

**ENVIRONMENTAL ROLE IN LEARNER RETENTION AMONG  
MENTALLY CHALLENGED CHILDREN IN SPECIAL EDUCATION  
CENTRES IN LAIKIPIA EAST DISTRICT, LAIKIPIA COUNTY, KENYA**

**BETH MUTHONI RUKARIA**

**A PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE AWARD  
OF MASTER OF EDUCATION DEGREE IN EDUCATION PLANNING,  
MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF  
MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

**NOVEMBER, 2013**

## ABSTRACT

Learning environment in Special Education Centres for learners who are Mentally Challenged is as important as that for the regular schools. It entails the use of resources, facilities, personnel and appropriate management practices. There is relationship between learning environment and learner retention at all levels as established by various studies. The main purpose of this study was to analyze environmental role in learner retention among mentally challenged children in Special Education Centres in Laikipia East District, Laikipia County, Kenya. The study was premised on Newell's constrict theory based on learning and knowledge. The theory suggests that perceive in terms of individual goals for the task and what the environment affords. The study adopted descriptive survey design, which gave description of the state of affairs as it existed. The design was used to investigate education problems and determine the reports to be made, since once data was collected there was measurement, classification, analysis, comparison and then interpretation. The researcher used simple random sampling in order to select 9 schools from the 11 Special Education Centres in Laikipia East District, Kenya. 9 Head-teachers and 23 teachers who are respondents. Further the researcher applied purposive sampling methods by use of the class register as the sampling frame. The study employed an interview schedule, a questionnaire, and structured observation. For reliability, the researcher piloted the instruments to two schools that were not involved in the actual data collection in order to find the consistence. Qualitative and Quantitative technique were used for data analysis and the results presented by use of charts, graphs and tables. The study found out that physical infrastructure, teaching and learning resources, did not have the desired effect on learner retention. In conclusion Special Education Policy makers, curriculum planners and implementers should have full responsibility in provision of infrastructure, teaching and learning resources and also equipping teachers teaching in Special Education Centres with required skills. The study recommends the need for all stake holders in provision of resources for pre-vocational training. There is need to have a policy that will increase the total financial allocation to the special education sectors by the government in order to have the suitable infrastructure and resources. There is an urgent need to evaluate the level of challenges among the pupils so that appropriate training level for skills can be planned.