent to which the measuring equipment employed in the research provide consistent results or data when subjected to several trials. According to Kombo and Tromp (2011), dependability may be defined as the degree to which an instrument properly measures the intended construct. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), the concept of dependability pertains to the extent to which instruments employed in a study are deemed relevant and accurate. The assessment of the instruments' reliability was conducted.

3.7 Data collection procedures

Prior to commencing the data collection procedure in accordance with ethical guidelines, a formal request for study approval was acquired from the National study Council through the

Ministry of Education and Mount Kenya University. The researcher corresponded with the pertinent educational institutions and specialised departments in order to schedule appointments for the purpose of conducting research. In order to verify the feasibility of conducting the research, the researcher also visited pertinent venues such as libraries and study locations to confirm the scheduled appointments and assess their suitability. The researcher further notified the pertinent authorities of the objective of the study. The research study provided a guarantee of confidentiality to all participants, ensuring that the data collected would remain private and solely used for research purposes. The researcher dedicated time to providing explanations for any potential difficulties that may have emerged over the course of the investigation.

3.8 Data Analysis

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), the process of data analysis involves the examination of the obtained data from a survey or experiment, and afterwards drawing deductions and inferences based on the findings. Qualitative approaches were employed to collect and analyse data, which was subsequently categorised and thematically organised. The purpose of this was to obtain a concise and impressionistic overview of the main findings. Thematic analysis was employed extensively in this study, wherein themes were derived from the data obtained through the administration of questionnaires.

3.9 Ethical considerations

During the course of the investigation, the researcher took into account many factors. The researcher acquired the necessary authorization to carry out the research from the National Research Council in accordance with ethical guidelines. During the process of data collection, the participants were provided with information on the objective of the research and their agreement was obtained for their involvement in the study. The participants were also provided with a comprehensive overview of the study's objectives and rationale. The assurance of

confidentiality was provided to all respondents regarding the data gathered, emphasising that their replies were solely intended for research purposes. The data was accurately recorded and efforts were made to prevent bias throughout the analysis and interpretation of the data, particularly in situations when impartiality was necessary.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an exposition of the data collected and the subsequent analysis conducted. The study was conducted with three primary objectives. Firstly, it aimed to assess the various communicative adjustment activities employed to improve speech production and usage in children with mental disabilities in Vihiga county. Secondly, it sought to determine the correlation between communication adjustment skills and oral language use in children with mental disabilities in the same county. Lastly, it aimed to evaluate the impact of language instructors and care givers on language production and usage among children with mental disabilities in Vihiga county. As a result, the primary headings in this chapter will be derived from the aforementioned objectives.

4.2 Demographic Data of Respondents

The study incorporated several strata of respondents, as seen in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Respondents Designation

| Designation | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Language instructors | 10 | 9.1 |
| Caregivers | 20 | 18.2 |
| Children with mild mental disabilities | 80 | 72.7 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

Source: Field Data (2022)

The data presented above illustrates that a significant majority of the participants in the study, namely 80 individuals, accounting for 72.7% of the total respondents, were identified as children with minor mental disorders. This can be attributed to their higher numerical representation relative to other categories within the target audience. Consequently, it was necessary to ensure that their representation was conducted in a manner that sufficiently enhanced the credibility of the findings, thereby enabling broader generalisation to encompass a larger range of comparable traits. The carer group, including 20 individuals (18.2% of the total responders), was the second largest category. The final group of participants, including 10 individuals, or 9.1% of the total sample, consisted of language instructors. It is noteworthy to mention that each of the aforementioned groups of respondents constituted 30% of the total members within their respective stratum or group. Therefore, the respective totals of language teachers, care givers, and children with modest mental problems were 35, 65, and 260.

4.3 Communicative Adjustment Activities Used to Enhance Speech Production and Use among Children with Mental Disabilities in Vihiga County

| S/no. | Statement | SA | A | U | D | SD | Total |
|--------------|--|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|--------------|
| 1. | I use communicative adjustment activities in my class to enhance speech production and use among | 3(30%) | 4(40%) | 1(10%) | 1(10%) | 1(10%) | 10(100%) |

children with
mild mental
disabilities in
this school.

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|----------|
| 2. | Children with mild mental disabilities enhance their production of speech and use whenever communicative adjustment activities are employed in the teaching of language. | 4(40%) | 4(40%) | 0(0.0%) | 1(10%) | 1(10%) | 10(100%) |
| 3. | Teachers who are knowledgeable in communicative adjustment | 2(20%) | 5(50%) | 1(10%) | 1(10%) | 1(10%) | 10(100%) |

activities help learners with mild mental disabilities to produce speech and use it effectively.

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|----------|
| 4. | There is a difference in language performance between learners with mild mental disabilities who are exposed to communicative adjustment activities and those who are not. | 3(30%) | 5(50%) | 1(10%) | 1(0.0%) | 0(10%) | 10(100%) |
| 5. | Empathetic listening of the | 2(20%) | 6(60%) | 1(10%) | 1(0.0%) | 0(10%) | 10(100%) |
-

teacher to
 children with
 mild mental
 disabilities
 allows them to
 feel heard
 enhancing their
 participation
 and
 undertaking
 language
 activities to
 produce
 coherent
 speech.

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| 6. | Use of gestures and non-verbal communication can enhance speech production of mild mentally disabled children since they will | 3(30%) | 4(40%) | 1(10%) | 2(20%) | 1(10%) | 10(100%) |
|----|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|

| | | | | | | | |
|----|------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|----------|
| | connect them | | | | | | |
| | to what is being | | | | | | |
| | said and | | | | | | |
| | thereby | | | | | | |
| | improving their | | | | | | |
| | competency | | | | | | |
| | and | | | | | | |
| | performance | | | | | | |
| | gradually | | | | | | |
| 7. | Reading for | 2(20%) | 4(40%) | 2(20%) | 2(20%) | 0(0.0%) | 10(100%) |
| | and talking to | | | | | | |
| | learners with | | | | | | |
| | mild mental | | | | | | |
| | disabilities | | | | | | |
| | enhance their | | | | | | |
| | language | | | | | | |
| | production | | | | | | |
| | abilities and | | | | | | |
| | performance | | | | | | |
| 8. | Provision of | 2(20%) | 5(50%) | 1(10%) | 2(20%) | 0(0.0%) | 10(100%) |
| | constant | | | | | | |
| | explanation is | | | | | | |
| | key in | | | | | | |
| | enhancing | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------|----------|
| | speech | | | | | | |
| | production and | | | | | | |
| | use by learners | | | | | | |
| | with mild | | | | | | |
| | mental | | | | | | |
| | disabilities. | | | | | | |
| 9. | Use of pictures, flash cards and associating still photos with words will enhance language performance and competence in children with mild mental disabilities. | 5(50%) | 3(30%) | 1(20%) | 1(10%) | 0(0.0%) | 10(100%) |
| 10. | Realizing, respecting and appreciating the differences and limitations | 5(50%) | 4(40%) | 0(0.0%) | 1(10%) | 0(0.0%) | 10(100%) |

of children
with mild
mental
disabilities will
enhance their
use of language
in a
communication
set up.

Source: Field Data (2022)

The primary aim of this study was to evaluate the communicative adjustment strategies employed to improve speech production and utilisation in children with mental disorders residing in Vihiga County. The researcher employed a Likert scale to assess participants' responses, using the following response options: SA (strongly agree), A (agree), U (undecided), D (disagree), and SD (strongly disagree). Table 4.2 presents the responses of the participants on the communicative adjustment activities employed to improve speech production and utilisation in children with mental disorders residing in Vihiga County.

Table 4.2 is a compilation of communicative adjustment activities that have been employed to improve speech production and utilisation in children with mental disabilities residing in Vihiga County.

The initial component examined in objective one, as depicted in table 4.2, pertained to the assertion that "I employ communicative adjustment activities within my classroom to augment speech production and utilisation among children with mild mental disabilities in this educational institution." The statement was limited to language instructors only, resulting in a

sample size of N=10. The study revealed that a significant proportion (40%) of the participants concurred with the assertion that they employed communicative adjustment activities in their educational settings to promote speech production and utilisation among children with minor mental disorders. Likewise, a total of 3 respondents, accounting for 30% of the sample, expressed strong agreement with the aforementioned statement, indicating their utilisation of communicative adjustment activities within educational settings to promote speech production and usage among children with minor mental disorders. In aggregate, it was found that 7 out of 10 respondents, including 70% of the participants in the survey, recognised the utilisation of communicative adjustment activities in their educational settings. The purpose of these activities was to facilitate speech production and usage among children with mild mental impairments in school. This finding suggests that engaging in communicative adjustment activities can improve speech production and usage in school-aged children with modest mental impairments.

However, 10% of the participants in the research expressed uncertainty regarding the potential effectiveness of communicative adjustment exercises in improving speech production and usage among children with modest mental disorders in educational settings. Moreover, 10% and 10% of the participants, correspondingly, expressed disagreement and significant disagreement with the assertion that they employed communicative adjustment activities in their instructional sessions to promote speech production and utilisation among students with mild cognitive impairments in educational settings.

Additionally, participants were exposed to the assertion that "the implementation of communicative adjustment activities in language instruction improves the speech production and usage of children with mild mental disabilities." The study revealed that 40% of the participants, who were instructors, highly endorsed the notion that children with modest mental disorders exhibit improved speech production and usage when exposed to communicative

adjustment exercises during language instruction. Furthermore, a notable proportion of the participants (40%) in the research study expressed agreement with the notion that children exhibiting minor mental disorders exhibit improved speech production and utilisation when exposed to communicative adjustment activities within language instruction. Hence, a significant majority of the participants (80%) who were surveyed in the study, namely individuals serving as instructors, expressed their agreement with the proposition that children with minor mental disorders exhibit improved speech production and utilisation when exposed to communicative adjustment activities within language instruction. The percentage of individuals who remained uncertain regarding the assertion that children with modest cognitive impairments exhibit improved speech production and usage when exposed to communicative adjustment activities during language instruction was found to be 0(0.0%). However, a minority of respondents (10%) participating in the study expressed disagreement with the assertion that children with modest mental disorders exhibit improved speech production and usage when communicative adjustment exercises are incorporated into language instruction. In a similar vein, 10% of the participants who took part in the study, namely those who were instructors, expressed significant disagreement with the assertion that children with modest mental disorders improve their speech production and usage through the implementation of communicative adjustment activities in language instruction. In aggregate, a total of 40% of the participants who were surveyed in the study, namely those who were serving as instructors, contradicted the assertion that children with modest mental disorders improve their speech production and usage when communicative adjustment exercises are incorporated into language instruction.

Furthermore, the instructors who participated in the study were presented with the assertion that professors who possess expertise in communicative adjustment actions are significant in assisting learners with modest mental disorders in generating speech and utilising it

proficiently. The majority of instructor respondents (50%) participating in the survey concurred with the assertion that teachers who possess expertise in communicative adjustment activities are important in assisting learners with minor mental disorders in generating speech and employing it proficiently. Furthermore, a total of 2 out of 10% of the participants who took part in the research as educators expressed a significant level of agreement with the assertion that instructors who possess expertise in communicative adjustment activities play a crucial role in assisting individuals with minor cognitive impairments in generating speech and utilising it proficiently. The data indicates that 7 out of 10 respondents, who were instructors participating in the study, expressed their agreement with the assertion that teachers who possess expertise in communicative adjustment activities play a crucial role in assisting learners with minor mental disorders in generating speech and utilising it proficiently. It was observed that 10% of the participants in the study expressed uncertainty regarding the proposition that educators who possess expertise in communicative adjustment activities may assist individuals with modest mental disorders in generating speech and utilising it proficiently. However, a minority of the participants (10%) who were categorised as language instructors expressed disagreement with the assertion that teachers who had expertise in communicative adjustment activities are beneficial in assisting learners with mild mental disorders in their speech production and successful usage. Similarly, 10% of the instructors surveyed expressed severe disagreement with the assertion that teachers who possess expertise in communicative adjustment activities are efficient in assisting learners with minor mental disorders in generating and using speech proficiently. Hence, a total of 40% of the instructors who participated in the survey contradicted the assertion that educators who possess expertise in communicative adjustment activities are important in assisting individuals with minor mental impairments in generating speech and utilising it proficiently.

In addition, the instructors were presented with the assertion that there exists a distinction in language proficiency between learners with modest cognitive impairments who engage in communicative adjustment activities and those who do not. The findings indicate that a significant proportion of the teacher respondents, namely 5 out of 10 (50%), expressed agreement with the assertion that there exists a distinction in language proficiency between learners with minor mental disorders who engage in communicative adjustment activities and those who do not. Furthermore, a notable proportion of participants (3 out of 10, or 30%) within this particular group expressed high agreement with the assertion that there exists a discernible disparity in language proficiency between individuals with moderate cognitive impairments who engage in communicative adjustment interventions and those who do not. In aggregate, it can be inferred that a total of 8 participants, accounting for 80% of the sample population consisting of language instructors, expressed their agreement with the assertion that there exists a discernible disparity in language proficiency between learners with minor mental disorders who engage in communicative adjustment activities and those who do not. Additionally, it was found that 10% of the participants who were instructors expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that there exists a distinction in language proficiency between learners with moderate intellectual impairments who are subjected to communicative adjustment activities and those who are not. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that those who had a contrary viewpoint on the assertion that there exists a distinction in language proficiency between learners with moderate intellectual impairments who are exposed to communicative adjustment activities and those who are not were represented by a negligible percentage of 0(0.0%). However, a minority of the participants (10%) in the research expressed significant disagreement with the assertion that there exists a distinction in language proficiency between learners with moderate intellectual impairments who are exposed to communicative adjustment exercises and those who are not. Hence, a few 10% of the instructors expressed dissent towards the assertion that learners with modest mental disorders, who engage in communicative adjustment activities,

exhibit distinct variations in language performance compared to their counterparts who do not partake in such activities.

Furthermore, the instructor responders were presented with the assertion that the act of empathic listening by teachers towards children with minor mental disorders has the potential to make them feel acknowledged, hence promoting their engagement and involvement in language-related tasks, ultimately leading to the production of intelligible speech. The findings of the study revealed that a significant proportion of the instructor respondents, specifically 6 out of 10 (60%), expressed agreement with the assertion that when teachers engage in empathetic listening towards children with mild mental disabilities, it enables these children to feel acknowledged, thereby facilitating their active involvement in language-related tasks and promoting the development of coherent speech. Furthermore, it was found that a significant proportion (40%) of the participants, who were instructors, expressed strong agreement with the notion that when teachers engage in empathetic listening towards children with mild mental disabilities, it enables these children to feel acknowledged, thereby promoting their active involvement and facilitating their ability to engage in language activities and generate coherent speech. As a result, a significant majority of the participants (80%) expressed their agreement with the assertion that when teachers engage in empathic listening towards children with minor mental disorders, it enables them to feel acknowledged, hence facilitating their involvement in language-related tasks and promoting the development of coherent speech. Additionally, it was found that 10% of the instructors surveyed expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that demonstrating sympathetic listening towards children with minor mental disorders enables them to feel acknowledged, hence promoting their engagement in language activities and facilitating the development of intelligible speech. However, 10% of the instructors surveyed expressed disagreement with the assertion that the teacher's sympathetic listening to children with minor mental disorders enables them to feel acknowledged, hence promoting their

engagement and facilitating their ability to engage in language activities and generate intelligible speech.

In addition, the instructors who participated in the study were presented with the assertion that using gestures and non-verbal communication might potentially boost the speech output of children with minor intellectual disabilities. This is because such gestures can establish a connection between the children and the content being communicated, ultimately leading to progressive improvements in their competence and performance. The study revealed that a significant proportion (40%) of the participants concurred with the assertion that incorporating gestures and non-verbal communication can augment the speech production of children with mild intellectual disabilities. This is attributed to the notion that such communication methods establish a connection between the children and the content being conveyed, ultimately leading to a gradual enhancement of their competence and performance. Furthermore, it was found that a significant proportion (30%) of the participants, who were language instructors, expressed strong agreement with the notion that incorporating gestures and non-verbal communication can effectively enhance the speech production abilities of children with mild mental disabilities. This is attributed to the fact that such non-verbal cues facilitate a connection between the children and the content being communicated, leading to gradual improvements in their overall competency and performance. In aggregate, 70% of the participants in the study expressed support for the notion that incorporating gestures and non-verbal communication can augment the speech production abilities of children with mild intellectual disabilities. This is because such methods facilitate their comprehension of spoken language, leading to a gradual improvement in their overall competence and performance. Nonverbal cues, such as pointing, nodding, and maintaining concentrated eye contact, have the potential to facilitate comprehension of communications among children with impairments. Parents, family members, and educators may find it necessary to enhance their gestures or extend their

duration, particularly during the initial stages, in order to facilitate comprehension. It was observed that a portion of the participants (specifically, 2 out of 20%) in the research exhibited uncertainty regarding the assertion that the utilisation of gestures and non-verbal communication has the potential to augment the speech production abilities of children with mild intellectual disabilities. The rationale behind this claim is that such non-verbal cues can establish a connection between the children and the content being communicated, ultimately leading to a gradual enhancement of their competence and performance. However, a minority of the instructors (10%) participating in the study expressed disagreement with the assertion that the utilisation of gestures and non-verbal communication can enhance the speech production of children with mild intellectual disabilities. These instructors argued that such methods may not necessarily facilitate a connection between the children and the content being communicated, and thus may not lead to gradual improvements in their competence and performance.

In addition, the study administered a statement to instructor responders, positing that engaging in reading activities and conversing with learners who have modest mental disorders can improve their language production abilities and performance. The study revealed that a significant proportion of the participants, namely 4 out of 10 instructors (40%), concurred with the assertion that engaging learners with modest mental disorders in reading and conversation might effectively improve their language production abilities and overall performance. Furthermore, it was shown that a significant proportion (40%) of the instructors surveyed expressed strong agreement with the notion that engaging learners with modest mental disorders in reading activities and conversational interactions might effectively boost their language production skills and overall performance. In aggregate, a total of 6 participants, including 60% of the respondents who took part in the study in the capacity of instructors, expressed their endorsement of the assertion that engaging learners with minor mental

disorders in reading activities and conversational interactions contributes to the improvement of their language production abilities and overall performance. The initial stage in acquiring linguistic proficiency involves the act of listening. The survey revealed that a portion of the teacher respondents, namely 2 out of 10 (20%), expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that engaging learners with modest mental disorders in reading and conversation can improve their language production abilities and performance. Moreover, a significant proportion (2 out of 10, or 20%) of the participants included in the research expressed their dissent against the proposition that engaging in reading activities and conversing with individuals with minor mental disorders might effectively boost their language production skills and overall performance.

Furthermore, participants were exposed to the assertion that the consistent providing of explanations plays a crucial role in improving the speech production and usage of individuals with minor intellectual impairments. The survey found that a majority of the respondents, namely 5 out of 10 teachers, agreed with the assertion that consistently providing explanations is crucial for improving speech production and usage among learners with modest mental disorders. Additionally, it was shown that 40% of the instructors surveyed highly endorsed the notion that consistent explanation is crucial for improving speech output and usage among learners with modest mental disorders. In aggregate, a total of 7 respondents, accounting for 70% of the participants who were serving as instructors in the study, expressed their agreement with the assertion that consistent explanation plays a crucial role in improving the speech production and utilisation of learners with minor mental disorders. In the context of a grocery store, it is advisable to engage in conversation with the youngster during the many stages of the shopping process. Enumerate the apples while placing them within the shopping bag, peruse the things on the list and mark them as completed in the presence of the kid, and ultimately permit the youngster to assist in arranging and storing the products upon arrival at home. This

facilitates the repetition of goods to the youngster, so fostering the process of learning and concurrently imparting knowledge about grocery shopping. However, 10% of the participants who were identified as instructors in the study expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that consistently providing explanations is crucial for improving speech output and usage among learners with modest mental disorders. Moreover, a total of 2 out of 10 (20%) teacher respondents expressed disagreement with the assertion that consistent explanation plays a crucial role in improving speech production and utilisation among learners with minor mental disorders.

In the ninth phase of the study, participants who were language teachers were presented with the assertion that employing visual aids such as pictures, flash cards, and connecting static images with words might potentially improve language proficiency and aptitude in children with modest cognitive impairments. The study revealed that a significant majority of the teacher respondents, namely 5 out of 10 (50%), expressed high agreement with the assertion that including visual aids such as pictures, flash cards, and connecting still images with words might effectively improve language proficiency and competence among children diagnosed with minor mental disorders. Furthermore, it was shown that 30% of the instructors surveyed concurred with the assertion that including visual aids such as pictures, flash cards, and linking still images with words might augment language proficiency and aptitude in children with minor cognitive impairments. In aggregate, a majority of the participants (80%) in the study expressed their agreement with the assertion that the use of visual aids such as pictures, flash cards, and the association of static images with words can contribute to the improvement of language proficiency and competence in children who have modest mental disorders. Moreover, a total of 10% of the participants who were identified as teachers expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that employing visual aids such as pictures, flash cards, and linking static images with words would improve language proficiency and aptitude in children

with minor cognitive impairments. In the study, a comparable proportion of participants, namely 10% of the instructors, expressed disagreement with the notion that employing visual aids such as pictures, flash cards, and linking still images with words would improve language proficiency and aptitude in children with minor cognitive impairments.

In addition, the study presented teacher responders with the proposition that acknowledging, valuing, and understanding the distinctions and constraints of children with minor mental disorders can contribute to the improvement of their language proficiency within a communicative context. The study found that a significant proportion of the participants, specifically 5 out of 10 instructors (50%), expressed strong agreement with the notion that acknowledging and valuing the unique characteristics and constraints of children with mild mental disabilities can positively impact their language proficiency within a communicative context. Furthermore, it was shown that 40% of the participants belonging to this particular group concurred with the assertion that acknowledging, valuing, and understanding the distinctions and constraints of children with minor cognitive impairments might positively impact their language proficiency within a communicative context. Collectively, a total of 9 out of 10 teacher respondents expressed their approval for the assertion that acknowledging, valuing, and understanding the distinctions and constraints of children with minor mental disorders can contribute to the improvement of their language proficiency within a communicative context. However, 10% of the participants in the survey expressed dissent with the aforementioned statement, which suggests that acknowledging, valuing, and understanding the distinctions and constraints of children with modest mental disorders may have a positive impact on their language proficiency within a communicative context.

4.4 Relationship between Communication Adjustment Skills and Oral Language Use in Children Mental Disabilities in Vihiga County

Cregan (1998), as quoted in Shiel et al. (2012), posits that spoken language holds the distinction of being the primary, paramount, and commonly employed organised mode of communication. The aforementioned media serves as the principal means by which each individual kid is empowered to organise, assess, articulate, and regulate their own encounters. The study's second purpose focused on examining the correlation between communicative adjustment skills and oral language usage among children with mental disorders in Vihiga County. In this study, participants included both language instructors and care givers. Hence, our sample size (N=30) comprises 10 language instructors and 20 care givers. The responses pertaining to this aim are displayed in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Relationship between Communication Adjustment Skills and Oral Language Use in Children Mental Disabilities in Vihiga County

| S/no. | Statement | SA | A | U | D | SD | Total |
|-------|--|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| 1. | Communication adjustment skills play a vital role in enhancing oral language use in children with mild mental disabilities in Vihiga County. | 12(40%) | 12(40%) | 3(10%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| 2. | Using fun activities to educate children with mild mental disabilities boost their oral language use. | 12(40%) | 13(43.3%) | 2(6.7%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |
| 3. | Using storytelling to teach children with mild mental disabilities improves their use of oral language. | 14(46.7%) | 10(33.3%) | 3(10%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |
| 4. | Using interactive activities at home to teach communication skills to children with | 14(46.7%) | 10(33.3%) | 3(10%) | 3(10%) | 0(0.0%) | 30(100%) |

mild mental disabilities enhance their oral language use.

5. Applying early intervention programmes to teach language skills to children with mild mental disabilities improves their use of oral language. 12(40%) 12(40%) 3(10%) 2(6.7%) 1(3.3%) 30(100%)

improves their use of oral language.

6. Teaching phonology through breaking down its components beginning with sounds to distinction of 13(43.3%) 12(40%) 2(6.7%) 2(6.7%) 1(3.3%) 30(100%)

distinction of

syllables,
words, phrases
and
understanding
of aspects such
as blending,
segmenting,
manipulating
sounds, rhyme
and alliteration
fosters use of
oral language in
children with
mild mental
disabilities.

7. Semantics is an integral aspect of oral language which should be taught to children with mild mental disabilities by addressing the meaning of
- | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| 14(46.7%) | 11(36.7%) | 2(6.7%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|

words and

phrases

including

vocabulary

knowledge

breaking it into

spoken

vocabulary

encompassing

words used in

informal

conversation

and academic

vocabulary

which refers to

words used in

academic talk.

8. Children with 14(46.7%) 12(40%) 1(3.3%) 2(6.7%) 1(3.3%) 30(100%)

mild mental

disabilities

should be

taught syntax to

enrich their oral

language skills

by mainly

focusing on
 grammar
 pointing out the
 rules that
 dictate the ways
 in which words
 and phrases can
 be combined
 into sentences
 and paragraphs.

9. Pragmatics as a social use of language should be used in improving the oral language use by children with mild mental disabilities through focusing on variety of social norms regarding how
- | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| 14(46.7%) | 13(43.3%) | 1(3.3%) | 1(3.3%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|

to participate in communication including turn taking during conversation, interacting in groups, maintaining personal space and using appropriate behaviour with various communication partners or different contexts.

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|----------|
| 10. In teaching use of oral language to children with mild mental disabilities, morphological awareness should be | 12(40%) | 12(40%) | 3(10%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |
|---|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|----------|

integrated with
other aspects of
language by
pointing out
areas such as
morphemes and
words
formations.

Source: Field Data (2022)

According to the data shown in Table 4.3, it can be observed that 12 out of the total respondents, accounting for 40%, who participated in the study in the capacity of language instructors and care givers, expressed a strong agreement with the assertion that the development of communication adjustment skills significantly contributes to the improvement of oral language proficiency in children with minor mental disorders in Vihiga County. In a similar vein, it was found that 12 individuals, accounting for 40% of the participants who identified as language instructors and care givers, expressed agreement with the assertion that the development of communication adjustment skills is crucial in facilitating the improvement of oral language proficiency among children with minor mental disorders in Vihiga County. In aggregate, a total of 24 respondents, accounting for 80% of the participants who were language instructors and care givers, expressed their agreement with the assertion that the development of communication adjustment skills significantly contributes to the improvement of oral language proficiency in children with minor mental disorders in Vihiga County. Moreover, a total of 3 respondents, accounting for 10% of the participants in the survey, who were identified as language instructors and care givers, expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that the development of communication adjustment skills significantly contributes to the improvement

of oral language proficiency in children with minor mental disorders residing in Vihiga County. However, a total of 3 respondents, accounting for 10% of the participants who were language instructors and care givers, expressed disagreement with the assertion that communication adjustment skills significantly contribute to the improvement of oral language proficiency in children with mild mental disabilities in Vihiga County. Among these respondents, 2 individuals (equivalent to 6.7%) disagreed with the statement, while the remaining respondent (13.2%) strongly disagreed.

The participants were furthermore presented with the assertion that employing enjoyable activities as a means of educating youngsters with modest mental disorders enhances their utilisation of spoken language. The study revealed that a significant proportion of the respondents, namely 13 individuals (43.3%), who participated in the research as language teachers and care givers, expressed agreement with the assertion that including enjoyable activities into the educational process enhances the spoken language proficiency of children with minor mental disorders. Furthermore, a total of 12 individuals, accounting for 40% of the participants, who were both language instructors and care givers, expressed high agreement with the assertion that including enjoyable activities into the educational process enhances the spoken language proficiency of children with minor mental disorders. In aggregate, a total of 25 respondents, representing 83.3% of the participants in the survey, expressed their approval for the assertion that including enjoyable activities as a means of educating children with minor mental disorders enhances their utilisation of spoken language skills. This aligns with the viewpoint expressed by Sunish (2013), who asserts that engaging in role-play can facilitate the development of speech and non-verbal communication skills in children with minor intellectual impairments. This approach is often regarded as a very efficacious tool for instructing children with minor intellectual impairments in oral language acquisition. It is worth mentioning that the utilisation of role plays in an inclusive educational setting, particularly for the instruction

of children with minor mental disorders, is not commonly seen. The utilisation of games holds significance in facilitating the development of spoken language skills among children with modest mental disorders.

However, a total of 2 respondents, accounting for 6.7% of the participants who took part in the study in the capacity of language instructors and care givers, expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that employing enjoyable activities as a means of educating children with minor mental disorders enhances their utilisation of spoken language. However, a total of 2 respondents, accounting for 6.7% of the sample, expressed disagreement with the notion that employing enjoyable activities as a means of educating children with modest mental disorders enhances their utilisation of spoken language skills. Furthermore, a small proportion of the participants (3.3%) expressed severe disagreement with the assertion that employing enjoyable activities as a means of educating children with modest mental disorders enhances their utilisation of spoken language. Hence, a total of 3 respondents, accounting for 10% of the participants in the study, expressed disagreement with the assertion that employing enjoyable activities as a means of educating children with modest mental impairments enhances their utilisation of spoken language.

The participants were also presented with the assertion that employing storytelling as an instructional method enhances the spoken language skills of children with modest mental impairments. The findings of the study revealed that a significant proportion of the participants, namely 14 individuals representing 46.7% of the total responses, expressed a strong level of agreement with the assertion that employing storytelling as an instructional method for children with minor mental disorders had a positive impact on their oral language proficiency. Furthermore, it was found that a significant proportion of the participants, namely 10 individuals representing 33.3% of the total responses, expressed their agreement with the assertion that employing storytelling as an instructional method for children with minor mental

disorders had a positive impact on their oral language proficiency. In aggregate, a total of 24 respondents, constituting 80% of the participants in the study, expressed their endorsement for the proposition that employing storytelling as an instructional method enhances the spoken language proficiency of children with modest mental disorders. Nevertheless, a portion of the participants (3 out of 10%) in the research remained uncertain regarding the assertion that employing storytelling as an instructional method enhances the spoken language skills of children with modest mental disorders. Furthermore, a minority of the participants (2 out of 30, representing 6.7%) expressed disagreement with the assertion that employing storytelling as an instructional method enhances the spoken language skills of children with modest mental disorders. In addition, a small proportion of the participants (3.3%) expressed severe disagreement with the assertion that employing storytelling as an instructional method enhances the spoken language skills of children with minor mental disorders, as shown by the study findings.

The study also presented participants with the assertion that using interactive activities within the home environment might augment the utilisation of spoken language by children with modest mental disorders, hence facilitating the development of their communication skills. The study found that a significant proportion of the respondents, namely 14 individuals representing 46.7% of the total sample, expressed a strong agreement with the assertion that employing interactive activities within the home environment might effectively boost the oral language use of children with minor mental disorders. Furthermore, it was found that a significant proportion of the participants, namely 10 individuals representing 33.3% of the total sample, expressed agreement with the aforementioned statement. This suggests that the use of interactive activities within the home environment might potentially contribute to the improvement of oral language proficiency in children with minor mental disorders. Hence, it was found that 24 individuals, accounting for 80% of the participants in the study, expressed

their agreement with the proposition that employing interactive activities within the home environment might effectively boost the oral language utilisation of children with minor mental disorders. However, a portion of the participants (3 out of 10%) in the study expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that employing interactive activities in a home setting can improve the oral language proficiency of children with modest mental disorders. In a similar vein, a subset of 3 respondents, including 10% of the participants in the survey, expressed disagreement with the assertion that employing interactive activities within the home environment to instruct children with mild mental impairments in communication skills leads to an improvement in their utilisation of spoken language.

The participants were also exposed to the assertion that the implementation of early intervention programmes aimed at teaching language skills to children with modest intellectual impairments enhances their oral language proficiency. The survey revealed that 12 individuals, accounting for 40% of the respondents, expressed significant agreement with the notion that implementing early intervention programmes aimed at teaching language skills to children with minor mental disorders leads to enhanced oral language proficiency. Likewise, a total of 12 respondents, accounting for 40% of the participants, expressed agreement with the assertion that the implementation of early intervention programmes aimed at teaching language skills to children with minor mental disorders has a positive impact on their oral language proficiency. Hence, it can be inferred that 24 individuals, constituting 80% of the participants in the study, expressed their agreement with the proposition that the implementation of early intervention programmes aimed at enhancing language abilities in children with minor cognitive impairments leads to an enhancement in their oral language proficiency. It should be further acknowledged that a total of 3 respondents, constituting 10% of the participants in the study, expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that the implementation of early intervention programmes aimed at teaching language skills to children with minor mental disorders leads to

enhancements in their spoken language proficiency. Furthermore, a minority of the participants (3.3%) expressed dissent towards the notion that implementing early intervention programmes aimed at teaching language skills to children with mild mental disorders enhances their oral language proficiency.

The research exposed participants to the proposition that instructing phonology by deconstructing its elements, starting with sounds and progressing to the differentiation of syllables, words, phrases, and comprehension of concepts such as blending, segmenting, manipulating sounds, rhyme, and alliteration, promotes the development of oral language skills in children with mild intellectual disabilities. A significant proportion, specifically 13 individuals (equivalent to 43.3% of the total respondents), expressed strong agreement with the assertion that instructing phonology by deconstructing its constituent elements, commencing with sounds and progressing to the differentiation of syllables, words, phrases, and comprehension of various aspects including blending, segmenting, manipulating sounds, rhyme, and alliteration, promotes the development of oral language skills in children with mild mental disabilities. Furthermore, it was found that 12 out of the total number of respondents, accounting for 40% of the sample, expressed agreement with the proposition that the pedagogical approach of deconstructing phonology into its constituent parts, starting from individual sounds and progressing to the differentiation of syllables, words, phrases, and comprehension of various aspects such as blending, segmenting, manipulating sounds, rhyme, and alliteration, effectively promotes the development of oral language skills in children with mild mental disabilities. As a result, a majority of the participants (83.3%) in the research study expressed their agreement with the assertion that instructing phonology by deconstructing its elements, starting with individual sounds and progressing to the differentiation of syllables, words, phrases, and comprehension of techniques such as blending, segmenting, manipulating

sounds, rhyme, and alliteration, promotes the development of oral language skills in children with mild intellectual disabilities.

Additionally, it should be noted that a total of 2 respondents, accounting for 6.7% of the participants in the study, expressed uncertainty regarding the proposition that instructing phonology by deconstructing its elements, starting from individual sounds and progressing to the differentiation of syllables, words, phrases, and comprehension of various aspects such as blending, segmenting, manipulating sounds, rhyme, and alliteration, contributes to the development of oral language skills in children with mild mental disabilities. In a similar vein, it was found that 2 out of 100 respondents (6.7%) in the study expressed disagreement with the notion that instructing phonology by deconstructing its elements, starting from individual sounds and progressing to the differentiation of syllables, words, phrases, and comprehension of concepts like blending, segmenting, sound manipulation, rhyme, and alliteration, promotes the development of oral language skills in children with mild mental disabilities. However, a small percentage (3.3%) of the participants in the study expressed strong disagreement with the notion that teaching phonology by deconstructing its elements, starting from individual sounds and progressing to syllables, words, phrases, and incorporating activities such as blending, segmenting, manipulating sounds, rhyme, and alliteration, promotes the development of oral language skills in children with mild mental disabilities. Hence, a total of 3 respondents, constituting 10% of the sample, expressed disagreement with the assertion that instructing phonology by deconstructing its elements, starting from individual sounds and progressing to the differentiation of syllables, words, phrases, and comprehension of concepts like blending, segmenting, sound manipulation, rhyme, and alliteration, promotes the development of oral language skills in children with mild intellectual disabilities.

The present study conducted further examination of participants' perspectives regarding the assertion that semantics constitutes a fundamental component of spoken language, which ought

to be imparted to children with mild cognitive impairments. This was accomplished by exploring the significance of words and phrases, encompassing vocabulary knowledge, and distinguishing between spoken vocabulary, pertaining to informal discourse, and academic vocabulary, pertaining to language used in educational contexts. The study observed that a significant proportion of the participants, specifically 14 individuals (equivalent to 46.7% of the total sample), expressed a strong agreement regarding the importance of semantics in oral language development. These participants emphasized the need to teach semantics to children with mild mental disabilities by focusing on the comprehension and usage of words and phrases. This includes the acquisition of both spoken vocabulary, which pertains to words commonly used in informal conversations, and academic vocabulary, which encompasses words utilised in academic discourse. Furthermore, a total of 11 respondents, accounting for 36.7% of the sample, expressed agreement with the assertion that semantics holds a crucial role in oral language development. They advocated for the inclusion of semantics instruction in the education of children with mild mental disabilities. This instruction would involve exploring the meanings of words and phrases, encompassing both spoken vocabulary utilised in informal conversations and academic vocabulary specific to academic discourse. In aggregate, a total of 25 respondents, accounting for 83.3% of the participants in the study, expressed their endorsement of the assertion that semantics holds a crucial position within oral language. They further advocated for its inclusion in the educational curriculum for children with mild mental disabilities. This inclusion would involve a focus on comprehending the significance of words and phrases, encompassing both vocabulary knowledge, which encompasses words utilised in informal conversations, and academic vocabulary, which pertains to words employed in academic discourse.

Nevertheless, a small proportion (2 out of 6.7%) of the participants in the research expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that semantics plays a crucial role in spoken language

instruction for children with mild cognitive impairments. This instruction involves teaching the meaning of words and phrases, encompassing both informal conversational vocabulary and academic vocabulary used in educational settings. Additionally, a total of 2 respondents, accounting for 6.7% of the participants in the study, expressed disagreement with the notion that semantics holds a crucial role in oral language development for children with mild mental disabilities. Specifically, these respondents contested the idea that teaching semantics should involve an exploration of the meaning of words and phrases, encompassing both informal conversational vocabulary and academic vocabulary utilised in educational settings. An additional 1 (3.3%) of the participants included in the research expressed strong disagreement with the assertion that semantics is a fundamental component of spoken language that should be instructed to children with mild intellectual disabilities. This instruction would involve exploring the meanings of words and phrases, including vocabulary knowledge, which can be divided into two categories: spoken vocabulary, encompassing words used in informal conversations, and academic vocabulary, referring to words used in academic discourse.

The participants were also exposed to the assertion that children with minor cognitive impairments should get instruction in syntax to enhance their spoken language abilities, mostly through an emphasis on grammar that highlights the principles governing the formation of sentences and paragraphs. The study observed that a significant proportion, specifically 14 individuals (46.7% of the total respondents), expressed strong agreement with the notion that children with mild mental disabilities should receive instruction in syntax. This instruction aims to enhance their oral language abilities by primarily emphasising grammar, specifically the principles governing the arrangement of words and phrases to form coherent sentences and paragraphs. Furthermore, it was found that 12 individuals, representing 40% of the participants in the study, expressed agreement with the notion that children with mild mental disabilities should receive instruction in syntax as a means of enhancing their oral language abilities. This

instruction would primarily emphasise grammar, specifically highlighting the principles governing the arrangement of words and phrases to form coherent sentences and paragraphs. In aggregate, a total of 26 respondents (86.7%) participating in the study expressed their endorsement of the proposition that children with mild mental disabilities should receive instruction in syntax as a means of enhancing their oral language proficiency. This instruction would primarily emphasise the study of grammar, specifically highlighting the principles governing the arrangement of words and phrases into coherent sentences and paragraphs.

However, a small proportion of the participants (3.3%) in the research expressed uncertainty regarding the proposition that children with mild mental disabilities should receive instruction in syntax as a means of enhancing their oral language abilities. This instruction would primarily involve emphasising grammar and highlighting the principles governing the arrangement of words and phrases to form coherent sentences and paragraphs. However, a small proportion (2 out of 6.7%) of the participants in the research expressed disagreement with the notion that children with mild cognitive impairments should receive instruction in syntax as a means of enhancing their oral language abilities. This instruction would primarily involve emphasising grammar and highlighting the principles that govern the formation of sentences and paragraphs. Finally, a small proportion of the participants (3.3%) expressed strong disagreement with the assertion that children with mild cognitive impairments should receive instruction in syntax as a means of enhancing their oral language abilities. This instruction would primarily involve emphasising grammar and elucidating the principles governing the combination of words and phrases to form coherent sentences and paragraphs.

The study also presented participants with the assertion that the application of pragmatics, as a social aspect of language, can enhance the oral language skills of children with mild mental disabilities. This can be achieved by emphasising the importance of adhering to a range of social norms related to effective communication, such as taking turns during conversations,

engaging in group interactions, respecting personal boundaries, and employing appropriate behaviour when communicating with different individuals or in diverse contexts. The study found that a significant proportion of the respondents, specifically 14 individuals (46.7%), expressed strong agreement with the notion that pragmatics, as a social aspect of language, can effectively enhance the oral language skills of children with mild mental disabilities. This improvement can be achieved by emphasising the understanding and application of diverse social norms related to communication, such as turn-taking in conversations, group interactions, personal space maintenance, and appropriate behaviour with different communication partners and in various contexts. Additionally, it was found that 13 respondents, accounting for 43.3% of the total sample, expressed agreement with the notion that pragmatics, as a social aspect of language, can play a crucial role in enhancing the oral language skills of children with mild mental disabilities. This can be achieved by emphasising the importance of adhering to various social norms related to effective communication, such as turn-taking in conversations, engaging in group interactions, respecting personal boundaries, and exhibiting appropriate behaviour with different communication partners and in diverse contexts. In aggregate, a total of 27 respondents, constituting 90% of the participants in the study, expressed their agreement with the assertion that pragmatics, as a social application of language, can be utilised to enhance the oral language proficiency of children with mild mental disabilities. This can be achieved by emphasising a range of social norms pertaining to effective communication, such as engaging in turn-taking during conversations, interacting within group settings, respecting personal boundaries, and employing appropriate behaviour when communicating with different individuals or in diverse contexts.

Moreover, a small proportion (3.3%) of the participants in the research exhibited uncertainty regarding the assertion that pragmatics, as a social aspect of language, can enhance the oral language proficiency of children with mild mental disabilities. This uncertainty stems from a

lack of consensus on the diverse social norms that govern effective communication, such as turn-taking in conversations, group interactions, personal space maintenance, and appropriate behaviour with different communication partners or in varying contexts. In a similar vein, a small proportion of the participants in the study, specifically 1 (3.3%) and 1 (3.3%) respectively, expressed disagreement and strong disagreement with the notion that pragmatics, as a social application of language, can enhance the oral language skills of children with mild mental disabilities. This approach involves emphasising a range of social norms related to effective communication, such as taking turns during conversations, engaging in group interactions, respecting personal boundaries, and employing appropriate behaviour with different communication partners or in various contexts.

The present study conducted a deeper examination of participants' perspectives regarding the proposition that while instructing children with moderate intellectual impairments in oral language skills, it is beneficial to incorporate morphological awareness with other facets of language, specifically by highlighting elements such as morphemes and word formations. It was observed that a total of 12 respondents, constituting 40% of the sample, expressed significant agreement with the proposition that while instructing children with moderate mental impairments on the use of spoken language, it is essential to incorporate morphological awareness with other components of language. This integration may be achieved by highlighting elements such as morphemes and word formations. In a similar vein, it was found that 12 individuals, accounting for 40% of the participants in the study, expressed agreement with the notion that when instructing children with mild mental disabilities on the use of oral language, it is beneficial to incorporate morphological awareness alongside other components of language. This integration involves highlighting elements such as morphemes and the formation of words. Hence, it can be inferred from the data that 24 individuals, accounting for 80% of the participants in the study, expressed agreement with the proposition that when

instructing children with mild mental disabilities in the use of oral language, it is beneficial to incorporate morphological awareness alongside other facets of language acquisition. This integration involves highlighting elements such as morphemes and the formation of words.

However, 3 out of 10% of the participants in the study expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that when instructing children with mild mental disabilities on the use of oral language, it is beneficial to incorporate morphological awareness alongside other components of language, specifically by highlighting elements such as morphemes and word formations. Furthermore, a minority of the participants (2 out of 6.7%) expressed disagreement with the notion that when instructing children with mild mental disabilities on the use of oral language, it is important to incorporate morphological awareness alongside other language components, such as identifying morphemes and word formations. In conclusion, a small proportion of the participants (3.3%) expressed strong disagreement with the notion that when instructing children with mild mental disabilities in the use of oral language, it is essential to incorporate morphological awareness alongside other linguistic components, specifically by highlighting elements such as morphemes and word formations.

4.5 Influence of Language Instructors and Caregivers on Language Production and Use among Children with Mental Disabilities in Vihiga County

The final aim of this study was on examining the impact of language instructors and care givers on language production and utilisation among children with mental disorders in Vihiga County. The participants were exposed to a series of statements in order to gather data on the specified aim, as depicted in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Influence of Language Instructors and Caregivers on Language Production and Use among Children with Mental Disabilities in Vihiga County

| C | Statement | SA | A | U | D | SD | Total |
|----|---|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| 1. | Language instructors and caregivers can positively or negatively influence language production and use among children with mental disabilities. | 14(46.7%) | 10(33.3%) | 3(10%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |
| 2. | The caregivers' language use has a direct influence on language production and use among children with mental disabilities. | 12(40%) | 13(43.3%) | 2(6.7%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| <p>3. The training and experience of the language instructor affects the production and use of language by children with mental disabilities.</p> | 13(43.3%) | 12(40%) | 2(6.7%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |
| <p>4. Both the quantity and quality of what caregivers say matter for the mentally disabled children's learning of language particularly on its production and use.</p> | 12(40%) | 12(40%) | 3(10%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| 5. | Language | 15(50%) | 13(43.3%) | 1(3.3%) | 1(3.3%) | 0(0.0%) | 30(100%) |
| | instructors and caregivers can ask children with mental disabilities questions starting with words like who, what, when, where and why to encourage them to provide more complex response. | | | | | | |
| 6. | Sensitive | 14(46.7%) | 12(40%) | 1(3.3%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |
| | caregivers notice vocalizations, cries, facial expressions and other clues signaling that children need | | | | | | |

help, comfort or
reassurance.

7. Language 13(43.3%) 12(40%) 2(6.7%) 2(6.7%) 1(3.3%) 30(100%)

instructors and
caregivers play
complementary
roles in
boosting
language
production and
use among
children with
mental
disabilities.

8. Parents can play 12(40%) 13(43.3%) 2(6.7%) 2(6.7%) 1(3.3%) 30(100%)

both language
instructor and
caregiver roles
in helping their
children with
mental
disabilities to
improve on
language

production and

use.

Source: Field Data (2022)

The participants were presented with the assertion that language educators and care givers have the capacity to have both positive and negative impacts on the language production and use of children with mental impairments. The study revealed that a significant proportion of the participants, namely 14 individuals or 46.7% of the total responses, expressed a strong consensus about the influential role of language instructors and care givers in shaping the language production and use of children with mental problems. Furthermore, it was found that a significant proportion of the participants, namely 10 individuals representing 33.3% of the total sample, expressed agreement with the assertion that language instructors and care givers had the ability to have both positive and negative influences on the language production and use of children with mental disorders. In aggregate, a total of 24 respondents, accounting for 80% of the participants in the survey, expressed their agreement with the assertion that language instructors and care givers had the capacity to have both positive and negative impacts on the language production and utilisation of children with mental impairments.

However, 3 out of 10% of the participants in the survey expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that language instructors and care givers have the ability to have both good and negative influences on the language production and usage of children with mental disorders. However, a small proportion (2 out of 6.7%) of the participants in the research expressed their disagreement with the assertion that language educators and care givers have the ability to impact the language production and use of children with mental disorders, either positively or adversely. Furthermore, a small proportion of the participants (1, accounting for 3.3% of the total) expressed significant disagreement about the assertion that language instructors and care

givers had the ability to have either positive or negative effect on the language production and use of children with mental disorders.

The study also aimed to gather the perspectives of participants on the assertion that the language utilised by care givers directly impacts the language development and usage of children with mental disorders. The findings of the survey indicated that a significant proportion, namely 13 individuals (43.3% of the total respondents), expressed agreement with the assertion that the language utilised by care givers directly impacts the language creation and usage of children with mental disorders. Furthermore, a significant proportion of the participants (12 out of the total sample) expressed high agreement with the assertion that the linguistic patterns employed by care givers exert a direct impact on the language development and utilisation of children with mental disorders.

Nevertheless, a small proportion of the participants (2 out of 6.7%) expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that the linguistic patterns employed by care givers had a direct impact on the language acquisition and utilisation of children with mental disorders. In addition, a total of 2 respondents, accounting for 6.7% of the sample, expressed disagreement with the notion that the language utilised by care givers directly impacts the language creation and usage of children with mental disorders. Furthermore, it was found that a minority of the participants, namely 1 (3.3%), expressed significant disagreement with the assertion that the language utilised by care givers had a direct impact on the language creation and usage of children with mental disorders.

It was observed that a significant proportion of the participants (43.3%) in the survey expressed strong agreement with the assertion that the language instructor's training and experience had a substantial impact on the language production and use of children with mental disorders. Furthermore, it was found that 12 individuals, accounting for 40% of the participants in the survey, expressed agreement with the assertion that the language instructor's expertise and experience had an impact on the language production and utilisation of children with mental

disorders. In aggregate, a total of 25 respondents, including 83.3% of the participants in the survey, expressed their endorsement of the proposition that the proficiency and expertise of the language teacher exert an influence on the linguistic output and utilisation of children with cognitive impairments.

However, a small proportion of the respondents (2, representing 6.7% of the total sample) expressed uncertainty regarding the impact of the language instructor's training and experience on the language production and usage of children with mental disabilities. Additionally, an equal number of respondents (2, also representing 6.7% of the total sample) disagreed with the notion that the training and experience of the language instructor have an effect on the language production and usage of children with mental disabilities. In addition, a minority of the participants (specifically, 1 respondent, constituting 3.3% of the sample) expressed significant disagreement with the assertion that the proficiency and expertise of the language teacher had an impact on the linguistic abilities and utilisation of language among children with cognitive impairments.

Participants were also exposed to the assertion that the number and quality of verbal interactions from care givers have a significant role in the language acquisition, specifically in terms of production and usage, of children with mental disabilities. It was observed that 12 individuals, accounting for 40% of the participants in the survey, expressed significant agreement with the assertion that the linguistic development of mentally challenged children, namely in terms of language production and usage, is influenced by both the number and quality of verbal interactions with their care givers. In a similar vein, it was found that 12 individuals, accounting for 40% of the participants in the survey, expressed agreement with the assertion that the verbal interactions of care givers play a significant role in the language acquisition process of children with mental disabilities, namely in terms of language production and usage. In aggregate, a total of 24 respondents, representing 80% of the participants in the study, expressed their support for the assertion that the number and quality of verbal

interactions by care givers significantly impact the language acquisition, specifically in terms of production and usage, of children with mental disabilities.

However, 3 out of 10% of the participants in the survey expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that the verbal interactions of care givers have an impact on the language acquisition, namely in terms of production and usage, of children with mental disabilities. However, a small proportion (6.7%) of the participants in the research expressed their disagreement with the assertion that the content and delivery of care givers' speech are significant factors in the language acquisition process of children with mental disabilities, specifically in terms of language production and usage.

The participants were furthermore exposed to the assertion that educators and care givers have the ability to prompt youngsters with cognitive impairments by employing interrogative phrases such as who, what, when, where, and why, therefore fostering the generation of more intricate responses. Fifty percent (n=15) of the participants in the study expressed a strong agreement with the assertion that language instructors and care givers have the ability to prompt children with mental disorders to deliver more intricate responses by posing inquiries commencing with interrogative terms such as who, what, when, where, and why. Furthermore, it was found that a significant proportion of the participants, namely 13 individuals representing 43.3% of the total respondents, expressed agreement with the notion that language instructors and care givers had the ability to elicit more intricate responses from youngsters with mental disorders by employing interrogative prompts commencing with terms such as who, what, when, where, and why. In aggregate, a total of 28 respondents, including 93.3% of the participants in the survey, expressed their support for the assertion that language instructors and care givers have the ability to elicit more intricate responses from children with mental disorders by employing interrogative prompts commencing with terms such as who, what, when, where, and why.

However, a small proportion of the participants in the research (3.3%) expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that language instructors and care givers have the ability to prompt children with mental disorders to generate more intricate responses by posing inquiries commencing with interrogative terms such as who, what, when, where, and why. Likewise, a minority of participants (3.3%) expressed disagreement with the notion that language instructors and care givers have the ability to prompt children with mental disorders to deliver more intricate responses by posing inquiries beginning with interrogative vocabulary such as who, what, when, where, and why.

The participants were also exposed to the assertion that perceptive care givers are able to discern vocalisations, cries, facial expressions, and other indicators that indicate youngsters want assistance, solace, or reassurance. The study revealed that a significant proportion of the participants, namely 14 individuals accounting for 46.7% of the total responses, expressed a strong level of agreement with the assertion that perceptive care givers possess the ability to discern various indicators such as vocalisations, cries, facial expressions, and other cues that signify a child's want for assistance, solace, or reassurance. Furthermore, it was found that 12 individuals, accounting for 40% of the participants in the survey, expressed agreement with the assertion that perceptive care givers had the ability to discern vocalisations, cries, facial expressions, and other indicators that indicate a child's want for assistance, solace, or reassurance. In aggregate, a total of 26 respondents, accounting for 86.7% of the participants in the survey, expressed their agreement with the assertion that care givers who possess a heightened sensitivity are able to discern vocalisations, cries, facial expressions, and other indicators that signify a child's want for assistance, solace, or reassurance.

However, a small percentage (3.3%) of the participants in the survey expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that perceptive care givers are able to discern vocalisations, cries, facial expressions, and other indicators that indicate a child's need for assistance, solace, or reassurance. Moreover, a total of 2 respondents, accounting for 6.7% of the participants in the

survey, expressed disagreement with the assertion that perceptive care givers are able to discern vocalisations, cries, facial expressions, and other indicators that indicate a child's need for assistance, solace, or reassurance. Finally, a small proportion of the participants (3.3%) expressed severe disagreement with the assertion that perceptive care givers are able to discern vocalisations, cries, facial expressions, and other indicators that indicate a child's need for assistance, solace, or reassurance.

The participants were also presented with the assertion that language instructors and care givers have mutually supportive responsibilities in enhancing language production and use in children with mental impairments. A significant proportion, namely 13 individuals (equivalent to 43.3% of the total responses), expressed high agreement with the assertion that language instructors and care givers have mutually reinforcing roles in enhancing language production and use in children with mental disorders. Furthermore, it was found that 12 individuals, accounting for 40% of the participants in the study, expressed agreement with the assertion that language instructors and care givers have mutually supportive functions in enhancing language production and utilisation in children with mental disorders. In aggregate, a total of 25 respondents, accounting for 83.3% of the participants in the survey, expressed their approval for the assertion that language instructors and care givers have complementary responsibilities in enhancing language production and utilisation in children with mental disorders.

Nevertheless, a small proportion of the participants (2 individuals, accounting for 6.7% of the total sample) expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that language instructors and care givers have mutually reinforcing roles in enhancing language production and use in children with mental disorders. Likewise, a proportion of 2(6.7%) of the participants included in the survey expressed dissent with the notion that language instructors and care givers have mutually reinforcing responsibilities in enhancing language production and use among children with mental disorders. Finally, a small proportion of the participants (3.3%) expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that language instructors and care givers have mutually

reinforcing roles in enhancing language production and use in children with mental impairments.

Finally, participants were presented with the assertion that parents have the capacity to fulfil the dual roles of language teacher and carer in facilitating language development and utilisation among their children with mental disorders. A significant proportion of the participants, specifically 13 individuals or 43.3% of the total sample, expressed agreement with the assertion that parents had the capacity to assume the dual responsibilities of language instruction and caregiving in order to facilitate language development and utilisation among their children with mental impairments. Furthermore, it was found that 12 individuals, accounting for 40% of the participants, expressed significant agreement with the assertion that parents had the ability to fulfil the dual roles of language teacher and carer in facilitating language development and utilisation among their children with mental disorders. In aggregate, a total of 23 respondents, representing 83.3% of the participants in the study, expressed their agreement with the assertion that parents had the capacity to assume the dual roles of language instructor and carer in facilitating language development and utilisation among their children with mental disorders. Nevertheless, a small proportion of the participants (2 individuals, accounting for 6.7% of the total sample) expressed uncertainty regarding the assertion that parents had the capacity to fulfil the dual roles of language instructor and carer in facilitating language development and utilisation among their children with mental disorders. In a similar vein, it was found that a proportion of 2 (6.7%) of the participants in the study expressed disagreement with the notion that parents are capable of assuming the dual roles of language instructor and carer in facilitating language development and usage among their children with mental disorders. Furthermore, a subset of 1 (3.3%) participants strongly disagreed with this assertion.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a concise overview, a comprehensive conclusion, and practical recommendations derived from the research findings.

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 Communicative Adjustment Activities Used To Enhance Speech Production and Use among Children with Mental Disabilities in Vihiga County

The research revealed that a significant majority of the participants (70%) in the study acknowledged employing communicative adjustment activities in their educational settings to facilitate speech production and utilisation among children with modest mental disorders. This finding suggests that engaging in communicative adjustment activities can improve speech production and usage in school-aged children with modest mental impairments. Furthermore, a significant majority of the participants (80%) who were surveyed in the study, namely those who were serving as instructors, expressed their agreement with the assertion that children with minor mental disorders exhibit improved speech production and utilisation when exposed to communicative adjustment exercises during language instruction.

The study observed that 70% of the participants, who were instructors, expressed agreement with the assertion that teachers who possess expertise in communicative adjustment activities are beneficial in assisting learners with minor mental disorders in generating speech and utilising it proficiently. The study revealed that 80% of the participants, who were language teachers, expressed their agreement with the assertion that there exists a distinction in language

proficiency between learners with minor mental disorders who engage in communicative adjustment activities and those who do not.

However, a significant majority of the participants (80%) expressed their agreement with the assertion that when teachers engage in empathic listening towards children with minor mental disorders, it enables the children to feel acknowledged, hence promoting their involvement in language-related tasks and facilitating the production of intelligible speech. It was observed that a majority of the participants (70%) in the study expressed support for the notion that incorporating gestures and non-verbal communication can have a positive impact on the speech production abilities of children with mild intellectual disabilities. This is attributed to the belief that such strategies facilitate comprehension and engagement, leading to gradual improvements in their overall competency and performance. Nonverbal cues, such as pointing, nodding, and maintaining concentrated eye contact, have the potential to facilitate comprehension of communications among children with impairments. Parents, family members, and educators may find it beneficial to employ exaggerated and prolonged gestures, particularly during the initial stages, in order to enhance comprehension.

The study revealed that 60% of the participants, who were instructors, expressed their support for the notion that engaging learners with minor mental disorders in reading activities and conversing with them might effectively boost their language production abilities and performance. The initial stage in acquiring linguistic proficiency involves the act of listening. Additionally, it was found that 70% of the participants in the study, who were instructors, expressed their support for the notion that consistent explanation plays a crucial role in improving the speech production and usage of learners with modest mental disorders. Moreover, a significant majority of the participants (80%) in the research study expressed their agreement with the proposition that employing visual aids such as pictures, flash cards, and connecting static images with words might effectively improve language proficiency and

aptitude in children with minor cognitive impairments. The results of the survey indicate that a significant majority (90%) of the instructors expressed support for the notion that acknowledging, valuing, and understanding the unique characteristics and constraints of children with minor mental disorders might positively impact their language proficiency within a communicative context.

5.2.2 Relationship between Communication Adjustment Skills and Oral Language Use in Children Mental Disabilities in Vihiga County

The findings of the study revealed that a majority of the participants, namely 24 out of the total sample size, which accounts for 80% of the respondents, consisted of language instructors and care givers. These individuals expressed their agreement with the assertion that the development of communication adjustment skills has significant importance in improving the utilisation of spoken language among children who have minor mental disorders in Vihiga County. Additionally, a significant majority of the participants (83.3%) in the research study expressed their agreement with the assertion that incorporating enjoyable activities into the educational process enhances the utilisation of spoken language skills among children with minor mental disorders. This aligns with the perspective of Sunish (2013), who asserts that engaging in role-play can facilitate the development of speech and non-verbal communication skills in children with minor intellectual impairments. This approach is often regarded as a very efficacious tool for instructing children with minor intellectual impairments in oral language acquisition. It is worth mentioning that role plays are not extensively employed within the context of inclusive education, particularly in the instruction of children with modest cognitive impairments. The utilisation of games has significant importance in facilitating the development of spoken language skills among children with modest mental disorders.

The findings of the study revealed that a significant majority of the participants, namely 24 individuals representing 80% of the total responses, expressed their support for the assertion

that employing storytelling as an instructional method enhances the spoken language skills of children with minor mental disorders. Furthermore, it was found that a significant majority of the participants (80%) in the study expressed their agreement with the assertion that employing interactive activities within the home environment may effectively boost the utilisation of spoken language among children with minor mental disorders, thereby promoting their communication skills. The study revealed that a majority of the respondents (80%) who participated in the research expressed their support for the assertion that implementing early intervention programmes aimed at teaching language skills to children with minor mental disorders enhances their spoken language proficiency. It should be further acknowledged that a total of 3 respondents, constituting 10% of the participants in the study, expressed indecisiveness about the assertion that the implementation of early intervention programmes aimed at teaching language skills to children with minor mental disorders leads to an enhancement in their spoken language proficiency.

However, a significant majority of the participants (83.3%) in the research study expressed their agreement with the proposition that instructing phonology by deconstructing its elements, starting from individual sounds and progressing to the differentiation of syllables, words, phrases, and comprehension of various aspects such as blending, segmenting, manipulating sounds, rhyme, and alliteration, effectively promotes the development of oral language skills in children with mild intellectual disabilities. Moreover, a significant majority of the participants (83.3%) in the research study expressed their agreement with the assertion that semantics plays a crucial role in oral language development. They emphasised the importance of teaching semantics to children with mild mental disabilities, specifically by focusing on the comprehension and interpretation of words and phrases. This instruction should encompass two key components: spoken vocabulary, which encompasses words used in informal conversations, and academic vocabulary, which pertains to words used in academic discourse.

The research findings indicate that a significant majority of the participants (86.7%) expressed their endorsement of the proposition that children with mild mental disabilities should receive instruction in syntax as a means to enhance their oral language proficiency. This instruction would primarily concentrate on grammar, specifically emphasising the principles governing the organization of words and phrases into coherent sentences and paragraphs. Moreover, a significant majority of the participants (90%) in the research study expressed their agreement with the proposition that pragmatics, as a form of language use in social contexts, can effectively enhance the oral language skills of children with mild mental disabilities. This improvement can be achieved by emphasizing the understanding and application of diverse social norms related to active engagement in communication, such as taking turns during conversations, interacting within groups, respecting personal boundaries, and employing appropriate behaviour when communicating with different individuals or in varying situations. In conclusion, it was found that 24 respondents, accounting for 80% of the participants in the survey, expressed their agreement with the assertion that while instructing children with minor mental disorders in the use of spoken language, it is beneficial to incorporate morphological awareness with other facets of language. This integration may be achieved by highlighting various elements such as morphemes and word formations.

5.2.3 Influence of Language Instructors and Caregivers on Language Production and Use among Children with Mental Disabilities in Vihiga County

The study observed that a majority of the respondents (80%) in the survey expressed agreement with the assertion that language instructors and care givers have the capacity to have both positive and negative influences on the language production and usage of children with mental disorders. Furthermore, a significant majority of the participants (83.3%) in the survey expressed their agreement with the assertion that the proficiency and expertise of the language

teacher play a crucial role in influencing the linguistic talents and utilisation of language among children with cognitive impairments.

The study revealed that 80% of the participants surveyed expressed their agreement with the assertion that the linguistic development of mentally challenged children, namely in terms of language production and usage, is influenced by both the number and quality of verbal interactions provided by care givers. Furthermore, a significant majority of the participants (93.3%) in the study expressed their agreement with the proposition that language instructors and care givers have the ability to elicit more intricate responses from children with mental disorders by employing interrogative prompts commencing with terms such as who, what, when, where, and why.

In addition, a significant majority of the participants in the study, namely 26 individuals representing 86.7% of the total responses, expressed their agreement with the assertion that care givers who possess a heightened sensitivity are able to discern and respond to various forms of communication from children, such as vocalizations, cries, facial expressions, and other indicators that signify their need for assistance, comfort, or reassurance. Furthermore, it was found that a significant majority of the participants, namely 25 individuals representing 83.3% of the total responses, expressed their agreement with the assertion that language instructors and care givers have mutually reinforcing roles in enhancing language production and utilisation in children with mental disorders. In conclusion, a significant majority of the participants in the study, specifically 23 individuals representing 83.3% of the sample, expressed their agreement with the assertion that parents possess the capacity to fulfil the dual roles of language instructors and care givers in facilitating language development and utilization among their children with mental disorders.

5.3 Conclusion

The research investigation revealed that engaging in communicative adjustment activities had a positive impact on the speech production and usage abilities of children with modest mental disorders in Vihiga County. This necessitates language educators to possess a comprehensive understanding of several communicative adjustment tasks. The teachers' comprehension of the adjustment activities and their effective implementation consistently contributes to the improvement of speech production and utilisation in mentally challenged youngsters.

The study revealed a significant correlation between communicative adjustment skills and oral language usage among children with mental disorders in Vihiga County. According to a study conducted by Cregan in 1998, as referenced in the work of Shiel et al. in 2012, spoken language holds the distinction of being the primary, paramount, and commonly employed organized mode of communication. The aforementioned media serves as the principal means by which each individual kid is empowered to organize, assess, articulate, and regulate their own encounters. The utilization of enjoyable activities as an instructional approach has been seen to enhance the utilization of spoken language among children with modest mental disorders. Utilizing narrative techniques as an instructional tool for children exhibiting modest mental disorders enhances their spoken language proficiency. Research has revealed that the implementation of interactive activities within the home environment can effectively facilitate the development of communication skills in children with modest mental disorders, leading to notable improvements in their oral language use. Research has indicated that the implementation of early intervention programmes aimed at enhancing language skills in children with minor mental disorders has been associated with notable improvements in their oral language proficiency.

The study further observed that language instructors and care givers exert a significant impact on the language production and use of children with mental disorders in Vihiga County. The

impact of language instructors and care givers on the language production and usage of children with mental disorders can be either beneficial or detrimental. The linguistic patterns employed by care givers exert a direct impact on the language creation and utilisation of children with mental disorders. The proficiency and expertise of the language teacher have an impact on the acquisition and use of language among children with cognitive impairments. The learning of language, specifically in terms of its production and use, is influenced by both the number and quality of verbal interactions provided by care givers, particularly in the case of mentally handicapped children. In order to elicit more elaborate responses from children with mental disorders, language instructors and care givers may employ questioning techniques that start with interrogative phrases such as who, what, when, where, and why. Language instructors and care givers have distinct yet complementary responsibilities in enhancing language production and use in children with mental impairments.

5.4 Recommendations

The study proposes the following suggestions:

There is a necessity for language teachers and care givers to undergo training in Communicative Adjustment Activities in addition there is a need for the creation of additional educational resources that incorporate communication adjustment skills and spoken language as integral components to support children with cognitive disabilities also regular in-service trainings should be implemented for instructors and care givers in order to augment language production and utilisation among youngsters with mental impairments.

5.5 Suggestion for further Studies

There is a necessity for doing a study on the linguistic performance and competency of children with mental disabilities. This is because such individuals need to be assisted to develop or naturally or possible in spite of their disabilities.

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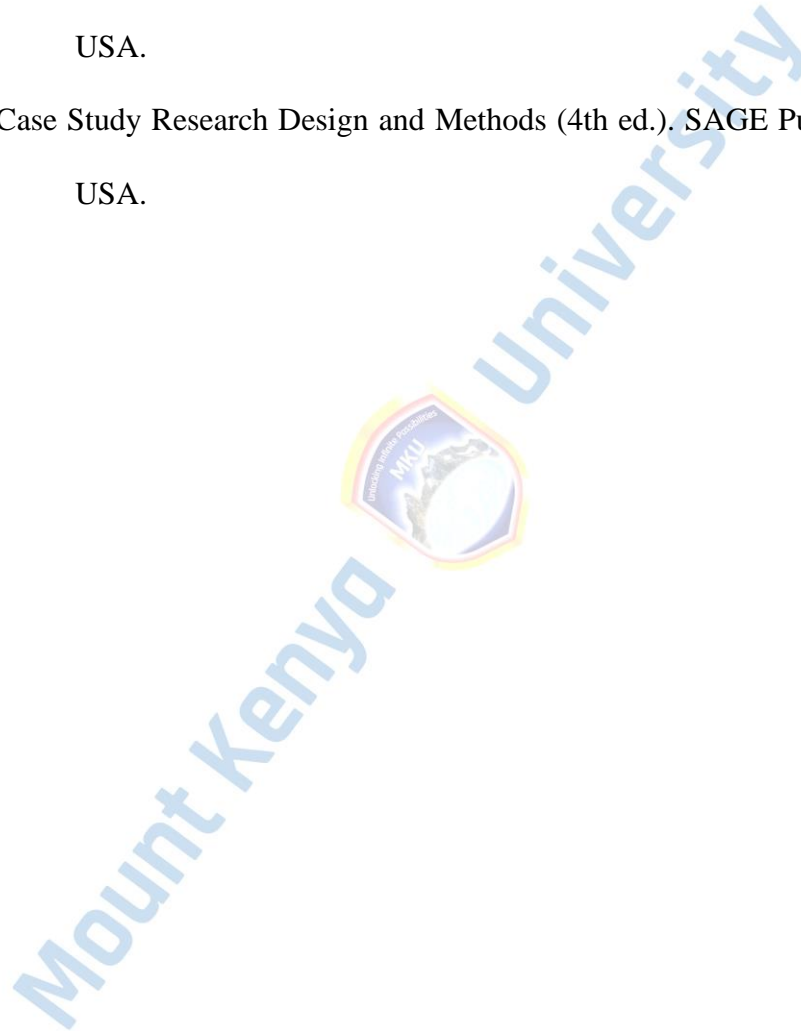
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: CONSENT FORM

I am Dembeko Roselyne Indangasi Connie a master student at Mount Kenya University. Am conducting a study on “Assessment of Communication Adjustment in Oral Language Production and Use in Social Contexts Among Children with Mental Disabilities Special Units in Vihiga County”. I would like to cordially tell you that this study serves as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for my master's degree programme. I cordially invite you to partake in this study at your convenience, and kindly request your agreement to join. Confidentiality will be upheld by the utilisation of code numbers in lieu of personal names, and any collected information shall remain undisclosed to any party. Participation in this study is optional. The initiative does not provide any hazards to the participants.

Prior to your participation in this study, I respectfully require that you sign the declaration provided below.

I have thoroughly reviewed the objectives of this research and thus express my consent/disapproval to partake in it.

Respondent (coded) Sign.....

Date.....

Principal investigator

Name: Dembeko Roselyne Indangasi

Sign.....

In case of any complains or further clarification, kindly contact the;

The Chairman

Mount Kenya University,

Ethics Review committee (MKU-ERC)

P.O Box 342-0100

THIKA

APPENDIX: III :INSTRUCTORS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Communicative Adjustment Activities Used to Enhance Speech Production and Use among Children with Mental Disabilities in Vihiga County

As a language instructor working with mentally challenged children, please provide your opinion or rating on each of the following statements assessed on a likert scale of one to five:SA=strongly agree (5), A=Agree (A), U=Undecided (3), D=Disagree (2) and SA=strongly Disagree (1).

| S/no. | Statement | SA | A | U | D | SD | Total |
|-------|---|----|---|---|---|----|-------|
| 11. | I use communicative adjustment activities in my class to enhance speech production and use among children with mild mental disabilities in this school. | | | | | | |
| 12. | Children with mild mental disabilities enhance their production of speech and use whenever communicative adjustment activities are employed in | | | | | | |

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| | the teaching of language. | | | | | | |
| 13. | Teachers who are knowledgeable in communicative adjustment activities help learners with mild mental disabilities to produce speech and use it effectively. | | | | | | |
| 14. | There is a difference in language performance between learners with mild mental disabilities who are exposed to communicative adjustment activities and those who are not. | | | | | | |
| 15. | Empathetic listening of the | | | | | | |

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| | <p>teacher to children with mild mental disabilities allows them to feel heard enhancing their participation and undertaking language activities to produce coherent speech.</p> | | | | | | |
| 16. | <p>Use of gestures and non-verbal communication can enhance speech production of mild mentally disabled children since they will connect them to what is being said and thereby improving their competency and</p> | | | | | | |

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| | performance gradually | | | | | | |
| 17. | Reading for and talking to learners with mild mental disabilities enhance their language production abilities and performance | | | | | | |
| 18. | Provision of constant explanation is key in enhancing speech production and use by learners with mild mental disabilities. | | | | | | |
| 19. | Use of pictures, flash cards and associating still photos with words will enhance language performance and | | | | | | |

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| | competence in children with mild mental disabilities. | | | | | | |
| 20. | Realizing, respecting and appreciating the differences and limitations of children with mild mental disabilities will enhance their use of language in a communication set up. | | | | | | |

APPENDIX IV:QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INSTRUCTORS/CAREGIVERS


SECTIONA: *Relationship between Communication Adjustment Skills and Oral Language*

Use in Children Mental Disabilities in Vihiga County

As a language instructor/caregiver working with mentally challenged children, please provide your opinion or rating on each of the following statements using a likert scale ranging from one to five:SA=strongly agree (5), A=Agree (A), U=Undecided (3), D=Disagree (2) and SA=strongly Disagree (1).

| S/no. | Statement | SA | A | U | D | SD | Total |
|-------|--|----|---|---|---|----|-------|
| 11. | Communication adjustment skills play a vital role in enhancing oral language use in children with mild mental disabilities in Vihiga County. | | | | | | |
| 12. | Using fun activities to educate children with mild mental | | | | | | |

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| | <p>disabilities</p> <p>boost their oral language use.</p> | | | | | | |
| 13. | <p>Using storytelling to teach children with mild mental disabilities improves their use of oral language.</p> | | | | | | |
| 14. | <p>Using interactive activities at home to teach communication skills to children with mild mental disabilities enhance their oral language use.</p> | | | | | | |

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| 15. | <p>Applying early intervention programmes to teach language skills to children with mild mental disabilities improves their use of oral language.</p> | | | | | | |
| 16. | <p>Teaching phonology through breaking down its components beginning with sounds to distinction of syllables, words, phrases and understanding of aspects such as blending,</p> | |  | | | | |

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| | <p>segmenting, manipulating sounds, rhyme and alliteration fosters use of oral language in children with mild mental disabilities.</p> | | | | | |
| 17. | <p>Semantics is an integral aspect of oral language which should be taught to children with mild mental disabilities by addressing the meaning of words and phrases including vocabulary knowledge breaking it into</p> | | | | | |

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| | <p>spoken vocabulary encompassing words used in informal conversation and academic vocabulary which refers to words used in academic talk.</p> | | | | | | |
| 18. | <p>Children with mild mental disabilities should be taught syntax to enrich their oral language skills by mainly focusing on grammar pointing out the rules that dictate the ways in which words</p> | | | | | | |

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| | and phrases can be combined into sentences and paragraphs. | | | | | | |
| 19. | Pragmatics as a social use of language should be used in improving the oral language use by children with mild mental disabilities through focusing on variety of social norms regarding how to participate in communication including turn taking during conversation, interacting in | | | | | | |

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| | <p>groups, maintaining personal space and using appropriate behaviour with various communication partners or different contexts.</p> | | | | | | |
| 20. | <p>In teaching use of oral language to children with mild mental disabilities, morphological awareness should be integrated with other aspects of language by pointing out areas such as morphemes and</p> | | | | | | |

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| | words formations. | | | | | | |
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SECTION B: Influence of Language Instructors and Caregivers on Language Production and Use among Children with Mental Disabilities in Vihiga County

| C | Statement | SA | A | U | D | SD | Total |
|----------|---|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|--------------|
| 9. | Language instructors and caregivers can positively or negatively influence language production and use among children with mental disabilities. | | | | | | |
| 10. | The caregivers' language use has a direct influence on | | | | | | |

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| | language production and use among children with mental disabilities. | | | | | | |
| 11. | The training and experience of the language instructor affects the production and use of language by children with mental disabilities. | | | | | | |
| 12. | Both the quantity and quality of what caregivers say matter for the mentally disabled children's | 12(40%) | 12(40%) | 3(10%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |

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| | learning of language particularly on its production and use. | | | | | | |
| 13. | Language instructors and caregivers can ask children with mental disabilities questions starting with words like who, what, when, where and why to encourage them to provide more complex response. | | | | | | |
| 14. | Sensitive caregivers notice vocalizations, | | | | | | |

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| | cries, facial expressions and other clues signaling that children need help, comfort or reassurance. | | | | | | |
| 15. | Language instructors and caregivers play complementary roles in boosting language production and use among children with mental disabilities. | 13(43.3%) | 12(40%) | 2(6.7%) | 2(6.7%) | 1(3.3%) | 30(100%) |
| 16. | Parents can play both language instructor and caregiver roles in helping their | | | | | | |

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| | children with mental disabilities to improve on language production and use. | | | | | | |
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