



**UNIVERSITY of  
RWANDA**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**SCHOOL OF INCLUSIVE AND SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION**

**IMPORTANCE OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT ON ACADEMIC  
ACHIEVEMENT OF SLOW LEARNERS IN SEVEN LOWER SECONDARY DAY SCHOOLS,  
KAMONYI District-Rwanda**

A Thesis submitted to College of Education, the School of Inclusive and Special Needs Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Masters of Education (MED) in Special Needs Education of the University of Rwanda

**By : MUTUYIMANA VEDASTE**

**Registration number : 221027493**

**Supervisor : Dr BETH NASIFORO**

**April, 2024**

## **DECLARATION**

This research study is my original work and has not been presented to any other Institution for the award of any academic qualification.

No part of this research should be reproduced without the other's consent or that of University of Rwanda, College of Education.

Name: MUTUYIMANA Vedaste

Reg. No: MSNE 221027493

Signature..... Date.....

Declaration by the supervisor:

This research has been submitted with my approval as the University of Rwanda, College of Education Supervisor.

Dr NASIFORO BETH (PhD)

Signature..... Date

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research proposal to: My beloved wife NYIRAMINANI LUCIE, my mother, my daughter Ashimwe Gihozo Heureuse Precious and my son Ntwari Gusenga Blessing Prince, my beloved parent and guider Dr HABINSHUTI GONZAGUE, my closest relatives and friends.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

First and foremost, I express my gratitude to God for the gift of life and that of my beloved wife and mother. I equally thank my Supervisor Dr BETH NASIFORO, my beloved parent and guider DR HABINSHUTI GONZAGUE and my classmates for their collaborative efforts, my lecturers who tirelessly dedicated their time to impart knowledge and different skills in me. My sincere gratitude is extended to the administration of UR-CE, Staff of School of inclusive and special needs education, who have worked hard for us to receive the knowledge and skills that enabled me to attain this current level of education.

**May God bless you all!**

## **ABSTRACT**

This is a descriptive survey research design which aimed at examining the Importance of Special educational needs assessment on academic achievement of slow learners in lower secondary day schools, in Kamonyi district - Rwanda. The sample size purposively included 4 sector education inspectors, 28 slow learners and their parents, 36 teachers and 7 headteachers from 7 secondary day schools within the four sampled sectors of Kamonyi District. Data were collected from the field by use of questionnaires and interview guide. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviations and statistics were generated using excel software while qualitative data were analysed through content and narrative analysis.

The reliability and validity of the research instruments were ensured through a pilot study in two secondary day schools which later not included in the study. To enhance validity of the research instruments, experts including supervisors facilitated the researcher to proofread and adjust the research instruments.

The research findings showed that most of the teachers in secondary day schools do not have adequate knowledge and skills required to identify all learning needs and talents of slow learners for the provision of adequate educational provisions as it is thus they mostly refer to their daily observations of students' behaviours, learning performance results in different subjects through different academic tests and parents' opinions about learning progress of their children.

The findings also indicated that some parents deny their responsibilities either as result of internal family conflict, low educational background of parents and lack of effective communication between parents and schools about existing learning gap throughout their children's studies.

This research showed that most of the teachers neither have information on how to prepare individual education plan to cater for individual learning needs of slow learners nor have adequate knowledge and skills to plan and provide appropriate special educational provisions for slow learners

The findings also showed that the lack of clear national policy guidelines regarding the planning, implementing as well as monitoring and evaluation of SEN assessment practice in different education levels is

the big challenge for schools to carry out a standard SEN assessment for students with special educational needs.

**Table of Contents**

DECLARATION..... i

DEDICATION..... ii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ..... iii

ABSTRACT ..... iv

**Table of Contents**..... v

**LIST OF TABLES**..... ix

LIST OF FIGURES ..... x

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ..... xi

1.0 Introduction..... 1

1.2 Statement of the Problem ..... 6

**1.2.1 purpose** ..... 7

1.3. Objectives of the study ..... 8

1.4. Research Questions ..... 9

1.5. Significance of the Study..... 10

1.6. Scope and limitations of the study ..... 11

**1.6.1 Content Scope** ..... 11

**1.6.2 Geographical Scope** ..... 11

**1.6.3 Time Scope** ..... 12

1.7. Operational Definition of Key terms..... 13

1.8 Theoretical and Conceptual Frame Work..... 14

    1.8.1 Theoretical Framework..... 14

**1.8.2 Conceptual framework**..... 17

1.9 Assumptions ..... 19

1.10 Conclusion of the Chapter ..... 20

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW ..... 20

2.0 Introduction..... 20

2.1 Theories on practice of Special educational needs assessment of Slow Learners..... 21

<b>2.1.1 Theories on basic considerations in schools to carry out SEN assessment for slow learners</b> .....	21
<b>2.1.2 Theories on parental involvement in Assessing Special Educational Needs</b> .....	25
2.2 Theories on Academic achievement of Slow Learners .....	29
2.3 Factors associated with Academic achievement of Slow learners .....	30
2.4 Summary of literature view .....	32
CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	33
3.0. Introduction .....	33
3.1 Research design .....	33
3.2 Target Population .....	33
3.3 Sample size determination .....	34
3.3.1 Sampling Techniques .....	34
3.4.1 Data collection instruments .....	37
3.5 Validity and Reliability .....	39
3.5.1. Validity of Instruments .....	39
Validity of a research instrument refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it intends to measure (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008) .....	39
3.5.1 Reliability of Instruments .....	39
3.6 Data analysis procedure .....	39
3.7 Ethical issues .....	40
CHAPTER 4 : FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION .....	41
4.0 Introduction .....	41
4.1 SECTION I : General and Demographic information .....	41
4.1.1 General information .....	41
4.1.2 Demographic information .....	42
SECTION TWO : Findings, interpretation and discussions .....	59
<b>4.2.1 Characteristics and learning difficulties of slow learners</b> .....	60
4.2.2 Procedures undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners .....	77
4.3 Educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners .....	90
4.3.1 Views of teachers on educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners .....	90

4.3.2 Views of slow learners on educational placement and provisions following assessment of their learning needs .....	95
4.3.3 Views of parents/ guardians of slow learners on educational placement and provisions following the assessment of their children’s special educational needs .....	98
4.3.4 Views of Sector Education Inspectors and headteachers on educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners .....	99
4.4 Parental involvement in special educational needs assessment of slow learners.....	101
4.4.1 Views of teachers on parental involvement in special educational needs assessment of slow learners .....	101
<b>4.4.2 Views of parents/ guardians on their contribution in assessment of special educational needs of their children .....</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>4.4.3 Views of headteachers and sector education inspectors on parental involvement in assessment of special educational needs of slow learners.....</b>	<b>106</b>
4.5 Major challenges encountered by lower secondary day schools during assessing learning needs of slow learners .....	108
CHAPTER FIVE : SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS .....	112
5.0 Introduction.....	112
5.1 Summary.....	112
<b>5.1.1 Basic considerations undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners .....</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>5.1.2 Parents/ guardians’ contribution in special educational needs assessment of slow learners .....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>5.1.3 Educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners .....</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>5.1.4 Major challenges encountered by lower secondary day schools during assessing learning needs of slow learners .....</b>	<b>116</b>
5.2 Conclusions.....	116
5.3 Recommendations of the study .....	117
5.4 Suggestions for further research .....	118
References.....	119
APPENDIX A : QUESTIONNAIRES FOR STUDENTS .....	129
APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR Parents.....	132
APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS .....	135
APPENDIX D : Interview guide questions for Sector Education Inspectors and Headteachers.....	140
APPENDIX E : RECOMMENDATION LETTER FROM SUPERVISOR.....	141
APPENDIX F: RESEARCH PERMIT FROM UR-CE.....	142

APPENDIX G : KAMONYI DISTRICT PERMISSION FOR DATA COLLECTION .....143  
APPENDIX H : A map of Rwanda.....144

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 3. 1 SAMPLE SIZE DETERMINATION .....	35
TABLE 4.1 AGE AND GENDER OF TEACHERS.....	42
TABLE 4.2 TEACHING EXPERIENCE OF TEACHERS .....	43
TABLE 4.3 ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION OF TEACHERS .....	44
TABLE 4.4 SUBJECT SPECIALIZATION OF TEACHERS .....	45
TABLE 4.5 GENDER AND AGE OF STUDENTS’ PARENTS/ GUARDIANS .....	46
TABLE 4.6 ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS OF PARENTS.....	47
TABLE 4.7 NUMBER OF PARENTS/ GUARDIANS' CHILDREN .....	49
TABLE 4.8 PARENTS WITH DISABILITIES OR CHRONIC ILLNESS.....	50
TABLE 4.9 AGE AND GENDER OF SLOW LEARNERS .....	51
TABLE 4.10 STUDENTS’ GRADE LEVEL.....	53
TABLE 4.11 STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OR CHRONIC ILLNESS.....	53
TABLE 4.12 REPETITION RATE OF SLOW LEARNERS UNDER THIS STUDY.....	55
TABLE 4.13 ABSENTEEISM RATE OF SLOW LEARNERS .....	57
TABLE 4.14 THE RANGE OF FREQUENT LEARNING PERFORMANCE RESULTS OF SLOW LEARNER.....	58
TABLE 4.15 VIEWS ON SLOW LEARNERS ON THEIR CHARACTERISTICS OF SLOW LEARNERS .....	61
TABLE 4.16 VIEWS OF SLOW LEARNERS ON THEIR HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THEIR LEARNING BARRIERS .....	63
TABLE 4. 17 VIEWS OF SEIs AND HEADTEACHERS ABOUT THE INFLUENCE OF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SLOW LEARNERS ON THEIR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT .....	67
TABLE 4.18 VIEWS OF TEACHERS ON CHARACTERISTICS OF SLOW LEARNERS.....	71
TABLE 4.19 VIEWS OF PARENTS ON CHARACTERISTICS OF SLOW LEARNERS .....	74
TABLE 4.20 VIEWS OF TEACHERS ON THEIR DAILY PRACTICE OF SEN ASSESSMENT FOR SLOW LEARNERS .....	78
TABLE 21 VIEWS OF SECTOR EDUCATION INSPECTORS AND HEADTEACHERS ON PROCEDURES UNDERTAKEN DURING SEN ASSESSMENT FOR SLOW LEARNERS (INTERVIEW) .....	87
TABLE 4.22 VIEWS OF TEACHERS ON EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT AND PROVISIONS FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING NEEDS FOR SLOW LEARNERS .....	90
TABLE 4.23 VIEWS OF SLOW LEARNERS ON EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT AND PROVISIONS FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT OF THEIR LEARNING NEEDS .....	95
TABLE 4.24 VIEWS OF PARENTS OF SLOW LEARNERS ON EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT AND PROVISIONS FOLLOWING THE ASSESSMENT OF THEIR CHILDREN’S SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS .....	98
TABLE 4.25 VIEWS OF TEACHERS ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF SLOW LEARNERS .....	101
Table 4. 26 Views of parents/ guardians on their contribution in assessment of special educational needs of their children .....	102

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

FIGURE 1.1: INTERACTION OF VARIABLES ON IMPACT OF SEN ASSESSMENT ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT 17

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

**BLF** : Building Learning Foundations

**DDE** : District Director of Education

**DEO** : District Education Officer

**DFID** : Department for International Development

**EFA**: Education for all

**ESSP** : Education Sector Strategic Plan

**GS** : Groupe Scolaire

**HVP** : Home de la Vierge des Pauvres

**IE** : Inclusive Education

**IEP** : Individual Education Plan

**I.Q**: Intellectual Quotient

**MINEDUC** : Ministry of Education

**MoH** : Ministry of Health

**NFC** : Need for Cognition

**NECDP** : National Early Childhood Development Program

**NUDOR** : National Union of Disabilities' Organisations of Rwanda

**REB** : Rwanda Education Board

**SEI** : Sector Education Inspector

**SNE** : Special Needs Education

**UNICEF** : United Nations Children's Fund

**UR-CE** : University of Rwanda, College of Education

**USAID** : United States Agency for International Development

## CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, Research questions, significance of study, delimitation and limitation of the study, definition of operational terms, theoretical and conceptual framework as well as the conclusion of the chapter.

Education is a fundamental human right and an essential factor in the socioeconomic advancement of humanity. To guarantee that every student, regardless of their individual learning requirements, has access to high-quality education, inclusive education is necessary. However, inclusive education can only be realized if all educational placements and provisions for students with disabilities and other special educational needs are founded on a well-structured system of screening, identification, and assessment of their special educational needs and potential. This includes vulnerable students such as those with disabilities, slow learners, those with health impairments, those living in difficult circumstances, and orphans, among others. A child is identified as having "special educational needs" if they have a learning difficulty that necessitates specialized educational support ("Special Educational Needs Code of Practice", 2001). This encompasses a wide range of learning challenges that may require individualized instruction, adapted materials, or additional resources to ensure the child's access to a meaningful and effective education.

Although there is no universally accepted system of classifying children with special educational needs across different countries, classification of children into particular categories of disability and special educational needs may rely on guiding questions like :

*What definition's of a category of disability or special educational need are used ? How do these relate to the learning difficulties children face in school ? How do they relate to particular interventions designed to help these children learn ? (Desforges & Lindsay, 2010).*

In European countries like England, a formal diagnosis of a disability is not required to establish that a child has special educational needs (SEN). Instead, the SEN assessment process prioritizes a thorough understanding

of each child's unique needs. This assessment is conducted within a legal framework established by the central government, guided by a code of practice issued by the secretary of state (Desforbes & Lindsay, 2010). This code offers practical guidance to local authorities, schools, early education settings, health and social services, empowering them to fulfill their legal obligations in identifying, assessing, and providing for children's special educational needs.

Conversely, the German education system employs a different approach, distinctly categorizing students into two groups: those with general education needs and those with special educational needs. This categorization likely influences the identification and assessment procedures, as well as the types of educational provisions offered to students.

Referring to the recommendation of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, children or young people have special educational needs if their opportunities for education, development and learning are limited in such way they cannot learn and progress successfully within mainstream schools setting without being given special educational support. Besides, educational guidelines for assessment of child's special educational needs can be classified by referring to three levels :

- (1) The recommendations of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education, Cultural Affairs and Science to be adjusted as general guidelines.
- (2) The 16 Länder (Lands) interpret and implement general guidelines through their own school legislation.
- (3) School supervisory authorities release specific rules and regulations as well as policies based on the legislation (Hausotter & Von Knebel as cited in (Desforbes & Lindsay, 2010)

Similar to England and Germany, the Canadian education system does not necessitate a formal diagnosis of a disability to access special educational provision. Instead, it employs a broad classification of exceptionality, encompassing both learning difficulties and giftedness. This approach emphasizes the child's unique pattern of strengths and weaknesses rather than relying solely on a disability diagnosis.

However, SEN policies exhibit variations across different provincial governments. Some provinces have well-defined policies regarding the identification, diagnosis, and assessment of SEN, while others adopt "light

touch" policies. In certain regions, provincial policies are grounded in legislation, while in others, they rely on procedural guidelines. The specifics of assessment tools and methodologies are generally left to the discretion of educational professionals (Desforges & Lindsay, 2010).

In contrast, the Australian system, representing a different approach within Asia, requires a diagnosis of disability for a child to be eligible for special educational provision. However, it is important to note that not all children with diagnosed disabilities will automatically qualify for special educational needs support. Special education in Australia is governed by central government legislation, providing a framework for state governments to establish their own processes and systems for SEN provision (Desforges & Lindsay, 2010).

In Africa, South Africa's education system offers a representative example. The process of assessing children's special educational needs is meticulously outlined in the National Strategy Document, which provides guidance on a three-stage process encompassing screening, identification, assessment, and support. This process unfolds as follows:

(1) **Screening in early childhood education:** This initial screening, conducted for all learners by early childhood workers, parents, health services, and social welfare, aims to identify potential special educational needs early on and provide timely intervention.

(2) **Identifying moderate support needs:** This stage involves a more focused assessment to assist teachers in planning appropriate support for learners and enabling institution-level support teams to monitor their progress effectively.

(3) **Identifying high needs support:** In this stage, the formal screening, identification, assessment, and support process is initiated by the district-based support team. This team determines the level of support required and decides whether the support can be effectively delivered within a mainstream school with additional resources, or if a special school or resource center is necessary. (South Africa Department of Education, as cited in Desforges & Lindsay, 2010).

On the other hand in KENYA,

*The Ministry of Education in 1984 established special educational needs assessment and resource services in districts throughout the country while it was established in Kenya Institute*

*of Special Education in 1988 due to the great need for Assessment services for learners with disabilities and Educational Assessment Resource Centres (EARCs) have been responsible for assessing and placing learners with special needs (NYAKUNDI, 2015).*

Kenya Institute of Special Educational Needs has to train itinerant and vision support teachers in order to work with Assessment Centre Coordinators and other professionals like medical doctors and psychologists at the district level (Mwangi. L, 2013).

In Rwanda, a formal system for special educational needs assessment is not yet in place. Currently, such assessments are conducted only in a limited number of special schools equipped with multidisciplinary teams. These include the HVP Gatagara multidisciplinary team, the KAYONZA special center for assessment, and the MINEDUC 10 schools for modelling assessment and support.

The capacity for these schools to conduct assessments of children's special educational needs is largely facilitated through partnerships with various education partners. These partners include Humanity and Inclusion, Building Learning Foundations (BLF), the National Union of Disabilities' Organisations of Rwanda (NUDOR), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the National Early Childhood Development Program (NECDP), the Ministry of Health (MoH), the Department for International Development (DFID), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and Home de la Vierge des Pauvres (HVP) GATAGARA, among others (USAID SOMA UMENYE, 2019). This collaborative approach highlights the importance of external support in developing and implementing special educational needs assessment practices within Rwanda's education system.

According to MINEDUC (2018) in its Revised Special Needs and Inclusive Education Policy, it is explained that

*Rwandan education system is not yet endowed with any formal functional assessment, carried out for early identification of learning needs upon school entry for appropriate school placements and support. Therefore, policy guidelines on this vital service are still required in*

*the education sector, to equip it with standard assessment procedures and strategies to support learners with a range of SEN (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, 2018, p. 19)*

Early assessment, or screening, of learners' functional needs and abilities is crucial in making informed decisions about their educational placement, rehabilitation, and overall access to learning activities (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, 2018). Without a proper understanding of their individual potential, challenges, and difficulties, learners with disabilities and other special educational needs face a heightened risk of exclusion from educational opportunities. This lack of identification and appropriate early intervention can lead to persistent low academic achievement throughout their schooling.

Learners are often categorized based on their academic performance as fast, average, or slow learners. However, due to inadequate identification and assessment practices, many learners with disabilities and special educational needs are mislabeled as "slow learners" throughout their education. This label can obscure their potential abilities, inner talents, and unique learning needs, preventing them from reaching their full potential.

While slow learning can be attributed to factors like poor memory, lack of motivation, insufficient foundational knowledge, and psychological factors, it's crucial to recognize that these learners can thrive with appropriate support. By identifying their strengths and inner talents through varied learning approaches, teachers can foster a positive learning experience for slow learners, leading to improved academic progress (Korikana, A., 2020). Conversely, without such support, these learners may lose confidence, drop out of school, and ultimately be perceived as illiterate and incompetent.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Education is the fundamental human right for all people, women and men, of all ages and every person, child, youth and adult has to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs (UNESCO, 1990).

Students with special educational needs especially « Slow learners enjoy their learning and have better progress in their future if the teacher can identify their strengths, inner talents as well as their learning barriers through a well structured system of assessing special educational needs in order to provide adequate educational provisions. However, in Rwanda ; there is no any formal assessment of special educational needs ; as result, many students experience poor academic achievement and some of them even repeat the same grade level more than once due to their learning needs not well identified which leads to inappropriate intervention. In Kamonyi district, there was repetition rate of 15.1% in 2015 for lower Secondary Schools while in 2018 was 5.2 % for Secondary Schools whereas at national level, repetition rate was 11.6% in 2015 and 8.9% in 2019 for Lower Secondary Schools (MINEDUC, 2016, 2022). So, if no corrective measures taken ; these students will become unproductive citizens and this deviates Rwandan ambitious plans of building a skilled workforce that is able to compete both regionally and internationally, then there will be a deficit of human resources competent and independent to earn themselves their life and they become a burden for their family and the whole country in general.

This study therefore intended to investigate the importance of special educational needs assessment on academic achievement of slow learners in 7 lower Secondary day schools in Kamonyi district.

### **1.2.1 purpose**

The purpose of this study was to examine the Imporance of Special educational needs assessment on academic achievement of slow learners in lower secondary day schools, Kamonyi district –Rwanda.

The witnessing learning needs of students with special educational needs especially slow learners have not only placed them at high risk of absenteeism and school dropout but also at risk of becoming unproductive citizens due to their low academic achievement throughout their studies. Thus, there is a need of early identification of students with special educational needs as well as the assessment of their learning needs so as to provide appropriate early intervention.

### **1.3. Objectives of the study**

This study was guided by the following objectives :

- i) To identify the basic considerations in lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners in 9 & 12 years basic education in Kamonyi district.
- ii) To evaluate the contribution of parents involvement in assessment of their children's learning needs for improving their academic achievement.
- iii) To examine the importance of educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners on their academic achievement.
- iv) To identify major challenges encountered by lower secondary day schools during assessing learning needs of slow learners.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

- i) What are the basic considerations in lower secondary day schools to carry out learning needs assessment for slow learners in 9& 12 years basic education in Kamonyi district. ?
- ii) What is the contribution of parent involvement in assessment of their children's learning needs for improvement of their academic achievement ?
- iii) What is the importance of educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners on their academic achievement ?
- iv) What are the major challenges encountered by lower secondary day schools during assessing learning needs of slow learners ?

## **1.5. Significance of the Study**

This study has been expected to be significant to students with special educational needs especially slow learners in that they will receive educational provisions that match their learning needs as well as their potential abilities, thus this will enable them to enjoy learning and prevent absenteeism and school dropout.

This study is also beneficial to students with special educational needs including slow learners in that their learning performance will be improved due to the fact that teachers will plan and teach lessons referring to diverse students' learning needs and abilities identified during SEN Assessment.

This study has to assist the School community namely School leaders and teachers about the standard and appropriate procedures of assessing students' learning needs and abilities for effective educational placement and provisions.

It is expected to help the parents and local government authorities namely Sector Education Inspectors, District Education Officers and District Director of Education to understand better their roles and responsibilities regarding Assessment of Special educational needs especially for Slow learners and how this contributes to these learners' academic achievement throughout their Studies.

This study is expected to be an eye opener to the Policy makers about the gap in assessment of Special educational needs within Schools and its impact on academic achievement of learners with special educational needs especially Slow learners.

It should be used as the reference where it may invite for advance researchers on the area focused particularly the Assessment of children's Special educational needs in Secondary day Schools of Rwanda.

## **1.6. Scope and limitations of the study**

The Study covered the Content, Geographical Scope and Time Scope, limitation of the study as discussed in subsections that follow.

### **1.6.1 Content Scope**

This study was restricted to investigate the importance of Special Educational Needs Assessment on academic achievement of Slow learners in 7 Lower Secondary Day Schools within 4 Sectors in Kamonyi District-Rwanda.

This was measured by alternative factors related to academic achievement like students' retention in school, students' performance results, promotion rate, school drop out and repetition rate as well as students' behavior. It also discussed the procedures as well as challenges experienced during the practice of Special Educational Needs Assessment of Slower learners but also that of other learners with Special Educational Needs.

### **1.6.2 Geographical Scope**

Kamonyi District is one of the 8 Districts of the Southern Province and its location is the central region of the country. It borders Ruhango District in the South, Muhanga District in the West, Bugesera and Nyarugenge Districts in the East as well as Gakenke and Rulindo District in the North. Kamonyi District is made up of 12 Sectors, 59 Cells and 317 Villages (Imidugudu).

It is divided into twelve (12) administrative Sectors (Imirenge) namely Gacurabwenge, Karama, Kayenzi, Kayumbu, Mugina, Musambira, Ngamba, Nyamiyaga, Nyarubaka, Rugalika, Rukoma and Runda. Indeed, Kamonyi district has a surface area of 655 km<sup>2</sup>. For the purpose of this study, KAMONYI District is one of the southern province Districts with both rural and urban life conditions as it borders Kigali City and rural districts.

### **1.6.3 Time Scope**

The study focused only on the data of 2017-2023 School academic years in Rwanda. This period accounts for a reasonable trend of school attendance of children with Special educational needs especially Slow learners in the District. This research work was compiled in twelve (12) months starting from January 2023 to December 2023.

### **1.6.4 Limitation of the study**

This study is descriptive by design and is bound to be affected by a number of factors. Some of these factors might be beyond the scope of this study and cannot be fully controlled while others may be in the control of the researcher.

One of the limitations of the descriptive study is the inability to fully control the intervening variables. This limitation is controlled by random sampling techniques and identification of major intervening variable (Fraenkel, Wallen& Hyun, 2003)

Some children with Special educational needs and their parents may feel bad to respond to the research questions and this can limit the information needed, so smooth strategies of asking information should be applied.

Another major challenge is always respondents' biasness to questionnaire statements. This was minimized by encouraging them to be as honest as possible, and a question that evaluates the tool will be included so as to reflect the general feeling about the data collection tool.

## **1.7. Operational Definition of Key terms**

**Slow learners :** These are learners who learn slowly than their colleagues of the same age but they do not have disability requiring Special education.

**Special Educational Needs (SNE) :** This refers to a set of learning difficulties, barriers which make students with disabilities and other special educational needs harder to learn successfully as their peers.

**Screening and identification of learners with Special educational needs :** It is about screening children and identifying those who may be experiencing delays or learning problems. Identification is the process of singling out suspected cases of children with special needs in education or disability for the purposes of assessment and intervention.

**Special Educational Needs Assessment :** This is the process used to determination children's specific learning strengths and needs as well as for determining if is a child or not eligible for special education services.

**Multidisciplinary Assessment Team :** This is a team of Professionals from different fields who assess students suspected to have a special need or disability.

**Special education :** This refers to a educational system that caters for the special needs of students with disabilities or other special educational needs

**Educational placement :** This is just putting students with disability and other special Educational Needs in the most appropriate educational setting.

**Special educational provision** is provision that is different from or additional to that normally available to students of the same age, which is designed to help children with SEN or disabilities to access the regular Curriculum in mainstream School.

**Individual education plan** refers to a plan that teachers and parents develop to help a student with disability and other special educational needs.

**Academic achievement** of students refers to the level of schooling that students have successfully completed and the ability to attain success in their studies.

**Disability** this is a functional limitation of the body part as result of either physical or mental impairment.

## **1.8 Theoretical and Conceptual Frame Work**

### 1.8.1 Theoretical Framework

This subchapter aims to elucidate the theoretical framework underpinning this research, which investigates the significance of special educational needs assessment on the academic achievement of slow learners in secondary day schools within the Kamonyi district. This research is grounded in the Need for Cognition (NFC) theory.

Cognition encompasses the thinking skills and thought processes that individuals acquire through their life experiences (Areas of Need: Cognition and Learning, n.d.). It involves both conscious and unconscious processes related to thinking, perceiving, and reasoning. These cognitive processes include directing attention to stimuli, acquiring new knowledge, decision-making, language processing, sensory perception, problem-solving, and memory utilization (Kendra, 2023).

Arthur Cohen and his colleagues are credited with pioneering the concept of the need for cognition (NFC), which was further developed by John Cacioppo and Richard Petty in the 1980s (Need for cognition, n.d.). Cohen initially defined NFC as the inherent drive to make sense of the world, linking it to a preference for structure and clarity in one's environment. Cohen, Scotland, and Wolfe (1955) further elaborated on NFC, describing it as the need to structure situations in meaningful and integrated ways, and to understand and rationalize the world around us.

According to Ben Bauer & Emily Stiner (2020), NFC is a psychological trait reflecting an individual's inherent desire to engage in cognitively demanding tasks and effortful thinking. It represents an individual's inclination to participate in and derive enjoyment from activities that require mental exertion. Individuals with higher NFC demonstrate a greater propensity to seek out information, explore new products, and grapple with complex issues, driven by an intrinsic motivation for mental challenges. Conversely, those with lower NFC often require

external incentives to engage in mentally demanding tasks and exhibit limited motivation for cognitively complex activities (Need for cognition, n.d.).

Furthermore, individuals with higher NFC tend to actively seek and reflect on information to make sense of stimuli and events, while those with lower NFC may rely on mental shortcuts to simplify complex information and avoid cognitive overload (Lins de Holanda Coelho et al., 2020).

The effectiveness of individuals in tackling complex problems is positively correlated with their NFC. The achievement levels of individuals with varying NFC are linked to their capacity for focused attention, their willingness to explore new and thought-provoking experiences, their desire for control over their environment, and their tendency to elaborate on and seek relevant information in problem-solving situations (K. Unnikrishnan & S. Ramnarayan, 2000).

Referring to the assessment instrument known as Need For Cognition scale which was created by Cacciopo and petty in 1982 for the purpose of measuring quantitatively the individuals' tendency to engage in and enjoy cognitively challenging and effortful thinking activities, among 18 items from the revised Need For Cognition Scale, including these items :

*« Thinking is not my idea of fun , I would rather do something that requires little thought than something that is sure to challenge my thinking abilities, I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is likely a chance I will have to think in depth about something, I like tasks that require little thought once I've learned them, Learning new ways to think does not excite me very much, I feel relief rather than satisfaction after completing a task that required a lot of mental effort, It's enough for me that something gets the job done or I don't care how or why it works »* , they reflect the routines and mental processing capacity of individuals in low Need For Cognition including Slow learners (Bost, 2007).

It is important to acknowledge that individuals with high need for cognition (NFC) have different learning profiles compared to those with low NFC, as their cognitive abilities vary significantly. This necessitates

teachers to conduct thorough assessments of learners' current abilities, potentials, and learning needs to provide appropriate intervention services tailored to students with low NFC.

Within educational settings, low NFC is associated with various cognitive challenges that can hinder effective teaching. These challenges include situations where the amount of new information surpasses students' working memory capacity, learners harboring self-limiting beliefs about their learning abilities, those who are disengaged from understanding concepts, learners experiencing fear or anxiety towards certain subjects, those lacking prerequisite knowledge, those employing ineffective learning strategies, those struggling to apply knowledge to novel problems, and those who are easily distracted by irrelevant information (Chew & Cerbin, 2022).

Slow learners fall under the category of individuals with low NFC due to their below-average cognitive capacity and intellectual quotient (IQ) typically ranging from 70 to 90. Consequently, they require more time than their peers to grasp new concepts and often need additional support to complete their schoolwork (Alawiyah & Supriatna, 2022).

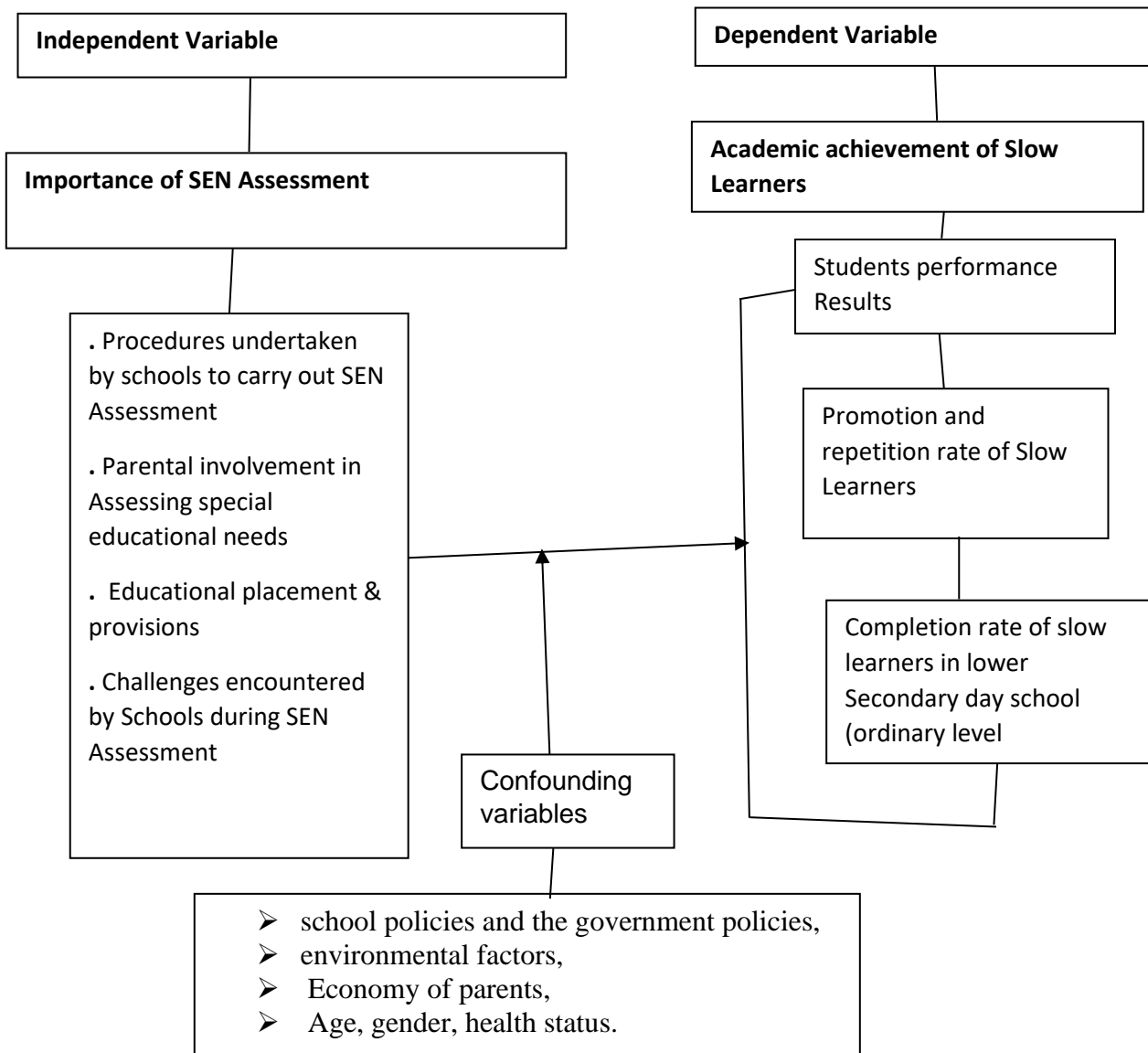
While slow learners share common characteristics related to limited cognitive abilities, such as difficulties with thinking skills, establishing relationships, reasoning, developing number and language concepts, weak memory, and social-emotional challenges (Mudarris, Nu'man, Wahyuni & Saifaldin, 2022), it's crucial to recognize their heterogeneity. They can be categorized into mild, moderate, and severe slow learners based on the diverse factors contributing to their learning difficulties (Komal, Ayesha & Shama, 2021).

The selection of the Need for Cognition theory to guide this study is based on its emphasis on the critical need to assess learners' cognitive abilities and challenges in order to design and deliver appropriate educational provisions. By accurately identifying both the cognitive strengths and challenges of slow learners, and providing them with tailored educational support services, their academic achievement can be significantly enhanced.

Therefore, this theory provides a suitable framework for investigating the impact of Special Educational Needs Assessment on the academic achievement of slow learners in secondary day schools within the Kamonyi District.

## 1.8.2 Conceptual framework

Figure 1.1: Interaction of variables on importance of SEN Assessment on academic achievement



Source : Researcher's design (2023)

The visual representation above, termed the "Conceptual Framework," is primarily based on the interplay between two key research variables: the independent variable, Special Educational Needs Assessment, and the dependent variable, Academic Achievement of Slow Learners (Figure 1.1). This framework illustrates the

dynamic relationship between these variables and reflects the core research objectives of this study (Swaen & Tegan, 2022).

As depicted in the framework, Special Educational Needs Assessment is operationalized through various procedures, including academic achievement tests, curriculum-based assessments, intelligence testing, tests of functional behavior, and informal assessments such as observations, classwork, projects, homework, oral presentations, portfolios, and other assessment practices. These procedures aim to identify the potential abilities and specific learning needs of slow learners, ultimately contributing to the improvement of their academic achievement ("How to identify, Assess and review children with Special educational needs", 2023). Effective assessment practices are the foundation upon which informed teaching choices and support services are built, leading to enhanced student learning (Michael. R, 2023).

Parental support plays a crucial role in children's schooling, particularly in their academic performance. A strong correlation exists between high academic performance in students and the extent to which parents actively monitor their children's education, collaborate with teachers, and support education-related activities (Shahzad, Farooq, Sammer, Farhan & Shazia, 2020). Schools have a responsibility to provide opportunities for parents/guardians to gain insights into their children's efforts, progress, and achievements, thereby fostering their ability to support their children's motivation and learning (Kirsten, 2016).

Educational placement, referring to the amount of time learners spend in resource or general education classrooms each school day, is another critical factor. Students with learning needs, including slow learners, may be placed in a single setting throughout the day or in different settings to receive specialized educational services tailored to their unique needs. To maximize academic achievement for these students, educational placement decisions should be driven by individual learning needs rather than the availability of services within a school ("Educational Placements for Students with Disabilities", n.d.).

Furthermore, student academic achievement is positively influenced by a safe and conducive learning environment that provides all learners with access to diverse learning experiences catering to individual needs, along with various intervention services for those with additional learning needs ("Education Provision", n.d.).

However, schools encounter various challenges in assessing children's learning needs. These challenges include a lack of professional development for teachers on procedures for identifying and assessing students with learning needs, the absence of clear policy guidelines on special educational needs assessment in some countries, and the lack of established procedures for referring learners to specialized centers for early intervention services (Fanuel, Mufunani, Gazimbe & Mapolisa, 2015). These challenges can hinder students with special educational needs from accessing essential modified instruction, tests, and examinations, leading to struggles with traditional classroom learning and assessments, and ultimately, lower academic achievement.

Academic achievement, defined as the learning outcomes or student performance in education, encompasses various indicators such as retention rates, graduation rates, completion rates, and licensure rates (Suvarna and Ganesha Bhata, 2015; "Student Achievement Indicators", 2022). The diagrammatical representation highlights specific indicators relevant to this study: student performance results, promotion and repetition rates of slow learners, and completion rates of slow learners in lower secondary day school (ordinary level).

It is important to acknowledge that other factors, including school policies, government policies, environmental factors, parental economic status, age, gender, and health status, can also influence the academic achievement of slow learners. However, these factors, depicted in the diagram as confounding variables, fall outside the scope of this particular study.

## **1.9 Assumptions**

At the beginning of each interview or the introduction of the questionnaire, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, ask for consent, and explained their rights as participants to take part in the study. The researcher ensured respondents that all their responses might only be used for the purpose of the study and that all their responses have to be strictly treated with confidentiality.

The respondents joined interview or filled questions due to their own interest and because of any incentives or future productive promises.

### **1.10 Conclusion of the Chapter**

This chapter describes the general introduction of the study : background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, scope/limitations, significance of the study, definition of key terms then conclusion of the chapter. It enables the readers to understand the reasons of this study and its importance along with providing historical information that need to be shared about impact of Special educational needs assessment and its impact on academic achievement of Slow learners.

## **CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

Literature review is a brief written summary of major writing and other sources like Scholarly journal articles, books, government reports, Conferences, websites among others on a given topic ("What is a Literature Review", 2020)

This chapter will discuss related literature relevant to the importance of Special educational needs Assessment on academic achievement of Slow learners. It addresses the theoretical review guiding the practice of Special educational needs assessment as well as the factors that are associated with academic achievement of Slow learners and the gaps of previous studies related to Special educational needs assessment of Slow learners.

## **2.1 Theories on practice of Special educational needs assessment of Slow Learners**

### **2.1.1 Theories on basic considerations in schools to carry out SEN assessment for slow learners**

Analysis of the 2004 Global Burden of Disease data revealed that approximately 15% of the world's population experiences disability ("World Health Organisation", 2011). This underscores the critical need for national education plans to prioritize the identification and needs assessment of individuals with disabilities, ensuring that provisions such as curriculum development, teaching methods, and materials are tailored to their diverse learning requirements.

Data from the United States in 2019 indicated that 1 in 5 elementary and secondary school students faced learning and attention challenges ("The State of Learning Disabilities Today", n.d.), while estimates suggest that slow learners comprise roughly 15% to 17% of the average school population ("Slow Learner", 2022).

Slow learners are characterized by learning difficulties in various academic areas, including reading, writing, comprehension, and mathematics ("Slow Learner", 2017). Their performance on standardized intelligence quotient (IQ) tests typically falls below average, with scores ranging from 70 to 85 or 89. While this indicates lower-average intellectual capability, it is important to note that this does not qualify them for the classification of mild cognitive impairment, which requires an IQ below 70. Consequently, slow learners often face the risk of not being eligible for special services, special education programs, or individualized educational plans (IEPs) (Stan L, 2022).

Similar to gifted and average learners, slow learners are identified based on their rate of learning (Kirk as cited in Meenakshi, n.d.). Identification methods include daily classroom observation by teachers, intelligence testing, competency-based tests, diagnostic tests in various subjects based on school marks, and parental input regarding their children's learning progress, homework challenges, language difficulties, emotional problems, illnesses, injuries, and physical limitations (Meenakshi, n.d.).

Korikana (2020) suggests that observation methods, achievement tests, personality inventories, and case studies are valuable tools for identifying slow learners.

While slow learners may not qualify for special education, they benefit significantly from specialized instructional techniques. These techniques encompass adapted teaching methods, modified curriculum content, and the use of assistive technology. By implementing these strategies, teachers can uncover the strengths and inner talents of slow learners while simultaneously addressing their individual needs. This approach fosters their progress and empowers them to become productive citizens (Korikana, A., 2020, p. 30).

Recognizing that slow learning stems from a multitude of causes, accurate Special Educational Needs Assessment is paramount for developing and implementing effective educational programs tailored to individual children with special needs (Warnock, 1978, p. 31).

Special Educational Needs Assessment is a comprehensive process that involves examining, interacting with, and observing individuals or groups who have actual or potential health conditions, impairments, activity limitations, or participation restrictions. This assessment may be necessary to determine eligibility for educational support, social services, and other interventions ("World Health Organisation", 2011, p. 301).

Assessment methods can be categorized as informal or formal. Informal assessment encompasses daily teacher observations, as well as student and parent perspectives on individual performance and progress.

Formal assessments, on the other hand, are characterized by their use of standardized grading systems and rubrics to evaluate student knowledge. Unlike informal assessments, which rely on past performance as a benchmark, formal assessments provide a structured and objective measure of student learning ("Formal VS. Informal assessment": differences and similarities", 2021).

Furthermore, formal assessments enable comparisons of student performance to larger groups, such as at the district or national level. They also aim to identify individual strengths and weaknesses relative to peers ("Informal Assessment in the Classroom: Examples & Types", 2015).

The primary goals of SEN assessment and identification are to ensure that learners with special educational needs have access to appropriate learning opportunities and support services. This includes promoting accessibility in various aspects of the educational environment, such as schools, classrooms, programs, curriculum, materials, resources, and instructional practices. SEN assessment also aims to identify and

implement accommodations that effectively address individual learning needs (Algraigray & Boyle as cited in Alisha M. B. Braun, 2020).

Children or young people are identified as having Special Educational Needs if they require additional support to fully participate in educational opportunities, development, and learning ("Country information for Germany - Assessment within inclusive education systems", 2020).

Nevertheless, there are about 8 Special Education Assessments used to diagnose or help learners with special needs ("8 Special Education Assessments", 2022).

A range of assessments are employed to identify and understand the diverse needs of learners:

**a) Developmental Assessments:** These assessments are crucial for uncovering the strengths and weaknesses of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who may be experiencing developmental delays. They provide a comprehensive picture of a child's development across various domains, such as motor skills, language acquisition, cognitive development, and social-emotional growth.

**b) Screening Tests:** These tests offer a quick and efficient method for identifying children who may be performing below expected norms in specific areas. They serve as an initial step in identifying potential concerns and determining the need for more in-depth assessments.

**c) Intelligence Quotient (IQ) Tests:** These standardized tests are used to assess the intellectual abilities of students who may be eligible for special education services. They help determine if a student's learning difficulties are associated with their cognitive abilities.

**d) Academic Achievement Tests:** These tests measure a student's performance in core academic subjects such as reading, writing, and mathematics. They provide valuable information about a student's academic strengths and weaknesses, informing instructional planning and intervention strategies.

**e) Adaptive Behavior Scales:** These scales are specifically designed to assess the daily living skills, social abilities, communication skills, motor abilities, and community participation of students with intellectual disabilities. They help identify areas where a student may need additional support to function effectively in their daily lives.

**f) Behavior Rating Scales:** These scales, typically completed by parents or teachers, offer insights into a student's behavior patterns. They help determine the frequency and intensity of challenging behaviors, allowing for comparisons with typical behaviors observed in other students.

**g) Curriculum-Based Assessment:** This type of assessment measures a student's skill level within a specific curriculum at a particular point in time. It helps track progress towards IEP goals and provides valuable information for instructional planning.

**h) End-of-Grade Alternate Assessments:** These assessments are designed to measure the progress of all students at the end of each grade level. They provide a comprehensive overview of student learning and achievement.

### **Significance of Special Educational Needs Assessment**

The Warnock report (1978) highlights the critical importance of early identification, diagnosis, and assessment of special needs in newborns. This early intervention approach enables timely and appropriate support, emphasizing the role of nursery schools and classes in identifying early signs of special needs and facilitating prompt intervention.

Similarly, the England SEN code of practice (2001) underscores the collaborative role of early education settings, parents, and external agencies in requesting statutory multidisciplinary assessments from local education authorities when a child's progress is a concern. It also highlights the responsibility of primary and secondary schools to be vigilant in identifying potential special educational needs in children and requesting statutory assessments when necessary.

Special Educational Needs Assessment serves several crucial purposes:

**Informing educational placement decisions:** Assessment results guide decisions about the most appropriate learning environment for a child with special needs.

**Planning and delivering effective instruction:** Assessment data informs the development of individualized instruction tailored to a child's unique learning needs.

**Diagnosing specific needs and disabilities:** Assessment helps identify the specific nature of a child's learning challenges or disabilities.

**Screening and identifying learning problems and developmental delays:** Assessment plays a key role in early identification of learning difficulties and developmental delays.

**Determining eligibility for special education services:** Assessment results help determine if a child meets the criteria for special education services.

**Developing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs):** Assessment provides detailed information that forms the foundation of an IEP.

**Evaluating learner progress:** Assessment enables ongoing monitoring and evaluation of a learner's progress and the effectiveness of interventions ("Special Education Assessment: How and Why It should be Conducted", 2022).

### **Basic Considerations for Undertaking a Statutory Special Educational Needs Assessment**

A statutory SEN assessment is a formal and comprehensive process designed to identify a child's specific needs and the additional support they may require in school ("Statutory Assessment", 2021).

This formal assessment process is typically initiated when a mainstream school is unable to provide the necessary support for a child to learn alongside their peers, when a child fails to make adequate progress despite receiving extra help, or when a child's needs are complex or severe, exceeding the school's capacity to provide support ("Special Educational Needs Code of Practice", 2001, pp. 74-75).

Parental involvement is essential throughout the entire SEN assessment process. Parents should be actively involved in all stages, provided with copies of all reports and decisions, and informed of their right to independently request an assessment for their child.

Effective SEN assessment hinges on collaboration among a multidisciplinary team, including parents, the child (when possible), school authorities, general education teachers, Special Educational Needs Coordinators, local government representatives, and various specialists such as medical professionals (occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, ophthalmologists, audiologists), educational psychologists, and counselors ("Special Educational Needs Code of Practice", 2001).

#### **2.1.2 Theories on parental involvement in Assessing Special Educational Needs**

Parents are often the first to notice signs of disabilities or special needs in their children that may not have been identified at or shortly after birth (Warnock, 1978, p. 51). Therefore, equipping parents with knowledge about typical child development patterns can help them more readily recognize any unusual developmental features in their children.

The involvement of parents/guardians in the assessment of their children's learning needs is essential for ensuring that language and cultural factors are considered, as these can significantly influence the interpretation of assessment results (Paula, n.d.).

Parents/guardians possess unique knowledge about their children's needs and strengths, making them invaluable members of the multidisciplinary assessment team. They play an active role in identifying and explaining their children's special educational needs, initiating requests for assessments, providing background information, and expressing their views on their children's education. Parents/guardians have the right to consent to or decline SEN assessments proposed by schools and can suggest alternative approaches. Schools must consult with parents/guardians before requesting an SEN assessment.

Beyond simply receiving information, advice, and support during the assessment process, parents/guardians should be actively supported in accessing relevant decision-making processes about special educational provision ("Special Educational Needs Code of Practice", 2001, p. 16).

Parents/guardians need to be informed about the nature and severity of their child's disability or special educational needs, as well as the potential implications for their child. When a disability is identified, parents/guardians should be made aware of the available support services and facilities to assist both them and their child (Warnock, 1978).

### **2.1.3 Theories on the importance of educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners on their academic achievement.**

Early identification and assessment for special educational provision aim to identify children with special educational needs as early as possible to ensure they receive appropriate support from a young age ("How to identify, assess and review children with special educational needs", 2022).

Effective special education educators must possess the knowledge and skills to interpret both informal and formal assessment results. This expertise is crucial for providing appropriate special education services, developing individualized education plans (IEPs), and informing ongoing support (Paula, n.d.).

Providing special educational provision typically involves several steps:

1. Identifying students who require special education and additional support services.
2. Evaluating students with special educational needs through a collaborative process involving professionals and parents/guardians to determine eligibility for additional services and IEPs.
3. Conducting an IEP meeting and developing a written IEP if the student is eligible.
4. Providing support services in accordance with the IEP.
5. Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the IEP to assess the child's progress towards the annual goals, keeping parents informed of their child's progress.
6. Reviewing the IEP if the provided support services are not effective, potentially re-assessing the child with special educational needs (Küpper & Kohanek, 2022).

Placement and intervention decisions are made based on the interpretation of information gathered during the assessment of a student's special educational needs. Educational placement refers to the amount of time a learner spends in resource rooms or general education classrooms each school day. A learner with special educational needs may be placed in a single setting or spend parts of the day in different settings, depending on their individual needs and the required provisions ("Educational Placements For Students with Disabilities", n.d.).

Educational provision encompasses the range of services provided by schools to support the learning and progress of students with special educational needs ("What is Provision?", n.d.). These provisions may include modified curriculum and study materials, adapted classroom environments, adjusted time demands, assistive technology, counseling, and health services (Najma, 2012). Slow learners, who may struggle to keep up with typical routines, often require individualized education and learning support to make satisfactory progress (Vasudevan A, 2017).

Access to appropriate and high-quality support services hinges on accurate and efficient identification and assessment of children's learning needs. While there is no single "best" model of support or educational

provision, successful provision stems from high expectations for all children, support services based on careful analysis of individual learning needs, daily monitoring of progress, and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of support services at all levels ("The Special educational needs and disability review", 2010).

The use of special education interventions should focus on both a child's strengths and needs, drawing upon a range of medical, psychological, and other treatment models for maximum effectiveness (G Hornyby, 2015).

#### **2.1.4 Theories on Challenges encountered by Schools during Assessing Learning Needs of Slow Learners**

SEN assessment is fundamental to developing effective special education policies and practices. Historically, SEN assessment focused on categorizing and segregating children with disabilities and special educational needs to identify those who were deemed unsuitable for mainstream schooling (Agbenu & Martyn, 1998).

However, schools now bear the responsibility of implementing policies and practices that align with national legislation and statutory guidelines regarding SEN assessment. This includes establishing procedures for the identification and assessment of children with special educational needs and disabilities to ensure the provision of appropriate interventions (Hornby as cited in G Hornyby, 2015).

*In Rwanda, the education system is not yet endowed with any formal functional assessment, carried out for early identification of learning needs upon school entry level for appropriate school placements and support. Therefore, policy guidelines on this vital service are still required in the education sector, to equip it with standard assessment procedures and strategies to support learners with a range of SEN (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, 2018, p. 19)*

Frequently, many teachers in mainstream schools are not competent to teach children with Special educational needs and disability due to the lack of required skills and use of inadequate resources, teachers fail to implement inclusive education because of lack of training about related required skills including that of identifying children with Special educational needs as well as SEN Assessment so as to provide appropriate support services (G Hornyby, 2015), (S'lungile, 2015)& (Mapunda et al, 2017).

According to Mapunda, Omollo & Bali (2017), Schools face the problem of lack of a functioning school-based system of assessment for identification and intervention services for children with special educational needs and there is no team of experts or multidisciplinary assessment team so as to assess, identify, and undertake intervention programmes for children with special educational needs which are appropriate to the children's learning needs.

Indeed, there is a low number of the Universities, Colleges and higher institutions which train and produce the experts in Special Needs Education for the whole country while Other education institutions only teach special needs education theoretically hence their graduates are not competent to conduct SEN assessment practices.

In addition, the national Special Educational Needs Policy remains theoretically guaranteed because of lack its policy implementation framework at school level hence the implementation of assessment for identification and intervention services for children with special educational needs depends on the school staff 's determination.

As well, there is a low frequency of parent meetings so that parents and schools can share experiences on learning needs and abilities of their children with special educational needs; on this, some parents have low education background and can neither care about their children's progress throughout their studies nor helping their children to do home works.

Addedly, there are schools who underestimate the value and ability of parents' contribution to information required for effective SEN assessment as well as appropriate intervention services. Furthermore, schools also meet the challenges of parents who deny different decisions and pieces of advice from school regarding support services appropriate to their children learning needs (Mapunda et al, 2017).

## **2.2 Theories on Academic achievement of Slow Learners**

The concept of academic achievement typically refers to the level of formal education that students successfully complete and their ability to achieve consistent success throughout their academic journey. This encompasses various aspects of their educational experience, including their academic performance and the educational milestones they reach ("Love To Know Media", n.d.).

Academic achievement can also be understood as a child's current knowledge or skills in a specific subject area, as well as the broader knowledge, skills, and understanding they acquire through their schooling (Hemwati, 2014). Thomas Matingwina (2018), in his research on health, academic achievement, and school-based interventions, defined academic achievement as encompassing academic performance, educational outcomes, and the overall level of achievement attained by a learner, teacher, or institution in relation to their established educational goals.

Student academic performance is often represented through various measures such as test scores, grades assigned at school, and even national-level assessments. In essence, academic achievement reflects the performance outcomes that indicate the extent to which an individual has accomplished specific goals within an educational setting, particularly in schools, colleges, and higher education institutions (Steinmayr, et al., 2014). Key indicators of student academic achievement in these settings include retention rates, graduation rates, and completion rates ("Office Institutional Research (Student Achievement)", n.d.).

### **2.3 Factors associated with Academic achievement of Slow learners**

Guruvaiah (2021) suggests that the academic achievement of slow learners is influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including those related to the student, the teacher, the school's location, parental education levels, and family income.

Appaji Korikana (2020) identifies several factors that contribute to low academic achievement and slow learning, categorizing them as:

1. **Environmental factors:** These encompass various external factors that can hinder a child's learning, such as inadequate family support for learning, limited school resources (e.g., large class sizes, insufficient teacher training), nutritional deficiencies, sleep difficulties, frequent changes in schools or

teaching styles, poor communication between parents/guardians and teachers, negative parental attitudes towards education, and low parental education levels.

2. **Student-related factors:** These include internal factors that can affect a child's learning, such as prolonged illness, frequent absences from school, feelings of inferiority, poor memory, sensory impairments (e.g., hearing or vision problems), lack of motivation for education, lack of foundational knowledge, and psychological factors.

The identification of children with special educational needs and the assessment of their learning needs are fundamental for providing effective intervention services. While slow learners may not have disabilities that require special education services, they do learn at a slower pace compared to their average or fast-learning peers. This slower learning pace can lead to lower academic achievement due to the various factors mentioned earlier.

However, much of the existing research on slow learners has primarily focused on their identification. For instance, Vasudevan A (2017) concentrated on the causes of slow learning, the challenges faced by slow learners, and appropriate educational programs. Appaji Korikana (2020) examined slow learning as a universal issue and explored suitable educational opportunities for these learners. Other studies have investigated teaching strategies and educational programs designed to support slow learners, such as Malik, Nehman & Hanif (2012) on the impact of academic interventions on developmental skills, Sangeeta (2011) on the psychology and educational programs for slow learners, Ranjana (2014) on the challenges faced by slow learners, Melyana, Sumaryanto & Achmad (2019) on thematic learning strategies for slow learners in inclusive elementary schools, and Hartini, Widryaningtyas & Mashlulah (2017) on project-based learning models for slow learners in primary schools.

There is a notable gap in research that specifically examines how special educational needs (SEN) assessment of students with special educational needs, including slow learners, influences their academic achievement. This research gap underscores the importance of investigating the relationship between SEN assessment and academic achievement in slow learners to further enhance their educational outcomes. To address this gap, this research investigates the importance of SEN assessment on the academic achievement of slow learners, both in Rwanda and globally, with data collected from seven lower secondary day schools in the Kamonyi District.

## **2.4 Summary of literature view**

This chapter began by introducing the concept of a literature review, focusing specifically on the importance of SEN assessment on the academic achievement of slow learners. It delves into the theoretical underpinnings of special educational needs assessment practices for slow learners and explores the concept of academic achievement in this population.

The section on SEN assessment practices examines the significance of SEN assessment, key considerations for conducting statutory SEN assessments, the crucial role of parental involvement in the assessment process, the importance of appropriate educational placement and provisions following assessment, and the challenges schools encounter in assessing the learning needs of slow learners. It also provides an overview of the various factors that can influence the academic achievement of slow learners.

## **CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0. Introduction**

This chapter defines the methodology to be utilized in the study; it outlines the design of the study, including the sampling and data collection process, researcher positionality, and data analysis, validity and trustworthiness and ethical considerations of the study.

### **3.1 Research design**

This study used mixed research approach which employs a descriptive survey design to investigate importance of SEN Assessment on academic achievement of slow learners in lower Secondary day schools, Kamonyi District-Rwanda.

Descriptive research aims at accurately and systematically describing a population, situation or a phenomenon by responding to how, where, what and when questions with no emphasis on why questions (McCombes, S., 2022).

According to John W, Creswell (2012), descriptive survey design refers to procedures in which researchers administer a survey to a sample or entire population under study for describing the attitudes, opinions, behaviors or characteristics of the given population and It has been used for long time to statistically analyze the data and interpret their meaning by relating results of the statistical test back to previous research studies.

Survey designs are more beneficial to educational research through providing quantitative descriptions of the characteristics, behaviors as well as attitudes of students, teachers, school leaders, parents/ guardians, district education leaders and other education partners. Survey designs also provide guidance on effective policy and program decisions (J. Walston, J. Redford & Bhatt, 2017)

### **3.2 Target Population**

According to Kombo D.K. & Tromp, D.L. (2006) in their study entitled “Proposal and Thesis Writing: An introduction”, a population is a group of individual objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement.

This study targeted all slow learners from all secondary day schools and their parents, teachers and head teachers in lower secondary education level as well as the sector education inspectors in KAMONYI District.

### **3.3 Sample size determination**

KAMONYI District is composed of 12 sectors, which means that 30% of them is four sectors. These four sectors were purposefully chosen and each sector has had at least one school with 9YBE or complete system of twelve-year basic education (12YBE).

The sample size was composed of all 7 head teachers in lower secondary day schools, all 36 teachers and all 28 slow learners and their parents as well as all 4 sector education inspectors which altogether makes the total of 103 people from four selected sectors of Kamonyi District.

#### 3.3.1 Sampling Techniques

According to Khan (2008), sampling is the selection of a part of group with the sole aim of collection of complete information; and the selected or chosen part which is used to determine the feature of the entire population is known as the sample.

In this regard, the purposive sampling was used to help the researcher have respondents who were expected to provide the relevant data.

According to Mugenda (2003), purposive sampling is a sampling technique that allows a researcher to use cases that have the required information with respect to the objectives of his or her study. It is also referred to as a sample selected for a specific purpose.

The sampling procedures also involved stratified sampling so that the sample size from each school will reflect its proportion of males to females' number to be represented equally during the study (John W, Creswell, 2012)

In this study, the researcher selected respondents purposively because they were believed to be with the best quality information in relation to the study; and this regarded not only headteacher, teachers, slow learners who

were available in the school in each ordinary level class in selected day secondary schools but also slow learners' parents or guardians as shown in the table below:

**Table 3. 1 Sample size determination**

Sectors	Name of Secondary Schools	Number of Head teachers		Number of teachers (ordinary level)		Number of Slow learners		Number of local authorities		Number of Parents		Total
		Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
RUNDA	G S Ruyenzi	0	1	2	5	3	1	1	0	3	1	17
	G S Kagina	0	1	3	4	3	2			4	1	18
	GS Gasharara	0	1	2	3	2	2			4	0	14
RUGARI KA	G S Rugarika	0	1	2	4	3	2	0	1	4	1	18
	G S Masaka	0	1	1	4	2	2			3	0	13
Gacurabwenge	GS Gacurabwenge	0	1	2	3	3	1	1	0	3	2	16
RUKOMA								0	1			
	GS Murehe Protestant	0	1	3	2	4	0			2	2	15
Total	7	0	7	14	22	19	9	2	2	22	6	103

**Source: Primary data (August, 2023)**

Every member in the target population plays a significant role in as much as the completion of slow learners' studies in lower secondary education level.

The head teachers were selected because of being the executive heads of the schools, and are believed to be supervisors of all schools' programs. They were able to give the right information required by the researcher.

Parents or guardians were selected due to their unconsiderable contribution in identifying children's learning needs including that of resulted from developmental challenges, socio-economic status of families as well as other challenges that prevent their children from learning successfully as others. Parents or guardians have also a crucial role in encouraging revision of the learnt content and provide a help, if possible, when their children are doing home works.

The teachers were selected, due to their role in the formation of students by providing all necessary basic knowledge, assisting and guiding them throughout, and assessing their performance as well as learning needs, being acquainted with skills and knowledge on the issues that the students face during their schooling period.

Local government authorities (Sector Education Inspectors) provided the information from the social problems they receive from vulnerable people, including that of the parents of slow learners along with other children with other special educational needs. Sector Education Inspectors were also supposed to provide information on the current practices of SEN Assessment within different schools under their inspection.

Finally, Slow learners were selected because the study concerned them and they were aware of their problems

### **3.4 Data Collection Methods**

In quantitative research, data collection typically involves numeric data and mathematical models are used as methods of data analysis (Williams, C., 2007).

Methods of quantitative data collection including probability sampling, structured questionnaire, interview and observation while quantitative information is often collected through structured questionnaire with a series of questions starting with "how much" or "how many" ("Quantitative Data Collection : Best 5 methods", 2022).

During this study, the researcher used two sources of data, namely primary and secondary data. Primary Data known as First hand or Field Data are defined as the information the researcher got from the field, that is from the sampled participant and it is original in nature.

For the researcher to do the primary data collection, he contacted the respondents right in the field by using two methods of data collection, namely through interviewing respondents as well as using survey which usually involves the use of self-administered questionnaires.

Secondary Data are defined as the information the researcher got by consulting the existing resources that are from library, documents, research articles, internet, newspapers, journals and government annual reports. Reviewing the existing literature on this study helped to answer the questions of the research.

#### 3.4.1 Data collection instruments

Data collection instruments refers to the set of tests, questionnaires, checklists, interview guides, case studies, observations, surveys or any other forms intended to collect data from respondents ("What is Data Collection: Methods, Types, Tools and Techniques", 2023)

In this study, data collection instruments were basically self-administered questionnaires, which comprised the open and close ended questions, as well as attitudinal questions, that the respondents were required to answer to the best of their knowledge. The questionnaires were administered to the sampled teachers, slow learners as well as their parents or guardians while the interview guide was used on the side of head teachers and Sector Education Inspectors.

##### 3.4.1.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaire refers to a research instrument containing a series of questions namely written or oral questions used for collecting useful information from respondents in order to measure their behavior, preferences, intentions, attitudes and opinions ("What is a questionnaire and How Is It used in Research?", 2022).

In this study, the researcher designed both open and close ended questions, where open ended questions had no predetermined responses, while close ended ones had predetermined responses.

The questionnaires were administered by the researcher and directed to teachers, Slow learners as well as their parents at 7 selected secondary day schools. The questionnaire which was used in this study was divided into three sections based on variables and objectives. The section A was composed of the close ended questions, section B composed of the open-ended questions, while sections C composed of questions whereby respondents indicated their level of agreement on a five points scale through assigned numbers: Strongly Disagree (5), Disagree (4), Neutral (3), Agree (2), and Strongly Agree (1).

#### 3.4.1.2 Interview

Interview as data collection method refers to the presentation of oral-verbal questions and responses that can be done by asking questions through telephone call or in a face-to-face contact with the person (M. kumar Sharma, n.d)

Interview is one of the techniques that were employed on the field during this study. It involved short and precise open and closed questions directed to the head teachers and Sector Education Inspectors only.

#### 3.4.1.3 Administration of data collection instruments

As noted earlier, the interview and questionnaires were used to collect data; and this was conducted within the period of four weeks. The researcher prepared a schedule and communicated with the concerned schools.

To ensure smooth running of this exercise, the school administrators were requested in advance to avail a place that is calm for the respondents to concentrate and answer to the questions freely.

For the interview guide, the researcher avoided to flick through papers and read from the list, this helped him to focus his attention on the interviewee and get the right information. Each of these instruments were preceded by the introduction on the side of the researcher in order to explain the purpose of the study to the respondents, hence showing them the importance of their involvement in it.

### **3.5 Validity and Reliability**

#### **3.5.1. Validity of Instruments**

Validity of a research instrument refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it intends to measure (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008)

To ensure content validity, Data collection instruments were constructed in such a way that they had an adequate number of items and that each item or question on the scale had a link with the objectives of the study and covers a full range of issues being measured.

The instruments were discussed with colleagues and the supervisor, then later for interviews, the researcher used simple language and clear instructions appropriate to the respondents in the interview.

Questions were rephrased to ensure consistency in responses of the participants. The respondents who participated in the study were those who were well informed, knowledgeable and capable to provide reliable answers.

#### **3.5.1 Reliability of Instruments**

A research instrument is known to be reliable if it reproduces the same results over multiple trials ("Reliability in a research: Definition and assessment Types", 2023). In this research, the reliability of the instruments was established after a pilot study conducted on a selected group of 12 slow learners, 6 teachers, 4 parents as well as the two headteachers from the two secondary day schools namely GS Hilltop Academy and GS GIHARA that are found in RUNDA Sector, Kamonyi district in order to establish the fitness of the instruments in the study. Given the X and Y value obtained through data from the two respective schools to calculate the Pearson Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ) that establishes the relationship between data from these two schools, the correlation coefficient was 0.84 which proved the research instrument is reliable as the reliability requires at least 0.8 (Karras. J D, 1997). These schools were not later included in my study sample.

### **3.6 Data analysis procedure**

The views of the respondents were analyzed quantitatively. Quantitative data analysis refers to data analysis process that is based on numbers or can easily be converted into numbers with no meaning loss (Warren, Jansen

&, 2020). According to Ofem Eteng (2022), quantitative data analysis is based on description and interpretation of data through numerical variables and statistics. Its meaningfulness is determined by the particular goals and objectives of the project at hand; the same data can be analyzed and synthesized from multiple angles depending on the particular research or evaluation questions being addressed.

The procedure for analyzing the data from questionnaires and Interviews were inspired from the principles of 'Quantitative Content Analysis'. Quantitative content analysis is based on the systematic coding and quantification of content which is either written, verbal and visual data so as to summarize them (Katy, 2020).

Data from questions in the structured interview were made up of 'closed-ended' and 'open-ended' questions. The method that was used to process these data is descriptive statistics.

Descriptive statistics instruments include the use of: frequency, tables, percentages, means, standard deviation, maximum and minimum values, averages and measures of variation of the data about the average (Kaplan, 1994).

### **3.7 Ethical issues**

The researcher asked for the introductory letter from the University of Rwanda –College of Education, school of Inclusive and Special Needs Education (UR-CE) to be able to collect data in the targeted schools and Institution. This letter was used to get an official letter from KAMONYI District which granted the researcher the permission to collect data from the seven schools from 4 sectors. Then the researcher proceeded to meet the participants who were involved in the study.

In order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of interviewees and respondents, the names of the participants were not disclosed. At the beginning of each interview or the introduction of the questionnaire, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, asked for consent, and explained their rights as participants to take part in the study. The researcher ensured respondents that all their responses have to be only used for the purpose of the study and that all their responses have to be strictly treated with confidentiality

## **CHAPTER 4 : FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter is composed of two sections : section one describes general and demographic Information while section two presents the findings, interpretations and discussions according to the objectives.

The objectives designed to guide the study were :

- i) To identify the basic considerations undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners in 9 & 12 years basic education in Kamonyi district.
- ii) To evaluate the contribution of parental involvement in assessment of their children's learning needs for improving their academic achievement.
- iii) To examine the importance of educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners on their academic achievement.
- iv) To identify major challenges encountered by lower secondary day schools during assessing learning needs of slow learners.

### **4.1 SECTION I : General and Demographic information**

The purpose of this study was to examine the Importance of Special educational needs assessment on academic achievement of slow learners in lower secondary day schools, Kamonyi district –Rwanda. This section is about general and demographic information.

#### **4.1.1 General information**

This study collected information from Sector Education Inspectors, head teachers of Secondary day schools, teachers, slow learners and their parents or guardians.

The research findings were presented using descriptive statistics namely frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation based on the above research objectives. For each category of the information presented in a given table, it is accompanied by interpretation and discussion.

The practice of collecting data took place within three months because Sector Education Inspectors and head teachers were sometimes absent. Finding teachers, students as well as their parents at school during holidays, it was also difficult as they were busy doing holidays occupations which required the researcher to wait for them many times.

4.1.2 Demographic information

4.1.2.1 Demographic data of teachers

The demographic information of teachers were analyzed in terms of age, gender, teaching experience and the area of specialization.

4.1.2.1.1 Gender and Age of teachers

The teachers were asked for specifying whether they were male or female as well as showing their ages.

Table 4.1 Age and gender of teachers

Age in years	Male		Female		Total	Percentage
	Frequence	Percentage	Frequence	Percentage		
18-24	0	0.0%	0	0.00%	0	0.0%
25-30	4	18.2%	1	7.14%	5	13.9%
31-35	4	18.2%	6	42.86%	10	27.8%
36-40	9	40.9%	4	28.57%	13	36.1%
41-50	4	18.2%	1	7.14%	5	13.9%
>50	1	4.5%	2	14.29%	3	8.3%
<b>Total</b>	22	100.0%	14	100.00%	36	100.0%

Source : Primary data (August, 2023)

Table 4.1 indicates that teachers were all beyond 24 years. Few were those aged at greater 50 years (8.3 %).

The majority were aged between 36-40 years (36.1%). Those between 25-30 years were 13.9%, between 31-35 years (27.8%), between 18-22 and 41-50 years (13.9%) and between 18-24 years (0%).

#### 4.1.2.1.2 Teaching experience of teachers

To get information about teaching experience of teachers, teachers were asked to indicate the Period they had taught throughout their teaching career.

Table 4.2 Teaching experience of teachers

Experience in years	Male		Female		Total	Percentage
	Frequence	Percentage	Frequence	Percentage		
1-3 years	6	27.3%	4	28.6%	10	27.8%
4-7 years	5	22.7%	4	28.6%	9	25.0%
8-15 years	6	27.3%	3	21.4%	9	25.0%
>15 years	5	22.7%	3	21.4%	8	22.2%
<b>Total</b>	22	100.0%	14	100.0%	36	100.0%

Source : Primary data (August, 2023)

Reffering to the table 4.2 that illustrates the teaching experience of teachers, 10 (27.8 %) among all teachers had been teaching for 1-3 years, 9 of 36 teachers (25.0%) taught for 4-7 years, other 9 teachers (25.0%) taught for 8-15 years while the remaining 8 teachers (22.2%) taught for more than 15 years. If this period of teaching experience is expressed in terms of teacher’s competency for facilitating and helping students with learning needs, these teachers might be competent to enable successful learning of students with learning needs.

The above data were supported by both headteachers and sector education inspectors that new teachers especially teachers with no teaching qualification struggle for identifying students with special educational needs as well as assessing their learning difficulties while some experienced teachers and even trained teachers often change schools and others leave teaching career.

Tara Kini and Anne Podolsky (2016) in their study entitled “*Does Teaching Experience Increase Teacher Effectiveness ?*”, stipulated that although new teachers are less effective in teaching than their

experiencedpeers, they become more effective teachers in their first years of teaching and continue to improve as long as they get hands-on training meeting their needs throughout their profession. Indeed, teachers become stable and refine their teaching skills as long as they teach the same subject area in a given same grade level repeatedly.

4.1.2.1.3 Academic qualification of teachers

Table 4.3 Academic qualification of teachers

Qualification	Gender				Total	Percentage
	Male		Female			
	Frequence	Percentage	Frequence	Percentage		
A2	1	4.55%	0	0	1	2.8%
A1	7	31.82%	6	42.86%	13	36.1%
A0	14	63.64%	8	57.14%	22	61.1%
<b>Total</b>	22	100.00%	14	100.00%	36	100.0%

Source : Primary data (August, 2023)

Table 4.3 indicates the data on the academic qualification of the 36 teachers participated in this research. The majority of the teachers under this study had Bachelor’s degrees which represented by 22 teachers (61.1%), 13 (61.1%) had Diploma while 3 remaining teachers (2.8%) had advanced certificate of secondary school. Unless the teacher which had high shool certificate, the qualification of the remaining teachers under this study was considered adequate to secondary schools in Rwanda.

Despite of teachers’ qualification, The most important challenge they face is the lack of training to be equipped with enough knowledge and skills for identifying and effectively supporting learners who experience learning barriers while even the trainings that are provided are not effective to enable teachers identify students with learning needs as well as giving them appropriate support (Abongdia, Foncha & Dakada, 2015).

Regardless of teacher’s qualification, during this study, headteachers and sector education inspectors stipulated that teachers do not have enough knowledge and skills regarding the identification of learners with special educational needs as well as doing the assessment of their learning needs. They also claimed that though they were some trained teachers, they did not have effective knowledge and skills to identify learners with special educational needs and provide appropriate support.

4.1.2.1.4 Subject Specialization of teachers

Table 4.4 Subject Specialization of teachers

Specialization	Gender				Total	Percentage
	Male		Female			
	Frequence	Percentage	Frequence	Percentage		
<b>Maths &amp; Sciences</b>	12	54.5%	7	50.0%	19	52.8%
<b>Humanities</b>	7	31.8%	3	21.4%	10	27.8%
<b>Arts and Languages</b>	3	13.6%	4	28.6%	7	19.4%
<b>Total</b>	22	100.0%	14	100.0%	36	100.0%

Source : Primary data (August, 2023)

Table 4.4 indicates data for Subject Specialization of teachers participated in this research. 19 (52.8%) of the teachers under this study taught mathematics and Science while 10 (27.8%) of them taught Humanities while 7 (19.4%) teachers were teaching Arts and Languages. Referring to these teachers’ subject specialization, they pretended to be competent to teach the subjects of their area of specialization and it might be more helpful if they were both knowledged and skilled to identify students with special educational needs as well as assessing their learning needs so that they provide appropriate intervention services.

Despite of teachers’expertise in their area of specialization, students with learning barriers especially slow learners should keep on experiencing poor performance throughout their studies if teachers do not have core or basic understanding of SEN as well as the teaching expertise in SEN (Hartley, 2010). Based on information given by teachers and headteachers in this study, it was shown that some of the teachers do not have basic understanding and skills concerning identification of students with learning needs to give them appropriate support whereas other teachers do not have enough required competencies which lead teachers to focus on results from daily classroom performance during the practice of SEN Assessment.

4.1.2.2 Demographic data of parents / guardians of slow learners

4.1.2.2.1 Gender and Age of students’ parents/ guardians

Table 4.5 Gender and Age of students’ parents/ guardians

Age in years	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	Percentage
	Frequence	Percentage	Frequence	Percentage		
18-24	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
25-30	0	0.0%	1	4.5%	1	3.6%
31-40	0	0.0%	11	50.0%	11	39.3%
41-50	5	83.3%	6	27.3%	11	39.3%
51-60	1	16.7%	3	13.6%	4	14.3%
>60	0	0.0%	1	4.5%	1	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source : Primary data (August, 2023)

Table 4.5 indicates that parents/ guardians under this study were all beyond 24 years. Few of them (3) aged at greater 60 years (3.6 %) as same as those aged between 25-30 years.

The number of parents aged between 31-40 years were 11(39.3%) as same as those aged between 41-50 years while 4 parents aged between 51-60 years (14.3%). Based on above data, 3.6% among the parents under this study were young and ready to follow and facilitate learning of their children while 3.6% were considered adult and mature enough to mentor, coach and monitor their children for successful learning but they might meet language barriers as most of them they had never neither studied nor used english language throughout their life and some of them did not attend any school. Among of the parents under this study, 78.6% of them aged between 31 up to 50 years old which proved their maturity, readiness and force to monitor, coach, mentor and work hand in hand with teachers as well as school leaders for successful learning of their children.

Despite of parents’expected significant participation in identifying students with special educational needs, SEN Assessment as well as IEP process based on their crucial information about the student’s observations outside the school setting, developmental milestones of the student along with the student’s motivations and interests (Kirsten, 2018), parents/ guardians under this study claimed that they were mostly busy struggling for life and their available time to follow their children’s studies was very limited.

4.1.2.2.3 Academic qualifications of parents

Table 4.6 Academic qualifications of parents

Qualifications	Gender				Total	Percentage
	Male		Female			
	Frequence	Percentage	Frequence	Percentage		
<b>Not attended School</b>	0	0.0%	1	4.5%	1	3.6%
<b>Adult literacy</b>	0	0.0%	2	9.1%	2	7.1%
<b>&lt; P3</b>	0	0.0%	1	4.5%	1	3.6%
<b>P3</b>	2	33.3%	1	4.5%	3	10.7%
<b>P4</b>	1	16.7%	0	0.0%	1	3.6%
<b>P5</b>	0	0.0%	2	9.1%	2	7.1%
<b>P6</b>	2	33.3%	5	22.7%	7	25.0%

<b>P6+VTC</b>	0	0.0%	3	13.6%	3	10.7%
<b>P8</b>	1	16.7%	1	4.5%	2	7.1%
<b>S3</b>	0	0.0%	2	9.1%	2	7.1%
<b>S5</b>	0	0.0%	1	4.5%	1	3.6%
<b>A2</b>	0	0.0%	1	4.5%	1	3.6%
<b>A0</b>	0	0.0%	2	9.1%	2	7.1%
<b>Total</b>	6	100.0%	22	100.0%	28	100.0%

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

Table 4.6 indicates data on the academic qualification of the 28 parents participated in this research.

2 (7.1%) of the parents/ guardians under this study had Bachelor's degree. The number of parents which only followed adult literacy studies was same as those higher level of education was primary five, primary eight and secondary three with equivalent ratio that was same as that of bachelor's degree holders. In addition, 3 of them had education level of P3 and other 3 with education level of P6 along with VTC certificate while 7 (25.0%) among these parents had P6 as higher level of education.

The above table also indicates that the number of parents with high school (A2) certificate was same as those with high educational level of S5, P4, those of education level less than P3 as well as those who did not attend any school. Based on information from the above table, it is clear that parents which managed to pursue secondary school studies were 6 among 28 parents while those managed to finish their high school studies and got their certificates were only 3 among 28 parents.

Normally, education background of parents/ guardians has a significant impact on academic achievement of students especially slow learners who need daily support in revising the learnt content, doing home works, reading books to improve their learning performance as well as their self-esteem. However, as parents/ guardians explained, they did not have adequate knowledge and skills to help their students in improving their learning performance due to the fact that most of them they did not even finish high school studies and a big number of them studied only primary school studies, others did not finish primary school studies while some of them did n't attend school anymore.

This gap in terms of parents' education impacts parental involvement to collaborate and work together with teachers and school leaders in monitoring their children's education as a result of inferior complex, low understanding regarding the essence of attending school as well as mutual collaboration between parents and school community (Garry Hornby & Rayleen Lafaele, 2011) and (Julie K, 2009)

#### 4.1.2.2.3 Number of parents/ guardians' children

Table 4.7 Number of parents/ guardians' children

Marital Staus	Number of children							
	One		Two		more than Two		Total	%
Parents/ guardians	frequence	%	Frequence	%	Frequence	%		
<b>Widow</b>	0	0%	1	20%	0	0%	1	4%
<b>Separated mother</b>	1	25%	1	20%	1	5%	3	11%
<b>Married (couple)</b>	3	75%	3	60%	18	95%	24	86%
<b>Total</b>	4	100%	5	100%	19	100%	28	100%

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

Table 4.7 indicates that 24 (86%) out of 28 parents/ guardians under this study were married and lived as couple with mostly more than two children, 3 (11%) out of 28 parents/ guardians were separated mothers and had at least one child while the remaining one (4%) was widow with two children. The impact of family size on academic achievement of students especially slow learners depends on the fact that of either being single family as result of death of one partner, imprisonment and divorce or couple family.

Based on data from this study, parents explained that parents in single parent - families especially single mothers, they met difficulties in finding school feeding contribution as well as school materials for their children because of doing low income generating jobs which did not even satisfy their basic needs. Although

many of these parents lived as couples, they did not get time to easily monitor and evaluate the learning progress of their children because of being busy struggling for survival of their families as they had many children to satisfy comparing to their low income.

Generally, most of the time, the academic performance of students from intact families/ two parent families was different from that of children from single families especially those with low income.

Despite of family social-economic status, parents in intact families work together to provide sufficient care, attention as well as inspiring and motivating their children to learn, supervise and help in revision of the learnt content, facilitating doing home works and collaborate with school community though this can be impacted by family’s struggles for life. Children from intact families also benefit from mother and figure attachment and get emotional stability while children from single parent families/ broken families suffer from emotional problems, disciplinary problems, lack of motivation for learning, distraction and insufficiency in terms of getting school feeding contribution, School materials as well as satisfying other basic needs (Akinleke, 2017).

#### 4.1.2.2.4 Parents with disabilities or chronic illness

Table 4.8 Parents with disabilities or chronic illness

Type of disability or chronic illness	Male		Female		Total	%
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%		
Asthma	1	16.7%	0	0.0%	1	3.6%
Diabete	1	16.7%	0	0.0%	1	3.6%
Visual disability	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Physical disability	1	16.7%	2	9.1%	3	10.7%
Hearing disability	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mental disability	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
No disability or chronic illness	2	33.3%	20	90.9%	22	78.6%

Other chronic diseases	1	16.7%	0	0.0%	1	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	6	100.0%	22	100.0%	28	100.0%

Source : Primary data (August, 2023)

Table 4.8 indicates the number of parents with disabilities or chronic illness, based on this table, 22 (78%) out of 28 parents/ guardians did not have disability or any chronic disease, 3 (10.7%) had physical disability while the number of parents/ guardians suffered from Asthma was equally represented as those suffered from diabetes as chronic disease and among parents under this study none had visual or hearing difficulties.

Parents/ guardians which had physical disability showed that they met different difficulties including attending parent meeting or any time they were called for coming to school because of transport barriers and this limit their involvement in education of their children.

These parents with physical disabilities had limitations in terms of getting income generating jobs because of mobility difficulties. Indeed, parents with diabetes and Asthma explained that it was difficult for them to get school feeding contribution as well as enough school materials for their children because of frequent illness. To have parent/ guardian with disability or any chronic disease for students, increases their absenteeism rate or even school dropout as they may be required to care for their parents, and even they may be involved in some low income generating jobs for family survival which later lowers the expected number of grades completed (MONT & NGUYEN, 2013).

#### 4.1.2.3 Demographic data of slow learners

##### 4.1.2.3.1 Age and gender of slow learners

Table 4.9 Age and gender of slow learners

Age in years	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage

< 14 Years	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
14	0	0.0%	3	15.8%	3	10.7%
15	2	22.2%	1	5.3%	3	10.7%
16	2	22.2%	3	15.8%	5	17.9%
17	2	22.2%	5	26.3%	7	25.0%
18	2	22.2%	6	31.6%	8	28.6%
19	0	0.0%	1	5.3%	1	3.6%
20	1	11.1%	0	0.0%	1	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	9	100.0%	19	100.0%	28	100.0%

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

Table 4.9 indicates that there was no student aged less than 14 years while 8 (28.6%) out of 28 were 18 years old, 7 (25.0%) students were 17 years old, 5 (17.9%) out of 18 were 16 years old, the number of slow learners which were 16 and 15 years old, were equally represented with 10.7% and the number of slow learners with 19 and 20 ages were also equally represented with 3.6%.

At the time of entering lower secondary education level, younger students have high concentration on their academic studies though they may sometimes experience minor distractions and this later enables them to improve their poor academic achievement in this level (Kigon, 2014).

According to Kigon Nam (2014), despite of slow learning of younger students in lower secondary education level, they may perform more successful than their older peers. Data supported by both parents and teachers under this study, showed that students especially slow learner who were older than their peers because of different factors including frequent illness and previous repetitions in primary schools, they likely experienced poor academic performance comparing to their younger peers.

#### 4.1.2.3.2 Students' grade level

Table 4.10 Students' grade level

Grade level	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequence	Percentage	Frequence	Percentage	Frequence	Percentage
S1	5	55.56%	3	15.8%	8	28.6%
S2	2	22.22%	12	63.2%	14	50.0%
S3	2	22.22%	4	21.1%	6	21.4%
Total	9	100.00%	19	100.0%	28	100.0%

Source : Primary data (August, 2023)

Table 4.10 Indicates the corresponding grade level of the slow learners under this research. Based on the above table, a half (50.0%) of all slow learners under this study studied in senior two, 8 among of them studied in senior one while the remaining 6 slow learners studied in S3. Students may be slow learners because of different factors namely the learning gaps from the previous academic grade levels, poor concentration skills, low intellectual abilities and poor cognitive entry characteristics, health and emotional problems, long absence from school, undetected physical defects and others (Vasudevan A, 2017).

Data supported by this study showed that slow learners in lower secondary education levels may experience learning difficulties as a result of language barriers, the learning gaps in different subjects resulted from the way they learnt the linked subjects in primary education levels, the new teaching and learning environment as well as the family life conditions.

#### 4.1.2.3.3 Students with disabilities or chronic illness

Table 4.11 Students with disabilities or chronic illness

Type of disability or chronic illness	Male		Female		Total	%
	Frequence	%	Frequence	%		
Asthma	1	11.1%	1	5.3%	2	7.1%
Diabete	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

<b>Visual disability (low vision)</b>	0	0.0%	1	5.3%	1	3.6%
<b>Physical disability</b>	1	11.1%	0	0.0%	1	3.6%
<b>Hearing disability</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Headache</b>	0	0.0%	2	10.5%	2	7.1%
<b>No disability or chronic illness</b>	6	66.7%	13	68.4%	19	67.9%
<b>Other chronic diseases</b>	1	11.1%	2	10.5%	3	10.7%
<b>Total</b>	9	100.0%	19	100.0%	28	100.0%

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

Table 4.11 Indicates the ratio of children with disabilities or chronic diseases. Referring to the above table, 19 (67.9%) out of 28 slow learners had no disability or any chronic disease, the number of students with headache and asthma were equally represented with 7.1%, 3 (10.7%) slow learners had other chronic diseases other than asthma and headache while those with visual and physical disabilities were equally represented with 3.6%.

Learners with disability or chronic diseases may be disadvantaged in a lot of school due to frequent absenteeism at school. Children may have different disabilities including physical disabilities, sensory difficulties, mental disabilities and learning disabilities.

Many chronic diseases including headache, asthma, diabetes, sickle cell anemia and epilepsy lead to poor academic achievement, social and emotional problems as well as impaired cognitive abilities of the victims throughout their studies (Howard Taras et al, 2005). Learners with physical disabilities may have posture and mobility barriers mostly because of inaccessible buildings and surrounding areas as well as the lack of assistive devices.

In addition, learners with physical disabilities may have posture and mobility barriers mostly because of inaccessible buildings and surrounding areas as well as the lack of assistive devices ("Implications for

Learning", n.d.). Some learners have difficulties in receiving information through hearing or sight while others have difficulties in processing received information.

Parents/ guardians under this study with children suffered from chronic diseases or disability showed that their children experienced frequent absenteeism at school with frequent low academic performance through their studies.

#### 4.1.2.3.4 Repetition rate of slow learners under this study

Table 4.12 Repetition rate of slow learners under this study

Number of repetitions	Male		Female		Total	%
	Frequence	%	Frequence	%		
<b>Once in S1</b>	2	22.2%	5	26.3%	7	25.0%
<b>Twice in S1</b>	2	22.2%	0	0.0%	2	7.0%
<b>More than twice in S1</b>	0	0.0%	11	57.9%	11	39.0%
<b>Once in S2</b>	2	22.2%	0	0.0%	2	7.0%
<b>Twice in S2</b>	0	0.0%	2	10.5%	2	7.0%
<b>Twice in S1 and S2</b>	1	11.1%	0	0.0%	1	4.0%
<b>More than twice in S2</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Once in S3</b>	1	11.1%	1	5.3%	2	7.0%
<b>Many tmes in primary</b>	1	11.1%	0	0.0%	1	4.0%
<b>Total</b>	9	100.0%	19	100.0%	28	100.0%

Source : Primary data (August, 2023)

Table 4.12. Indicates the repetition rate of slow learners under this study. Based on data from above table, 11(39.0%) out of 28 repeated more than twice in S1, 7 (25.0%) repeated once in S1, the number of slow learners who repeated twice in S1, once in S2, twice in S2, once in S3 were equally represented with 7.0% while slow learners which repeated many times in primary education levels and those who repeated twice in S1 nad S2 were equally represented with 4.0%.

Vulnerable repeaters are students with irregular attendance, from poorer families, that are overage, or that are working domestically in homes (D.O. Kyereko et al., 2022). Grade repetition is expected as an intervention strategy to enable the student who repeated the same grade level to master the curriculum and get the required competencies so as to meet the promotion requirements from reaching the next grade level (D.O. Kyereko et al., 2022).

Repeating in the same grade level may be an intervention strategy if the assessment of learning needs of the student advised to repeat suggests it as the right decision otherwise the repeaters may become demotivated and lead to their frequent absenteeism and school dropout. Frequent repetition increases the tendency of absenteeism and school dropout for slow learners as they feel bored of long school years, feel stigmatized and undervalued in the school environment (Okoth, Odongo & Onderi, 2022)

Data supported by this study, showed that slow learners often repeat the same grade level because of their frequent poor academic performance and do not meet the promotion criteria from the next grade level.

Poor academic performance of these students may be resulted from low intellectual abilities and impaired cognitive abilities, long illness linked with frequent absenteeism, lack of quality education, language barriers, family conflicts, learning gaps from the previous grade levels, sensory difficulties among others and some students may keep on repeating regardless of the number they repeat the same grade level since their poor academic performance is their nature then teachers and school leaders may sometimes decide to promote a student in the next grade level regardless his/ her poor academic performance.

#### 4.1.2.3.5 Absenteeism rate of slow learners in a week

Table 4.13 Absenteeism rate of slow learners

Absenteeism rate in a week	Male		Female		Total	%
	Frequence	%	Frequence	%		
Once a week	0	0.0%	2	9.1%	2	7.1%
Twice a week	3	50.0%	4	18.2%	7	25.0%
Three times	1	16.7%	1	4.5%	2	7.1%
More than 3 times	1	16.7%	1	4.5%	2	7.1%
None a week	1	16.7%	14	63.6%	15	53.6%
<b>Total</b>	6	100.0%	22	100.0%	28	100.0%

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

Table 4.13. Indicates the absenteeism rate of slow learners which participated in this study. Students may be absent at school because of different reasons namely frequent illness, family conflict, lack of motivation for learning because of repeating the same grade level or getting frequent poor academic performance, caring for family as result of parent's disability or chronic illness, lack of school materials and school fees where is required as result of poverty, lack of assistive devices for students with disabilities, Juvenile delinquency, being over age comparing with peers among others.

Learners who are frequently absent at school due to any reason are at risk of low academic achievement, social problems as well as dropping out of school (Claudia W, Diamond-Myrstern & Lisa K, 2018).

Referring to data from this study, parents/ guardians of slow learners in secondary day schools explained that their children often miss school most of time because of lack of motivation as they frequently get low academic performance results and repeat the same grade level, others explained that their children miss school because of chronic illness while some students claimed that their absenteeism is the result of family conflict as well as poverty then they decide to search for some low income generating jobs for survival.

#### 4.1.2.3.6 Range of frequent learning performance results of slow learners

Table 4.14 The range of frequent learning performance results of slow learner

Range of Scores	Grade level	Learning performance in terms of marks					
		Male		Female		Total	%
≤ 20 marks		F	%	F	%		
	S1	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	S2	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	S3	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Mean		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
<b>20-30 marks</b>							
	S1	3	30.0%	0	0.0%	3	10.7%
	S2	1	10.0%	3	16.7%	4	14.3%
	S3	0	0.0%	1	5.6%	1	3.6%
	Total	4	40.0%	4	22.3%	8	28.6%
	SD	1.53		1.527		1.528	
	Mean	1.33	13.3%	1.33	7.4%	2.666	9.5%
<b>31-39 marks</b>							
	S1	1	10.0%	2	11.1%	3	10.7%
	S2	1	10.0%	6	33.3%	7	25.0%
	S3	2	20.0%	3	16.7%	5	17.9%
	Total	4	40.0%	11	61.1%	15	53.6%
	SD	0.58		2.0816		2	
	Mean	1.33	13.3%	3.666	20.4%	5	17.9%
<b>40-45 marks</b>							
	S1	0	10.0%	2	5.6%	2	7.1%
	S2	1	10.0%	2	11.1%	3	10.7%
	S3	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Total	1	20.0%	4	16.7%	5	17.86%
	SD	0.58	20.0%	1.1547		1.528	
	Mean	0.5	10.0%	1.333	8.4%	1.666	5.9%
	<b>Total</b>	9	100.0%	19	100.0%	28	100.0%

Source : Primary data (August, 2023)

Table 4.14. Indicates the range of frequent learning performance results of slow learners under this study. Based on data from above table, the number of students who were frequently scoring between 20 up to 30 marks was 8 (9.5%) out of 28, 15 (53.6%) out of 28 were scoring between 30-39 marks while the remaining 5 (17.86%) students were scoring between 40-45 marks. Besides, 4 out of 9 males understudy were frequently

scoring between 20 and 30 marks, other 4 males were scoring between 30-39 marks while the remaining one was frequently scoring between 40-45 marks which indicates that the majority (8 out of 9) of male students under this study were scoring less than 40 marks. On the other hand, 4 (22.3%) out of 19 female students were frequently scoring between 20-30 marks, 11 (61.1%) out of 19 frequently got between 30-39 marks while the remaining 4 (22.3%) was frequently scoring between 40-45 marks.

Based on the findings from these research works namely (Saral, 2018), (Sultana, 2022) and (Govindarajoo, Selvarajoo & Mohd, 2022), Slow learners are often underachievers in different academic activities because of different factors including impaired cognitive abilities and low intellectual quotient which lead to inability to retain and remember what they learn as well as analyzing and understanding complex problems, short attention span during learning, language difficulties, slow information processing, difficult to work on their own among others.

Other factors that can contribute to low learning performance results of slow learners are emotional factors namely low self-esteem, inferior complex and poor relationship with others.

Furthermore, low performance results resulted from the lack of parental support, family conflicts, family poverty as well the poor collaboration between school community and parents. Despite of slow learning of students, we can't forget the contribution of teachers' attitudes as well as their teaching methodologies and techniques on learning performance of slow learners as these learners often fail to learn effectively using traditional teaching methods.

## **SECTION TWO : Findings, interpretation and discussions**

**Objective 1 :** To identify the procedures undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners in 9 & 12 years basic education in Kamonyi district.

This study intended to find out the procedures undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners in 9 & 12 years.

## **4.2. Basic considerations undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners**

This study therefore presents the findings about characteristics and learning difficulties of slow learners, their historical health and educational background as well as different procedures undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of their learning needs.

### **4.2.1 Characteristics and learning difficulties of slow learners**

#### *4.2.1.1 Views of slow learners on their characteristics and historical background of their learning difficulties*

##### 4.2.1.1.1 Views of slow learners on their characteristics and learning difficulties

Students with slow learning were asked to indicate their side regarding their potential learning difficulties as shown by the results in table 4.15.

Based on data from table 4.15, all respondents indicated that they like tasks that require little thought while 24 out of 28 (85.7 %) respondents stated that learning new ways to think does not excite them. Indeed, respondents' views shown by table 4.15 indicates that 21 (75%) respondents had difficulties to express their self during class presentation or any time they were asked to share their views orally in public and this challenge may be mostly resulted from low self-esteem and inferior complex.

Table 4.15 also indicates that 19 (69.7%) out of 28 had learning difficulties in almost all subjects, 25 (89.3%) respondents had difficulties in reading and understanding what is written in English language which later affected more the way they interpreted what was discussed during learnig and the success of revising the learnt content at home. On the other hand, 24 (85.7%) respondents stated that they had difficulties in interpreting mathematical concepts and it had been a barrier for them to solve any mathematical related problems.

In fact, the learning barriers of students under this study as shown by table 4.15, although other factors can take part, it was mostly due to low cognitive and intellectual abilities as these include memory capacity, information processing, logical reasoning ability, attention span, critical thinking capacity among others.

Moreover, the higher cognitive abilities of a student implies the higher ability to encode information more quickly and accurately in their memory to enable their brain to output more effective information as source of

better academic performance throughout their studies while low intellectual and cognitive abilities lead to learning difficulties and low academic achievement (Yueqi & Shaowei, 2022).

Indeed, table 4.15 indicates, 24 (85.7 %) Respondents stated that they enjoy working in groups than performing tasks individually even home works and they need additional support and remedial activities to improve their learning, so teachers can consider this while planning learning activities, class projects and home works (Ekwueme, 2023)

Table 4.15 Views on slow learners on their characteristics of slow learners

Characteristics/ learning difficulties	Likert scales										Total		Mean	SD
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		F	%		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%				
I like tasks that require little thought once I have learnt them	0	0.0	28	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	28	100.0	2	0
Thinking is not my idea of fun	0	0.0	26	92.9	0	0.0	2	7.1	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.14	0.524
I would prefer complex to simple problems	0	0.0	10	35.7	0	0.0	18	64.3	0	0.0	10	100.0	2.714	0.976
Learning new ways to think does not excite me	0	0.0	24	85.7	0	0.0	4	14.3	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.286	0.713

It's enough for me that something gets the job done, I don't care about how or why it Works.	0	0.0	14	50.0	0	0.0	14	50.0	0	0.0	28	100	3	1.018
It requires extra-time so that I finish the given classroom exercises, quizzes, tests or exam	0	0.0	23	83.1	2	7.1	3	10.7	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.285	0.659
I always need additional support to learn & complete the exercises and home works	0	0.0	22	78.6	3	10.7	3	10.7	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.321	0.669
I have difficulties in handwriting	0	0.0	8	28.6	0	0.0	20	71.4	0	0.0	28	100.0	3.428	0.920
I have difficulties in reading and understanding what is written in English language	0	0.0	25	89.3	0	0.0	3	10.7	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.214	0.63
I often have difficulties in interpreting mathematical concepts	0	0.0	24	85.7	1	3.6	3	10.7	0	0.0	28	100.0	28	100.0
I have difficulties in solving	0	0.0	25	89.3	0	0.0	3	10.7	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.214	0.63

mathematics related problems														
I get bored if I am learning new things or if the learning activity takes more than one hour.	0	0.0	11	39.3	3	10.7	14	50.0	0	0.0	28	100.0	3.107	0.956
I enjoy working in groups than performing tasks individually even home works	0	0.0	27	96.4	0	0.0	1	3.6	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.0714	0.377
I often have difficulties to express my self during class presentation or any time I am asked to share my views.	0	0.0	21	75.0	0	0.0	7	25	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.5	0.881
I have learning difficulties in almost all subjects	0	0.0	19	67.9	4	14.3	5	17.9	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.5	0.793
I enjoy talking about real facts but not abstract stories	0	0.0	28	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	28	100.0	2	0

Source : Primary data (August, 2023)

#### 4.2.1.1.2 Views of slow learners on their historical background of their learning barriers

Table 4.16 Views of slow learners on their historical background of their learning barriers

<b>Students' views</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Does your previous educational background contribute to your low learning performance ?			1.03	0.188
<b>No</b>	1	3.6		
<b>Yes, explain</b>				
Slow learners indicated that they frequently lag behind others in academic performance because of learning gap they had in different subjects as resulted from the way they studied them in primary school and even other grade levels in secondary before the current one	27	96.4		
Total	28	100.0		
<b>Does your health state contribute to your low learning performance ?</b>				
No	16	57.1	1.571	0.503
Yes	12	42.9		
Total	28	100.0		
<b>Do your behaviour or attitudes contribute to your low learning performance ?</b>				
No	11	39.3	1.392	0.49
Yes	17	60.7		
Total	28	100.0		
<b>Does your family background contribute to your low learning performance ?</b>				
No	3	10.7	1.107	0.314
Yes	25	89.3		
<b>Total</b>	28	100.0		
<b>If yes, explain</b>				
Lack of knowledged helper at home in doing home works	25	100.0	1	0
Lack of Guider and facilitator during revising summary notes at home	25	100.0	1	0
Lack of enough school materials and school feeding fees	9	36.0	1.64	0.489
Lack of access to health services due to lack of mutual health insurance	6	24.0	1.76	0.435
Lack of follow up and communication with school for parents	20	80.	1.2	0.408
Does your parent/ guardian talk with you about your learning difficulties as well as learning experience at school ?				
No	17	60.7	1.607	0.497
Yes	11	39.3		
Total	28	100.0		
<b>Is there any influence from your cognitive abilities to your low academic performance ?</b>				

No	7	25.0	1.25	0.440
If yes, explain				
Slow learners stated that they often score low in academic performance throughout their studies because of slow information processing which lead to difficulties in memorising and remembering what is learnt easily and that they got bored easily while learning new concepts requiring much reasoning and critical thinking capacity.	21	75.0		
Total	28	100.0		

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

From table 4.16, students were asked to state whether there had been an influence of their historical background including educational background, health state, attitudes, their psychological characteristics and socio-economic status of their families to their frequent low academic performance.

Based on information from table 4.16, 27 (96.4%) out of 28 indicated that they frequently lag behind others in academic performance because of learning gap they had in different subjects as resulted from the way they studied them in primary school and even other grade levels in secondary studies before the current one.

According to Gaurav Soman (2023) defined a learning gap as result of not having necessary knowledge and expertise for current learning grade level, lack of motivation to improve their learning and poor communication between students and teachers. Addedly, students may develop a learning gap in different subjects due to frequent absenteeism at school because of long term-illness or life challenges in their families and learning difficulties due to personal factors.

Gaurav Soman (2023) explained that despite of challenges of teachers while identifying students' learning gaps either because of big class size or any other reason, teachers have to do their best to remove students' learning gaps through diagnostic assessment to identify the missing fundamental abilities, develop individual education plan based on assessment of learning needs for struggling learners, coordinate the action of peer support between excelling students and slow learners and work as a team for teachers to share expertise and experience.

Besides, 21 (75.0%) respondents stated that they often score low in academic performance throughout their studies because of slow information processing which lead to difficulties in memorising and remembering

what is learnt easily and that they got bored easily while learning new concepts requiring much reasoning and critical thinking capacity.

Moreover, 25 (89.3%) respondents stated that their frequent low academic performance had been also influenced by their family background including misunderstandings between parents which could lead to emotional problems of their children, family poverty, lack of follow up of daily living of their children as well as irresponsibilities of parents regarding the basic needs of their children.

According to TAMÁS KELLER (2015) in his research work entitled « The Power of Family, The Change in Academic Achievement after Breakdown of the Biological Family » explained that children with broken families experience drop in test scores in different academic achievement tests comparing with children from intact families especially those who had intact families before as they experience emotional stress that blocks their motivation and willingness to learn.

Indeed, students under this study as shown on table 4.16, stated that they frequently got low learning performance results due to their family poverty in which their parents struggle to get even what to eat two times a day, difficult to get access on health services because of lack of mutual health insurance, difficult to get school feeding fees as well as basic school materials to enroll learning.

Infact, it is difficult to manage successful learning for the victimy child of the challenges shown in the previous paragraphs as they mostly sleep in classrooms, being physically present but absent mind and lack motivation for learning. Therefore, due to emotional threats of these students, these students often find themselves in school punishment as shown in table 4.16 with 17 (60.7%) out of 28 respondents indicated that they often do punishment while others are learning because of coming late at school or their negative attitudes.

Parents of students from low-income families may face challenges in providing academic support to their children due low education attainment and financial constraints or time constraints associated with multiple jobs while parents with higher social economic status and more Education are usually more knowledgeable about how the school system works and use their skills and information to help their children to revise the learnt content, facilitating their children while doing homeworks as well as encouraging a good attitude toward learning (Munir, J., Faiza, M., Jamal, B., Daud, S., & Iqbal, K., 2023)

On the other hand, based on this study, 12 (42.9%) respondents indicated that they frequently lag behind others in terms academic performance due to their health problems including respiratory obstructive diseases, visual and hearing difficulties, health problems of limbs which even led to physical disabilities, frequent headache and stomachache among others.

Thomas Matingwina (2018) in his research work entitled « Health, Academic Achievement and School-Based Interventions », stipulated that students with health problems, they are at high risk for higher probability of undergoing low academic performance due to short attention span while learning, frequent absenteeism and school dropout.

Thomas Matingwina after his research, he recommended that School leaders and teachers have to plan for the provision of health services including health education, maintaining healthy environment, physical activity programmes, counseling services, social services and nutrition services so as to prevent health related problems that can lead to low academic performance of students.

4.2.1.1.3 Views of Sector Education Inspectors and headteachers about the influence of historical background of slow learners on their academic achievement

Table 4. 17 Views of SEIs and Headteachers about the influence of historical background of slow learners on their academic achievement

Historical background related factors	Respondents							
	Sector Education Inspectors		Headteachers		Total	%	Mean	SD
	f	%	f	%				

<b>Cognitive impairment</b>	4	100.0%	4	66.7%	10	100.0%	1.2	0.421
<b>Health impairment</b>	2	50.0%	5	83.3%	10	100.0%	1.3	0.483
<b>Family conflict</b>	4	100.0%	2	33.3%	10	100.0%	1.4	0.516
<b>Family poverty</b>	4	100.0%	6	100.0%	10	100.0%	1	0

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

Table 4.17 indicates data about views of SEIs and Headteachers about the influence of historical background of slow learners on their academic achievement.

Data from Sector Education Inspectors and head teachers under this study through interview supported the views of both slow learners and teachers on historical background of learning barriers of slow learners.

Based on data from table 4.17, all sector education inspectors stated that referring to their experience in educational inspection, despite of other potential environmental factors, most of slow learners often have low cognitive and intellectual abilities and these views also supported by 4 (66.7%) out of 6 headteachers as indicated by table 4.17.

Indeed, a half of sector education inspectors stipulated that low academic achievement of slow learners may be caused by the learning gap in different subjects due to frequent illness which later reduces attention span during learning and while revising the learnt content, difficult to analyse and answer questions requiring critical thinking skills as well as reducing their motivation for learning as they experience frequent absenteeism and even some drop out of school. These data of SEI were supported by views of 5 (83.3%) out of 6 headteachers as shown in table 4.17.

Furthermore, as shown in table 4.17, all sector education inspectors stated that among of the factors that can contribute to low academic performance, family conflict comes in first considerations and their views were supported by 2 (33.3%) headteachers as indicated on table 4.17.

In addition, as indicated by table 4.17, all headteachers and sector education inspectors explained that family poverty comes in the first places of factors that can contribute in low academic achievement of slow learners.

Besides, one of the headteacher's views through the interview on influence of historical background of the students is expressed in the following paragraph :

*the presence of slow learners in our secondary day schools is true, we have learners who often score low in different academic achievement tests in almost all subjects then if we try to identify the main cause of this low academic performance, we have found that it has been most ly caused by their historical background including longterm illness which has affected their learning for a long time, students experience family problems like those who sent to their grandmothers/ fathers especially parents in urban areas where earning means of life is mostly challenging then the grand parents fail to manage disipline and make follow up of the learning progress of these students , parents who leave their children alone for searching means of life far way from home and only sending food to them then these children become responsible of their disipline as well as their learning progress which later affects the attention span, motivation and other corners of learning.*

Indeed, other headteacher's views are expressed in the paragraph below :

*After making a follow up of learning progress of students learning at low pace than their peers and get frequent low learning performance results, we found that many of these students are victim of their family problems including family conflict in a such that parents do not give their children basic school materials, school feeding fees and they do not even give them time for revising the learnt content and doing home works, family poverty which lead to frequent absenteeism and coming late at school especially because of transporting crops to the markets, taking their brothers/ sisters to the health service providers, searching for at least low income genarating jobs like mining activities, making and burning construction bricks as well as working in farming activites in school neighbouring swamps. On the other hand students may learn at lower pace than their peers due to their educational background in which some of them used to be promoted in next levels without knowledge and skills required to be there, then these later affect them in current secondary studies grade levels.*

Addedly, the views of another headteacher among the secondary day schools under this study are expressed in this interview quote :

*« On my side, slow learners frequently experience low academic performance because of their low cognitive and intellectual abilities as well as emotional problems ».*

On the other hand, the ideas of one of the sector education inspectors of one the sectors under this study are expressed in the paragraph below :

*Basically slow learning can be caused by many factors including low cognitive and intellectual abilities as well as emotional problems due to family problems in such a way children do not get school materials and other basic needs and no time for revising the taught content and doing home works.*

#### 4.2.1.2 Views of teachers on characteristics of slow learners

Teachers under this study were asked to indicate their side regarding the characteristics of slow learners refer to their daily teaching experience and observation as on table 4.18.

Based on data from table 4.18, 35 (97.2%) out of 36 respondents stated that Slow learners function at ability that is significantly below that of their peers in the same grade level, 32 (88.9%) respondents showed that slow learners consistently score low on academic achievement tests, 32 (88.9%) respondents indicated that slow learners master skills slowly and do not master some skills at all while 24 (66.7 %) respondents stated that Slow learners get bored if they are learning new things or if the learning activity takes more than one hour and 30 (83.3%) respondents stated that slow learners often have low self-esteem.

Referring to these views of teachers highlighting the characteristics of slow learners, it shows the essence of SEN assessment practice so as to identify fully both learners' potential abilities and learning needs which can later be used for providing the appropriate educational placement as well as adequate educational provisions

due to the fact that students may be slow learners because of different factors that are different from one another (Kanchan, 2023) and (Ardianingsih, Purbaningrum & Sujarwanto, 2019).

Table 4.18 Views of teachers on characteristics of slow learners

Characteristic s/ learning difficulties	Likert scales										Total		Mean	SD
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree					
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Slow learners function at ability that is significantly below grade level	10	27.7	25	69.4	0	0.0	1	2.8	0	0.0	36	100.0	1.777	0.591
They have difficulty following multi-step directions	14	38.9	18	50.0	3	8.3	1	2.8	0	0.0	36	100.0	1.75	0.731
They consistently score low on academic achievement tests	14	38.9	18	50.0	3	8.3	1	2.8	0	0.0	36	100.0	1.75	0.731
They work well with hands-on activities	11	30.5	16	44.4	4	11.1	1	2.8	4	11.1	36	100.0	2.194	1.237
They have low self-esteem	11	30.6	19	52.8	3	8.3	3	8.3	0	0.0	36	100.0	2.055	0.860

They master skills slowly and do not master some skills at all	10	27.8	22	61.1	4	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	36	100.0	1.833	0.609
It is difficult for them to verbally express their ideas	12	33.3	14	38.9	5	13.9	5	13.9	0	0.0	36	100.0	2.083	1.024
They really enjoy puzzles and challenging tasks	3	8.3	4	11.1	6	16.7	20	55.6	3	8.3	36	100.0	3.444	1.168
They like responsibility of handling a situation requiring a lot of thinking	3	8.3	3	8.3	4	11.1	23	63.9	3	8.3	36	100.0	3.555	1.054
They often have difficulties in interpreting mathematical concepts	11	30.6	15	41.7	7	19.4	3	8.3	0	0.0	36	100.0	2.055	0.924
They have difficulties in solving mathematical word problems	15	41.7	15	41.7	6	17.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	36	100.0	1.75	0.732
Slow learners get bored if they are learning new things or if the learning activity takes more than one hour	9	25	15	41.7	3	8.3	3	8.3	1	2.8	36	100.0	2.222	1.0173

They need extra-time so as to finish the given classroom exercises, quizzes, tests or exam	1 3	36 .1	13	36.1	2	5.6	7	19. 4	1	2.8	3 6	100. 0	2.16 6	1.20 7
They would prefer complex to simple problems	3	8. 3	7	19.4	2	5.6	2 0	55. 6	4	11. 1	3 6	100. 0	3.41 6	1.18 0
They have difficulties in handwriting	5	13 .9	14	38.9	4	11. 1	1 0	27. 8	3	8.3 3	3 6	100. 0	2.77 7	1.24 4
They enjoy working in groups than performing tasks individually even home works	1 4	38 .9	18	50.0	2	5.6	2	5.6	0	0.0	3 6	100. 0	1.77 7	0.79 6
They always need additional support to learn & complete the exercises and home works	1 4	38 .9	18	50.0	2	5.6	2	5.6	0	0.0	3 6	100. 0	1.77 7	0.79 6
Slow learners really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems	1	2. 8	8	22.2	3	7.1 8.3	2 0	63. 5	4	15. 9	3 6	100. 0	3.5	1.05 5
They have difficulties in reading and	1 5	41 .7	13	36.1	6	16. 7	2	5.6	0	0.0	3 6	100. 0	1.86 1	0.89 9



My child masters skills slowly and do not master some skills at all	0	0.0	18	64.3	10	35.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	28	100	2.357	0.487
My child has difficulty in maintaining relationships with their peers	0	0.0	2	7.1	21	75.0	5	17.9	0	0.0	28	100.0	3.107	0.4973
My child really enjoys puzzles and challenging tasks	0	0.0	2	7.1	22	78.6	4	14.3	0	0.0	28	100.0	3.071	0.465
My child likes responsibility of handling a situation requiring a lot of thinking	0	0.0	2	7.1	19	67.9	7	25	0	0.0	28	100.0	3.178	0.547
She/he often has difficulties in interpreting mathematical concepts	0	0.0	14	50.0	13	46.4	1	3.6	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.535	0.576
He/she has difficulties in solving mathematical word problems	0	0.0	3	10.7	25	89.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.892	0.314
She/ he needs extra-time so as to finish the given classroom exercises, quizzes, tests or exam	0	0.0	1	3.6	26	92.9	1	3.6	0	0.0	28	100.0	3	0.272

My child would prefer complex to simple problems	0	0.0	2	7.1	14	50.0	12	42.9	0	0.0	28	100.0	3.357	0.621
She/ he has difficulties in handwriting	0	0.0	2	7.2	24	85.7	2	7.1	0	0.0	28	100.0	3	0.384
She/ he enjoys working in groups than performing tasks individually even home works	0	0.0	5	17.9	22	78.6	1	3.6	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.857	0.448
My child always needs additional support to learn & complete the exercises and home works	0	0.0	5	17.9	22	78.6	1	3.6	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.857	0.448
She/ he really enjoys a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems	0	0.0	4	14.3	21	50	3	10.7	3	10.7	28	100.0	2.964	0.507
She/he has difficulties in reading and understanding what is written in English language	0	0.0	16	57.1	11	39.3	1	3.6	0	0.0	28	100.0	2.464	0.576

**Source : Primary data (August,2023)**

Parents/ guardians under this study were asked to give their views about characteristics of their children and learning difficulties then their reactions are shown by the table 4.19.

Based on data from table 4.19, although the majority of parents/ guardians under this study stated that they are neutral about almost of the points showing the characteristics of slow learners mentioned on the assigned questionnaire due their limited educational background, 16 (57.1%) out of 28 respondents stated that their children had difficulties in reading and understanding what is written in English language, 14 (50.0%) respondents indicated that their children had difficulties in interpreting mathematical concepts, 18 (64.3%) respondents stated that their children mastered skills slowly and do not master some skills at all, 26 (92.9%) respondents indicated that their children consistently scored low on academic achievement tests.

Data in above paragraph indicate that there should be effective communication and collaboration between parents/ guardians and school staff in order to identify what is really behind children's learning difficulties as a result of slow learning so as to provide appropriate educational intervention on the right time otherwise slow learners may keep on scoring low in different academic achievement tests.

Due to different reasons including low education level and illiteracy, family poverty, residential instability and family conflicts, Parents/ guardians of slow learners in nine and twelve years of basic education often fail to make follow ups of their children's learning progress and they neither visit their children at school nor calling school leaders or teachers for discussing the learning difficulties of their children and some of them do not even come to school when they are called by either school leaders or teachers (NTAWUGASHIRA, 2022).

The failure of parental involvement indicates why most of the parents/ guardians were neutral on different points asked to show their side regarding the learning difficulties of their children.

4.2.2 Procedures undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners

#### 4.2.2.1 Views of teachers on their daily practice of SEN Assessment for Slow learners

Table 4. 20 Views of teachers on their daily practice of SEN Assessment for Slow learners

<b>Teachers' views</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Is a multi-disiplinary Assessment team necessary to assess student's learning needs ?</b>				
No	1	2.8	1.02	0.166
Yes	35	97.2		
<b>If yes, Explain</b>				
Teachers and school leaders have limited knowledge and skills in such a way they need the expertise of other professionals so as identify each individual's learning needs and provide appropriate support services				
<b>Total</b>	36	100.0		
<b>Do learning needs of slow learners require a multi-disiplinary Assessment team to be identified and met ?</b>				
No	3	8.3	1.083	0.280
Yes	33	91.7		
<b>If yes, explain</b>				
Students may learn at slower pace than their peers in school because of factors that are different from one another as each individual has unique needs which may require the effort of professionals of different expertise				
<b>Total</b>	36	100.0		
<b>Do you have a multi-disiplinary assessment team for assessing special educational needs of students with disabilities and other special educational needs at your school ?</b>				
Yes	3	8.3	1.916	0.280
<b>If No, explain</b>				
We can't find the members of multidisiplinary assessment team	5	13.9		
We don't know the members of multi-disiplinary assessment team	13	36.1		
I do not know the role of multi-disiplinary assessment team	12	33.3		
No need of multi-disiplinary assessment team	3	8.3		
<b>Total</b>	36	100.0		
<b>Can any teacher easily identify slow learners and assess their learning needs ?</b>				
Yes	3	8.3	1.083	0.280
<b>If No, explain</b>				
Big class size	13	36.1		
Teachers consider slow learners as learners with mental disabilities	7	19.4		
Lack of experience and adequate skills for identifying slow learners as well as assessing their special educational needs	30	83.3		

<b>When can identification of slow learners as well as the assessment of their learning needs be done ?</b>						
At the end of year	6	16.7	2.94	1.329		
At the end of each term	10	27.8				
At the beginning of the year	4	11.1				
At the beginning of each term	12	33.3				
<b>Others, explain</b>						
Assessment of learning difficulties is often done throughout the lesson	4	11.1				
<b>Total</b>	36	100.0				
<b>Do you think are there the standard procedures undertaken to assess learning needs of slow learners ?</b>						
No	9	25.0	1.25	0.439		
Yes	27	75.0				
Total	36	100.0				
<b>If yes, explain</b>						
Referral Assessment	7	19.4				
Assessment of children's performance in specific subjects based on the school marks	21	58.3				
Based on opinions of parents about the child's progress and difficulties in learning various subjects	20	55.6				
Intelligence Testing	10	27.8				
Test of functional behaviour	6	16.7				
Portfolios	23	63.9				
<b>Is slow learner's contribution required during assessment of his/ her learning needs ?</b>						
Yes	34	94.4	1.055	0.232		
No	2	5.6				
<b>Total</b>	36	100.0				
<b>Do you regularly involve sector education inspector in Assessment of special educational needs of any student with disabilities or other special educational needs ?</b>						
Yes	3	8.3	1.916	0.280		
<b>If No, explain</b>						
We only give them a report about what is done	8	22.2				
Sometimes when they are doing educational inspection	3	8.3				
No official SEN assessment undertaken for students with disabilities and other special educational needs in my school	22	61.1				
<b>Total</b>	36	100.0				

Source : primary data (August, 2023)

Based on data from table 4.20, teachers were asked to indicate different procedures undertaken while assessing learning needs of a slow learner as presented to them, 35 (97.2%) out of 36 respondents stated that assessing students' learning needs may require multidisciplinary Assessment team in order to identify a set of difficulties that prevent each individual with disability or other special educational need from learning like their peers while 33 (91.7%) respondents emphasise the need of multidisciplinary assessment team to identify special educational needs of slow learners for enabling them to get adequate educational provisions that meet their needs.

As shown by table 4.20, respondents explained that assessment of students' learning needs may require the intervention of multidisciplinary assessment team because teachers and school leaders have limited knowledge and skills in such a way they need the expertise of other professionals so as to identify each individual's learning needs and provide appropriate support services.

Data from research work of Nizar H. Bagadood and Budor H. Saigh (2022) in their research work entitled « Multidisciplinary Team Approach In Special Education Settings In Saudi Arabia : Perceptions And Issues », indicated that lack of intervention of multidisciplinary approach may lead to poor instructional delivery and learning within the special education setting and added that teachers of students with special educational needs face many challenges when they are trying to accommodating the varied students' learning needs but it becomes easier when working with other professionals namely health workers, social workers, psychologist, counselors and families.

On the other hand, early identification of students with slow learning as well as the assessment of their special educational needs is a crucial step that require good cooperation of educators, parents as well as the required professionals with different expertise in order to give them appropriate intervention services that meet their individual needs on the right time (Imran, Nazir, Al-Harthy & Zakia, 2023).

As shown on table 4.20, teachers were asked to indicate if they ever used a multi-disciplinary assessment team in a practice of assessing learning needs of students with disabilities and other special educational needs at their school, 33 (91.7%) respondents stated that they do not have a multidisciplinary assessment team because of different reasons including 13 (36.1%) respondents which stated that they do not know the members of multi-disciplinary assessment team, 12 (33.3%) respondents stated they did not know the role of multi-disciplinary assessment team, 5 (13.9%) respondents stated that they couldn't find the members of multidisciplinary assessment team while 3 (8.3%) stated that no need of multi-disciplinary assessment team at their school.

Based on views of respondents about the use of multidisciplinary assessteam as shown on table 4.20, it indicates that teachers do not have enough information about the working of multidisciplinary assessment due to the lack of adequate knowledge and skills about the use of multidisciplinary assessment in practice of SEN assessment and educational placement in order to provide adequate special educational provisions that meet learning needs of student with disability or other special educational needs.

According to Fely C. Allam and Matronillo M. Martin (2021), the majority of teachers who teach students with disability or other special educational needs in mainstream schools were not trained about how to identify students with disability or other special educational needs, how to assess their learning needs and they do not have adequate knowledge and skills about the effective including teaching methodologies so as to meet each individual learning difficulties.

Besides, despite of the strength of multidisciplinary assessment team through its team work for creating a more conducive learning environment and successful learning for students with special educational needs, general education teachers and special education teachers may keep on struggling in classroom because of lack of understanding of multidisciplinary approach as well as the institutional support (Bagadood & Saigh, 2022).

Furthermore, looking at the table 4.20 indicating the views of teachers about their abilities regarding the identification of slow learners as well as the assessment of their special educational needs, 33 (91.7%) out of 36 respondents stated that it is not easy for teacher to easily identify slow learners and assess their learning needs due to different reasons including 30 (83.3%) respondents stated that Lack of experience and adequate skills for identifying slow learners as well as assessing their special educational needs is the main barrier, 13( 36.1%) respondents accused Big class size as the main barrier while 7 (19.4%) respondents stated that some teachers consider slow learners as learners with mental disabilities which may lead to low expectations towards these students.

Infact, Jane –Francis Afungmeyu Abongdia, JohnWankah Foncha and Alinda Dakada (2015), in their research work entitled « Challenges Encounterd by Teachers in Identifying Learners with Learning Barriers : Toward Inclusive Education » supported the ideas of these teachers explaining that lack of parental involvement, overcrowded classrooms, lack of team work among educators as well as the lack of effective training of the teachers are the main barriers that prevent teachers from easily identifying slow learners and assess their learning needs in order to give them appropriate support services as early as possible.

Indeed, Humphrey Alexender (2014) in his research work « Challenges faced by teachers when teaching learners with developmental disability », stipulated that teachers face different challenges regarding teaching students with disability or other special educational needs namely lack of potential special needs teachers as potential teachers are not interested in specialization of special needs education, lack of proper teaching materials that enable inclusive teaching, parents expectations, curriculum structure as well as the lack of enough classrooms and poor learning environment.

Moreover, keep on looking on data from table 4.20, this table indicates teachers' views on the right time for carrying out identification of slow learners as well as the assessment of their special educational needs, thus 12 (33.3%) out of 36 respondents stated that this pracitice of identification of slow learners as well as the required SEN assessment can take place at the beginning of each term, 10 (27.8) respondents suggested that it can take place at the end of each term, 6 (16.7%) respondents showed that the identification of slow

learners along with the assessment of their learning needs can take place at the end of year while 4 (11.1%) respondents stated that identification of slow learners and assessment of their special educational needs can take place at the beginning of each term and 4 (11.1%) respondents suggested that identification of slow learners as well as the assessment of their learning difficulties is often done throughout the lesson.

According to Aziza Ahmed (2023) explained that identification of slow learners can take place as early as possible for implementing strategies that meet their unique learning needs on the right time. The journey of identifying learning needs of slow learner is closely linked to the developmental milestones that have been achieved by these students as these developmental milestones act like guiding stars that illuminate the learning trajectory of the students (Imran, Nazir, Al-Harthy & Zakia, 2023).

Early identification of slow learners' learning needs reveal their potential abilities as well as their special educational needs so that a team of educators, parents and other professionals can decide as early as possible on the appropriate educational interventions including individual education plan (IEP) that fits their unique learning progress and this later promotes self-esteem of slow learners, their sense of belonging and inclusion as well as their motivation for learning (Imran, Nazir, Al-Harthy & Zakia, 2023).

Flora Malasi Nyali and Lydia Ntembi Kairanya (2022) in their research work entitled « Assessment of learning difficulties » explained that at each entry grade level, there should be conducted a general screening of students with special educational needs so that students with learning needs can be as early as possible identified so that further SEN assessment procedures undertaken if needed and students get appropriate special educational provisions on the right time.

In fact, after screening students with learning needs, students qualify for SEN Assessment, termly assessment will be carried out by a team of professional staff who work together in all process of assessing children's special educational needs, plan for different special educational provisions that meet the children's needs and agreed outcomes then review the previous support services for better learning progress of the students (How We identify ,assess and review Children With Special educational needs, n.d.)

Additionally, table 4.20 indicates the views of teachers on different procedures undertaken while assessing learning needs of slow learners. Based on these views, 21 (58.3%) out of 36 respondents stated SEN of slow learner can be done through assessment of children's performance in specific subjects based on the school marks, 20 (55.6%) respondents suggested that SEN assessment of slow learners can be based on opinions of parents/ guardians about their children's progress and difficulties in learning various subjects, 10 (27.8%) respondents stated that Intelligence Testing is crucial in assessing learning needs of slow learners, 23 (63.9%) suggested use of Portfolios as among the effective procedures to assess learning needs of slow learners, 7 (19.4%) respondents stated that referral Assessment should be among the assessment procedures for learning needs of slow learners while 6 (16.7%), suggested Test of functional behaviour to be included among the procedures of assessing learning needs of slow learners.

Actually, a student with disability and other special educational needs require evaluation as the first step to be eligible for any special education and related services thus, a child may require any special education and related services if is a victim of these types of disability and other special educational needs including autism, deafness, deaf-blindness, developmental delay, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, chronic diseases and other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, low vision or complete blindness among others ("Evaluating School -Aged Children for Disability", 2022).

Addedly, students have special educational needs if they experience a learning problem or disability that make them more difficult to learn than their peers and these students may have problems with school work, communication or behaviour ("Children with special educational needs", n.d.). Actually, there is a range of different types of SEN assessment including screening tests, adaptive behavioral assessment, behavioral rating scales, academic achievement test, intelligence testing, curriculum-based assessment, developmental test among others and are undertaken depends on the nature of special educational needs of a students (Rosilyn, 2022).

On the other hand, students whose intellectual quotient (I.Q) ranges between 70-90 are known as slow learners because of their frequent low academic achievement and they can be identified through observation method, case study, academic achievement test in different subjects and other scholastic tests, test of intellectual quotient (I.Q), medical tests, personality inventory among others (G. Subramonian & S. Vidhya, 2022).

Nevertheless, a student may qualify for a statutory SEN Assessment if a mainstream school can not provide all the help that the child needs to learn like their peers, the child does not make progress or needs a lot of extra help to make at least a little progress or if a child's needs are very complex or severe beyond the support that school provides ("Special Educational Needs Code of Practice", 2001).

Moreover, table 4.20 indicates data about teachers's responses on the contribution of a slow learner when a statutory SEN Assessment of his/ her learning needs is being carried out, 34 (94.3%) respondents stated that a slow learner should be in a multidisciplinary assessment team as the right person who feels his /her own learning needs, while 2 (5.6%) stated that there is no contribution of slow learner needed by the multidisciplinary assessment team because they can use their emotions to express their special educational needs which can affect decision making for support services.

In fact, the students under the intended SEN assessment, should be involved in making decisions in all phases where possible right from the start of their education so that they can express their views about their unique learning barriers and their wishes to remove or weaken these barriers then their views and wishes contribute a lot in individual education plan provided to them thus, the children are aware and feel comfortable of all decisions made throughout the assessment process ("Special Educational Needs Code of Practice", 2001). Additionally, table 4.20 indicates data of teachers' responses on the contribution of local education authority (LEA) in SEN Assessment of students with disability and other special educational needs, the majority of respondents (Mean of 1.916 and SD of 0.280) stated that they never invite sector education officer as they never carry out an official or statutory SEN assessment.

Besides, 8 (22.2%) respondents stated that they only submit report to local education authority a report about what is done, 22 (61.1%) respondents stated that no official SEN assessment done for students with disabilities and other special educational needs in their school in such a way they could invite local education authority while 3 (8.3%) respondents stated that they share issues related to learning barriers of students with disability and other special educational needs when sector education inspectors when they are doing educational inspection in their school.

In fact, local education authority in partnership with schools is not only responsible for ensuring that early identification and assessment of learning needs of students with disability and other special educational needs is done but also ensuring that students with disability and other special educational needs receive appropriate educational provisions that match their unique learning needs ("Special Educational Needs Code of Practice", 2001). Addedly, local education authority has to ensure close partnerships with parents, schools, health and social services providers as well as the voluntary sector in order to promote successful learning of children with disability and other special educational needs.

Normally, data from table 4.20 indicate that the practice of identification and assessment of learning needs of slow learners and other students with special educational needs has many challenges in such a way some of the students with disability and other special educational needs may not receive adequate special educational provisions due to the lack of close of partnership of schools with local education authority, parents, health and social service providers in planning and monitoring the implementation of each activity regarding the welfare of children with disability and other special educational needs.

On the other hand, based on data from table 4.20, teachers prefer academic achievement test as reference for identifying students with slow learning as well as providing support services for them while slow learning is a result of many factors including that require intervention of other professionals like health and social service professionals but only a small number of respondents suggested the referral assessment as one of the procedure for assessing slow learners's special educational needs.

Besides, other challenges shown by table 4.20, was that most of the teachers stated that they referred to parents' opinions about the child's progress and difficulties in learning various subjects as other procedure of assessing special educational needs of slow learners but when you look at data of table 4.16 and table 4.23 and 4.24 indicate that there was poor communication which could hinder the success of using this procedure thus, due to absence of adequate SEN assessment for students with special educational needs including slow learners, these students miss access to specific educational programs namely modified classroom instruction, curriculum, tests along with examinations which later worsen their education deficiency and become demotivated in such a way they can drop out of school (Fanuel RG et al, 2015).

**4.2.2.2 Views of Sector education Inspectors and headteachers on procedures undertaken during SEN Assessment for Slow learners**

Table 4.21 Views of Sector education Inspectors and headteachers on procedures undertaken during SEN Assessment for Slow learners (interview)

SEN Assessment procedures for slow learners	Respondents					
	Sector Education Inspectors		Headteachers		Total	
	F	%	F	%		
<b>Referral Assessment</b>	2	50.0%	2	33.3%	10	100.0%
<b>Assessment through academic achievement tests</b>	4	100.0%	6	100.0%	10	100.0%
<b>Daily teacher's observations on attitudes and performance of the learner Including talking with the child</b>	4	100.0%	6	100.0%	10	100.0%

<b>Assessment based on parents' opinions about their historical backbagrground</b>	4	100.0%	6	100.0%	10	100.0%
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	--------	---	--------	----	--------

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

Table 4.21 indicates different daily procedures undertaken by secondary day schools while assessing learning needs of slow learners. Based on data from table 4.21, all sector education inspectors and headteachers confirm the use of academic achievement tests, daily teacher's observation on students' attitudes as well as talking with a child and Assessing learning needs based on parents' opinions about their child's historical background.

On the other hand, only 2 (33.3%) out of 6 headteachers under this study confirmed they ever used referral assessment either referring students to counselors, clinical psychologist or medical doctors or other health professionals while 2 (50.0%) out of 6 sector education inspectors which had ever been involved in SEN Assessment that involved clinical psychologists or other health professionals.

In fact, slow learning is a result of many factors including emotional problems and long term illness which may require the intervention of psychologists or other health professionals from assessment of the special educational needs to the decision made on appropriate support services for the student's needs. Unfortunately, schools do not collaborate with different professionals because of different reasons as shown by the views of headteachers and sector education inspectors through interview.

Furthermore, the views of one headteacher among the secondary day schools under this study about their daiy procedures for SEN Assessment of slow learners are expressed in the paragraph below :

*In our school, we have some learners who mostly score low in different subjects then we used to carry out official SEN Assessment two times so as to identify the learning needs of some slow learners and it*

*was initiated by a teacher trained on inclusive and special needs education and she was a both coordinator and facilitator of all special education services in our school, throughout this practice ; we have been working together with parents, sector education officer, BLF Special needs education coordinator and a nurse from our neighbouring health center.*

Addedly, the views of other headteacher are expressed in the following paragraph :

*In practice of identifying slow learners and assessing their potential learner barriers, as educational psychologist, we mostly have a talk with children and their parents about the nature of learning difficulties, daily teacher's observation about learners' attitudes elsewhere in the school then we refer to learning performance results in different competence based tests for different subjects.*

Moreover, the views of other headteacher are expressed in this paragraph :

*Regarding the practice of SEN Assessment for slow learners, each class teacher often talks with learners learning at low pace than their peers about barriers that prevent them from learning successfully like their peers then we refer to their learning performance results in 3 different subject in order to provide remedial instruction, on other hand students which experience low academic performance because of low visual difficulties, CARTAS-RWANDA helps us to enable the students to get adequate health services for successful learning.*

On the other hand, the views of one the sector education inspector on the procedures of SEN Assessment undertaken for slow learners under her inspection are expressed in the following paragraph :

*Though I have not been invited to attend any official SEN Assessment for students with disability or other special educational needs, but some schools in which there are trained teachers about inclusive and special education have SEN assessment forms prepared by NGO known as Humanity and Inclusion thus, if you come in these schools, you find these forms with full identification of the student's potential abilities, his/ her learning needs as well as the decided educational intervention services to the assessed needs and this form is filled in collaboration with parents/ guardians of the students.*

Besides, the views of other sector education inspector are expressed in the paragraph below :

*Regarding the practice of the SEN Assessment for slow learners and other students with special educational needs in our sector, after being trained by NGO known as humanity and inclusion on inclusive and special education, we were given SEN Assessment forms to give different schools and work together with schools in identification of students with special educational needs as well as the assessment of their learning needs thus, schools , parents of the students and us worked together using the SEN Assessment form in dentifying the children’s abilities, his/ her learning needs as well as deciding which support services can meet the assessed needs. On the other hand, local education authority and schools neighbouring to hospitals and health centers work together with medical doctors, clinical psychologist and nurses in identification of abilities and special educational needs of some learners with disabilty and other special educational needs so as to provide special educational provisions that meet their needs.*

**4.3 Educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners**

**Objective 2 :** To examine the importance of educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners on their academic achievement.

4.3.1 Views of teachers on educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners

Table 4. 22 Views of teachers on educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners

<b>Teachers’ views</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Do you define the educational placement of slow learners based on the SEN Assessment done ?</b>				
Yes	8	22.2	1.78	0.421
No	28	77.8		
Total	36	100.0		
<b>Which educational placement is effective for learning needs of slow learners ?</b>				
Half a day in a resource room and then join regular classroom	2	5.6	3.722	1.301

Some time in a resource room	9	25.0		
a whole day in a regular classroom	20	55.6		
Most of the time in special school	3	8.3		
More than half a day in a resource room	2	5.6		
Total	36	100.0		
<b>What are the effective special educational provisions to meet slow learners' needs ?</b>				
Counseling services	23	63.9	1.361	0.487
Cognitive skills training	21	58.3	1.416	0.5
Remedial instruction	28	77.8	1.222	0.421
Use of concret and real life examples while teaching	29	80.6	1.194	0.401
Use of assistive technology to encourage reading and performing numeracy tasks	20	55.6	1.444	0.503
Provision of extra-time during tests and exams	20	55.6	1.444	0.503
Give long time to think of asked questions as well as rephrasing the assessment questions	22	61.1	1.388	0.494
<b>Is individual educational plan necessary for successful learning of slow learners ?</b>				
Yes	21	58.3	1.722	0.913
No	4	11.1		
I don't know	11	30.6		
Total	36	100.0		
<b>How often can individual education plan of slow learners be revised ?</b>				
Once a year	2	5.6	3.38	1.399
Once a month	12	33.3		
At the beginning of each the term	4	11.1		
At the end of each term	6	16.7		
<b>Others, explain</b>				
IEP may be revised any time it is needed based on learner's progress	12	33.3		
<b>Total</b>	36	100.0		

Source : Primary data (August, 2023)

Table 4.22 indicates the Views of teachers on educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners.

As indicated by table 4.22, teachers were asked to show their side regarding the educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners. Table 4.22 indicates that 28 (77.8%) out

of 36 respondents revealed that they define educational placement and provisions for slow learners based learning performance results in different subjects but no other SEN Assessment procedures considered.

According to Ardianingsih, Purbaningrum and Sujarwanto (2019) writing on slow learners assessment training in inclusive school, SEN Assessment for slow learners is a very essential practice that enable educators to identify both strengths and weaknesses of the students so that they receive appropriate educational provisions that meet their unique needs.

Appaji Korikana (2020) explained that Slow learners may learn at low pace than their peers because of many reasons including lack of awareness about of the importance of education, lack of fundamental knowledge, psychological factors and poor memory thus SEN assessment is very important either through observation method, academic achievement tests and personality inventory for accurate identification of learners' weaknesses and abilities in order to equip them with adequate educational provisions.

In fact, the above researchers explained the essence of SEN Assesment thus, if the assessment procedures undertaken are the same for different learners with different historical backgrounds and characteristics, it may lead to failure in accomodating learning needs of some of them hence they keep on frequently experiencing low academic achievement throughout their studies.

Futhermore, as shown by table 4.22, 20 (55.6%) respondents stated that slow learners receive any educational intervention service a whole day in a regular classroom, 9 (25.0%) respondents stated that slow learners may sometimes receive their support services in a resource room, 3 (8.33%) respondents indicated that slow learners may receive their support services most of the time in special school, 2 (5.6%) respondents showed that slow learners may receive their special educational provisions more than half a day in a resource room while the remaining 2 (5.6%) respondents stated that slow learners may receive their educational intervention services half a day in a resource room and then join regular classroom.

In fact, any educational placement assigned for a student with special educational needs depends on results of SEN Assessment as well as the individual education plan of a student (Considering LRE in Placement Decisions, 2022). As general education classroom is the preferred educational placement for learners with learning disability, students with special educational needs in mainstream schools placed in a regular education classroom with their age peers require special education teacher or regular education teacher trained on special education in order to enable them receive intensive help (Mauro, 2020).

Though slow learners can not be classified as students with mental disability but their intellectual quotient is ranging between 70 to 90 thus, categories of slow learners vary depends on their level of intellectual ability namely students with mild slow learning, moderate slow learning and students with profound slow learning which later implies that educational placement of slow learners can also be based on results of decisions made after assessing their learning needs and individual education plan made for them (Joan L. & Takach, 1965)

In addition, table 4.22 indicates the responses of teachers after being asked to indicate their side regarding the effective special educational provisions to meet slow learners' needs including 29 (80.6%) respondents stated that use of concret and real life examples while teaching can be one of the effective educational provision for slow learners, 21 (58.3%) respondents suggested cognitive skills training as effective special educational provision, 28 (77.8%) respondents suggested remedial instruction, 22 (61.11%) respondents suggested giving long time to think of asked questions as well as rephrasing the assessment questions, 20 (55.6%) respondents suggested provision of extra-time during tests and exams, 20 (55.6%) respondents suggested use of assistive technology to encourage reading and performing numeracy tasks, while 23 (63.9%) respondents suggested Counseling services as one of the effective special educational provision.

In fact, due to the nature of learning needs of the slow learners, the appropriate special educational provisions can include peer tutoring to ensure fast, average and slow learners are helping each other, individual education plan to ensure each student unique needs are met, high expectations in all planned activities to restore and develop self-confidence, curriculum differentiation so that the curriculum expectations are linked to each student learning needs and abilities, remedial instruction to fill the existing learning gap to ensure the effective learning progress and development of the expected competencies for the student, healthy school

environment, periodic medical check-up for chronic illness victims, special teaching methodology that fit each individual's needs including audio and visual instructions, mastery learning strategy with extra corrective instruction, computer assisted instruction and modular instruction (SANGEETA, 2011), (Vasudevan A, 2017).

Indeed, Appaji Koirkana (2020) in his research work entitled « Slowerners- A universal problem and providing education opportunities to them to be successful learner » revealed other special educational provisions for slow learners including psychological analysis and problem solution in such that the teacher makes a follow up of children's daily learning barriers based of daily attitudes of the child, family background, peer relationships and personal conflicts in order to enable them overcome these problems and learn successfully.

Koirkana (2020) kept on stipulating other educational provisions for slow learners namely identification of students suspected to have learning disability like discalculia, disrexia, disgraphia, sensory impairment or having intellectual disability then collaborate with school leaders and parents to be sure and work with local education authority for inviting the required professionals for further SEN Assessment procedures, use of portfolios to maintain children' progress records in all round activities both curricular and co-curricular aspects, recognition of student's talents while teaching, friendly attitudes for teachers as well as praising students for each successful activity.

Moreover, BODANG ROTKANGMWA JULIANA, PHILIP ETHER LENGKAT (2021) in their research work entitled « Strategies for Teaching Slow learners in an Inclusive Setup » stipulated other instructional strategies to meet specific learning needs of slow learners namely Scaffolding to maintain connection between what is known and what a learner can not know as well as breaking down the learning tasks respecting student's learning pace, graphic Organization as multisensory Instruction to stimulate all student's sense through pictures and diagrams accompanied by special phrases which help them to remember the information and connect to new concepts and affective teaching that requires teacher's interaction with students in a caring, conscious and committed way so as to develop the learner in both emotional and intellectual aspect.

Besides, teachers were asked to confirm whether individual education plan is necessary for successful learning of slow learners or not then 21 (58.3%) out of 36 respondents said « yes » as approval, 4 (11.1%) respondents stated that individual education plan (IEP) is not necessary for slow learners while 11 (30.6%) respondents stated that they don't have enough information about the use of individual education plan for slow learners.

Actually, students qualify for individualized education programs might need extra help and support in their learning (Collen, 2022) . On the other hand, Slow learners manage to achieve a moderate degree of academic success at a slower rate than their average peers and require more support and time for acquiring the skill than their average peers (Meenakshi, nd) thus, individual education plan can be one of the SEN Assessment decision to improve academic functioning of slow learners (Krishnakumar P, Jisha AM, Sukumaran SK & Nair M, 2011). Furthermore, table 4.22 indicates teachers' responses after being asked how often they can revise individual education plans designed for slow learners in which 12 (33.3%) out of 36 respondents suggested once a month, 6 (16.7%) respondents suggested at the end of each term, 4 (11.1%) respondents suggested at the beginning of each the term, 2 (5.6%) respondents suggested once a year while other 12 (33.3%) stated that IEP may be revised any time it is needed based on learner's progress.

In fact, an IEP is not steady, it can be reviewed as often as it is needed so that students with disabilities and other special educational needs get the support and services needed on the right time but if students assigned an IEP are academically succeeding as much as well, this IEP can be reviewed at the end of year for updating and addressing the current learning needs and goals, accommodations and services (Henry, 2023).

4.3.2 Views of slow learners on educational placement and provisions following assessment of their learning needs

Table 4. 23 Views of slow learners on educational placement and provisions following assessment of their learning needs

Students' views	F	%	Mean	SD
<b>At your school, you get any educational provisions in which placement ?</b>				
a whole day in a regular classroom	28	100.0	4	0
some time in a resource room	0	0.0		
<b>Total</b>	28	100.0		

<b>Do teachers use inclusive ways of teaching that meet all learners' learning style including that of slow learners ?</b>				
Yes	13	46.4	1.535	0.507
<b>If No, explain</b>				
Some teachers consider the pace of the fast learners while teaching and do not provide extra-time for slow learners while sitting for exams and tests	15	53.6		
<b>Total</b>	28	100.0		
<b>Do teachers give daily evaluations during and at the end of each lesson ?</b>				
No	8	28.6	1.285	0.460
Yes	20	71.4		
Total	28	100.0		
<b>If yes, do teachers ever rephrase questions and simple vocabularies in any exam / test instructions to meet every learner's needs ?</b>				
Yes	15	53.6	1.464	0.507
No	13	46.3		
Total	28	100.0		

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

Table 4.23 indicates slow learners' views on educational placement and provisions following the assessment of their learning needs.

As shown by table 4.23, students were asked to give ideas about education placement and provisions following the assessment of their learning needs and all slow learners under this study stated that they receive any educational provision in a regular classroom and none stated that has received any special education service in a resource room.

As educational placement defined as the amount of time in each school day that spent by students with disabilities and other special educational needs in a general education classroom or resource room ("Educational Placement for Students with Disabilities", n.d.), students can be placed in education setting that meet their unique needs and students in need of intensive support to keep up their learning progress may be placed in the resource room in order to receive adequate special education services (Mauro, 2020) thus, even slow learners can be placed in either regular class or resource room setting depends on the results from assessment of their learning needs done.

Besides, students under this study were asked to state whether teachers use inclusive teaching and assessment strategies that even cater for slow learner's needs then, 13 (46.4%) out of 28 respondents said 'yes' while the remaining 15 (53.6%) respondents said 'No' because Some teachers consider the pace of the fast learners while teaching and do not provide extra-time for slow learners while sitting for exams and tests.

Actually, Slow learners experience difficulty in adapting to traditional academic demands of the regular classroom in mainstream schools as the teaching and assessment techniques intended for the majority of the students fail to meet the specific learning needs of students that learn at slow late than their peers (Binu & Bhaskaran, 2015) thus, to ensure academic success of slow learners, they need more time, more resources from teachers and more repetition to understand and retain new concepts (ROTKANGMWA & LENGKAT, 2021).

Furthermore, as indicated by table 4.23, students were asked to state whether teachers provide daily evaluations during and at the end of each lesson, 20 (71.4%) out of 28 respondents said 'Yes' while the remaining 8 (28.6%) respondents said 'No' then, those who said 'yes' were asked to state if teachers ever rephrase questions and use simple vocabularies in any exam / test instructions to meet every learner's needs and 15 (53.6%) respondents said 'yes' while other 13 (46.4%) respondents said 'No'.

Normally, assessment is an integral part of the lesson and formative assessment is very essential tool that enable teachers to monitor student's learning progress from the beginning to the end of the lesson through adjusting teaching methods and techniques according to the change in learning needs of students (Deignan, 2022).

Besides, based on universal design for learning (UDL) principles namely use multiple means of engagement which requires to provide different opportunities for students to participate and be involved in their lesson actively, multiple means of representing information such as in audio format, audio-visual format, written multiple and open questions, graphic organisation as visual format , use braille and sign language, multiple means of action and expression in a such a way students with special educational needs may express their needs through oral presentation, written work, diagrams, songs, group projects, poems, sign language and

gestures as well as braille thus , teachers have to use a variety of assessment methods, formats and levels that suit a diversity of students with different unique needs in classroom (M.Dalton & Trostle.B, 2012).

On the other hand, UDL principles enable teachers to plan for assessment which even meet learning needs of slow learners through use of games and puzzles for funny learning and rewarding, individualized learning that allow students to choose goals, tasks, topics and work at their own pace as well as the use of collaborative activities including discussions, peer feedback and debates that are closely related to students' interests and curiosity (Raenkwocha, 2023).

#### 4.3.3 Views of parents/ guardians of slow learners on educational placement and provisions following the assessment of their children's special educational needs

Table 4. 24 Views of parents of slow learners on educational placement and provisions following the assessment of their children's special educational needs

<b>Parents' views</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Does your child receive additional support services ?</b>				
No	3	10.7	2.607	0.685
Yes	5	17.9		
I don't know	20	71.4		
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100.0</b>		
<b>Does your child have an individual education plan ?</b>				
Yes	0	0.0	2.928	0.262
No	2	7.1		
I don't know	26	92.9		
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100.0</b>		
<b>Are the educational provisions undertaken to your child based on Assessment of his/her learning needs done ?</b>				
No	2	7.1	2.98	02.62
Yes	0	0.0		
I don't know	26	92.9		
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100.0</b>		
<b>Are you satisfied with the educational provisions undertaken to your child ?</b>				
<b>Yes</b>	2	7.1	1.928	0.262
<b>No, explain</b>				

Teaching methodologies as well as assessment strategies used, do not meet each child's special educational needs	26	92.9		
<b>Total</b>	28	100.0		

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

Table 4.24 indicates the views of parents of slow learners on educational placement and provisions following the assessment of learning needs of their children.

Based on table 4.24 which indicates the views of parents on educational placement and provisions following the assessment of special educational needs of their children, 20 (71.4%) out of 28 respondents stated that they don't know whether their children receive additional support services for learning or not, 26 (92.9%) respondents stated that they don't know if their children they learn following their individual education plan or not, 26 (92.9%) out of 28 respondents stated that they don't know if the educational provisions undertaken to their children based on Assessment of their learning needs or not, and also 26 (92.9%) respondents stated that they are not satisfied by the educational provisions undertaken to their children as they suggested that teaching methodologies as well as assessment strategies used ,do not meet learning needs of their children.

Referring to data from table 4.24, it indicates how the lack of parental involvement in different steps of SEN Assessment is the main concern for academic achievement of their children. Indeed, due to lack of parental involvement in decisions made regarding the educational placement and provisions, it may lead to misunderstanding between parents and teachers about the main root of poor academic performance of students especially students with low intellectual abilities thus, parents/ guardians ignore their contribution in their children's school activities, provision of sufficient learning materials, follow up of learning progress of their children and helping their children during doing home works or revising learnt content in order to meet learning needs of their children (Oranga, Obuba, Inviolata & Boinett, 2022)

#### 4.3.4 Views of Sector Education Inspectors and headteachers on educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners

During this study, among the interview questions asked to sector education inspectors and headteachers of secondary day schools include how do they relate the educational placement and provisions to Assessment of

learning needs for slow learners and whether they think, are the slow learners receiving the educational interventions that meet their learning needs or not.

After the interview of headteachers and sector education inspectors, all of them explained that the educational provisions given to slow learners are not all that meet the unique needs of them due to the fact that teachers do not have enough knowledge and skills required first of all for assessment of their learning needs and that of appropriate special educational provisions designed for each individual needs.

The views of one of the sector education inspector on whether educational provisions given to slow learners are enough or not, are summarised in paragraph below :

*« May be the special educational provisions undertaken to suit special educational needs of slow learners are not enough as it is because school personnel does not have adequate knowledge and skills required for assessing learning needs of these students which later lead to inadequate educational provisions and affect their academic performance throughout their studies. Indeed, teachers fail to accomodate the unique needs of slow learners due to insufficient time for teaching and provide additional support services ».*

On the other hand, one of the headteacher's views are expressed in the paragrapg below :

*« On my side regarding special educational provisions undertaken to meet learning needs of slow learners, I think these support services are not enough as teachers carry out the assessment of learning needs of these students based on their own experience and available knowledge and skills but not trained to help these students while identification of some learning needs and abilities require support intervention of parents and other professionals ».*

Slow learners and other students with learning disabilities are expected to be placed in an education setting that ensures students with disabilities and other special educational needs are served in general education classes with their peers without disabilities where they are provided with instructional support to access regular curricular content (Barrocas & Lisa A., 2011).

In fact, if school personnel does not have adequate knowledge and skills for carrying out a standard SEN assessment for students with special educational needs, the special educational provisions undertaken to suit students' learning needs also may be inadequate thus, this can later lead to low academic performance.

#### 4.4 Parental involvement in special educational needs assessment of slow learners

**Objective 3 :** To evaluate the parental involvement in assessment of learning needs of slow learners to improve their academic achievement

##### 4.4.1 Views of teachers on parental involvement in special educational needs assessment of slow learners

Table 4. 25 Views of teachers on parental involvement in special educational needs assessment of slow learners

<b>Teachers' views</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Is there any contribution of parents/ guardians in Assessment of learning needs of slow learners ?</b>				
Yes	35	97.2	1.027	0.166
No	1	2.8		
Total	36	100.0		
<b>Do you easily communicate with parents of slow learners about their learning progress ?</b>				
Yes	8	22.2	1.78	0.421
No	28	77.8		
Total	36	100.0		
<b>If No, explain</b>				
Parents only visit their children when there is school general assembly	9	25.0	1.75	0.439
Parents only visit their children if they are called by schools	25	69.4	1.305	0.467
Parents come to school if they bring school materials for their children	2	5.6	1.944	0.232

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

Table 4.25 indicates data about views of teachers on parental involvement in special educational needs assessment of slow learners thus, teachers were asked to show their side regarding the need of parental involvement in assessing learning needs of slow learners then 35 (97.2%) out of 36 respondents said ‘yes’ but there is one teacher stated that no need of parental involvement in practice of assessing learning needs of slow learners.

Indeed, teachers were asked whether they easily communicate with parents of slow learners about learning progress then 28 (77.8%) out of 36 respondents said ‘No’ because of different reasons as 9 (25.0%) respondents stated that parents only visit their children when there is a school general assembly, 25 (69.4%) respondents stated that parents only visit their children if they are called by schools while 2 (5.6%) respondents stated that parents come to school if they bring school materials for their children.

Parents are believed to complement schools’ efforts by helping their children with academic, social, and daily living skills taught at school and especially students with intellectual challenges require more parental involvement so that these students receive additional coaching/teaching at home and get opportunities for continuity and practise skills taught/learnt at school. However, due to different reasons including low educational background, lack of information about what learners learnt and what parents can help ; parents/ guardians do not participate in their children’s school activities and neither volunteer at school in preparing teaching/ learning resources nor engage in communication with the school to make a follow up of their children’s academic progress and well-being (Oranga, J., Obuba, E., Sore, I. and Boinett, F, 2022).

**4.4.2 Views of parents/ guardians on their contribution in assessment of special educational needs of their children**

*Table 4.26 Views of parents/ guardians on their contribution in assessment of special educational needs of their children*

<b>Parents’ views</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Do you easily communicate with school leaders as well as teachers about your child’s learning progress ?</b>				
Yes	5	17.9	1.821	0.390
No	23	82.1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100.0</b>		

<b>Have you ever been involved in activity of assessing learning difficulties of your child ?</b>				
Yes	0	0.0	2	0
<b>If No, explain</b>	28	100.0		
I can't have time to join this activity because of being busy struggling for means of life for the family	1	3.6		
Ideas and decisions of school leaders as well as that of teachers are enough	2	7.1		
School leaders or teachers have never invited us	25	89.3		
<b>Total</b>	28	100.0		
<b>What do you think as your contribution during assessing the learning difficulties of your child ?</b>				
Provide all information concerning the developmental background of your child	3	10.7	1.892	0.314
Provide all information concerning the educational background of your child	18	64.3	1.321	0.475
Provide all information about your child's learning barriers as well as the potential abilities	19	67.9	1.321	0.375
<b>What do you think as the factors that contribute in low academic performance of your child ?</b>				
Your child has learning gaps from the previous grade levels	21	75.0	1.214	0.418
Your child has serious english language barriers as medium of instruction	22	78.6	1.321	0.475
Teaching methods and techniques used do not meet his/ her learning difficulties	16	57.1	1.428	0.503
The child is not motivated to learn due to his/ her age	7	25.0	1.75	0.440
He/ she does not revise the learnt content at home	19	67.9	1.321	0.475
She/ he does not have enough school materials	9	32.1	1.678	0.475
She/ he has attended many schools with different ways of teaching	4	14.3	1.85	0.356
Frequent absenteeism	8	28.6	1.714	0.460
She/ he has been sick for a long time	2	7.1	1.928	0.262
She/ he frequently drops out of school	5	17.9	1.821	0.390
<b>Do you ever meet any challenge when you need to contribute in assessment of learning needs of your child ?</b>				
No	14	50.0	1.5	0.509
<b>Yes</b>	14	50.0		
<b>Total</b>	28	100.0		
<b>If yes, explain</b>				
Schools do not inform us about the learning gaps of our children	20	71.4	1.285	0.460

Schools do not value our ideas while assessing learning needs and making corresponding decisions	3	10.7	1.892	0.314
Schools do not invite us at the time of assessing learning needs of our children	21	75.0	1.25	0.440

**Source : Primary data (August, 2023)**

Table 4.26 indicates data about views of parents/ guardians on their contribution in assessment of special educational needs of their children and when they were asked whether they easily communicate with school leaders as well as teachers about their children’s learning progress, 23 (82.1%) out of 28 respondents said ‘No’ and when they were asked if they had ever been involved in any activity of assessing learning needs of their children at schools, all respondents said ‘No’ because of different reasons including 25 (89.3%) out of 36 respondents stated that they did n’t attend any practice of SEN assessment at school because schools had never invited them, 2 (7.1%) respondents stated that they didn’t attend any practice of SEN assessment because the ideas and decisions of school leaders as well as that of teachers are enough while one (3.6%) respondent said that she didn’t not attend because she couldn’t get time to join this activity because of being busy struggling for means of life for her family.

Infact, to ensure effective communication between schools and parents/ guardians, schools should develop a universal design approach of communication that cater for family diversity and differences as parents have different socio-cultural and linguistic background, families experience different life challenges including that of single parent families, parents who work long hours thus, the undertaken ways of communication may be informal or formal such as home-work journals, technology-based communication systems (e.g. websites, emails, phone call, social media, text messaging systems among others), information evenings, parents’ handbooks and making appointments to meet when a discussion requires greater focus (O’Toole et al, 2019).

Besides, parents/ guardians of slow learners under this study were asked what they thought as their contribution during assessing the learning difficulties of their children, 19 (67.9%) out of 28 respondents stated that they could provide all information about their children’s learning barriers as well as their potential abilities, 18 (64.3%) out of 28 respondents stated that they could provide all information concerning the

educational background of your children while 2 (10.7%) respondents stated that they could provide all information concerning the developmental background of their children.

Moreover, parents/guardians of slow learners under this study were asked what they thought as the factors that contribute in low academic performance of their children then, 21 (75%) out of 28 parents stated that their children experienced frequent low academic performance because their children had learning gaps from the previous grade levels, 22 (78.6%) respondents stated that their children had serious English language barriers as medium of instruction, 16 (57.1%) respondents stated that their children experienced frequent low academic performance because of teaching methods and techniques used which do not meet learning difficulties of their children, 7 (25.0%) respondents stated that their children were not motivated to learn due to their age, 19 (67.9%) respondents stated that their children didn't have a time for revising the learnt content at home or doing home works, 9 (32.1%) respondents stated that their children experienced low academic performance due to the lack of enough school materials, 4 (14.3%) respondents stated that frequent low academic performance of their children caused by studying in many schools with different ways of teaching, 8 (28.6%) respondents stated that their children experience low academic performance because of frequent absenteeism, 2 (7.1%) respondents that they experience frequent low academic performance due to long illness, 5 (17.9%) respondents stated their children experience low academic performance because of frequent school dropout.

Warnock (1978) in his report on Special Educational Needs stipulated that parents play a significant role in discovering signs of handicapping conditions or special needs which have not been discovered at, or soon after, birth of their children, thus they should be equipped with knowledge about patterns of child development for more easily detecting any unusual features thus, the effective coordination of parent-teacher relationship and partnership is the cornerstone of inclusive education (Virani & Ali, 2022).

Addedly, parents/guardians were asked whether they ever meet any challenge when they need to contribute in SEN assessment of learning needs of their children and half of them said 'yes' due to different reasons including 20 (71.4%) stated that schools didn't inform them about the learning gaps of their children, 3

(10.7%) respondents stated that Schools didn't value their ideas while assessing learning needs and making corresponding decisions and 21 (75.0%) respondents stated schools didn't invite them at the time of assessing learning needs of their children.

However, Successful parent-school relationship and partnership for successful learning of students with special educational needs mainly requires building personal relationships of trust as well as open and transparent communication about behavioural or other learning difficulties of students, timely decisions on special educational provisions undertaken to suit the unique needs of a student among others (O'Toole et al, 2019). Mapunda, Omollo & Bali (2017) explained that some schools underestimate the value and ability of parents/ guardians in the practice of SEN assessment as well as the provision of appropriate intervention services while some parents deny different decisions and pieces of advice from schools regarding support services undertaken to meet their children's learning needs.

#### **4.4.3 Views of headteachers and sector education inspectors on parental involvement in assessment of special educational needs of slow learners**

After sector education inspectors and headteachers being asked on how do parents/ guardians of slow learners contribute in assessment of learning needs as well as support services of their children, the majority of interviewees stated that most of the parents/ guardians of slow learners abandon their children due to frequent low learning performance results thus, they expect nothing from them and these parents consider the school attendance of slow learners as wasting time.

The views of one of the headteacher are summarised in the paragraph below :

*« In our school, except some parents who manage to make a follow up of learning progress of their children and even search for a teacher for additional teaching, most of the parents/ guardians of slow learners consider education of their children as nothing and they neither want to talk with schools about learning progress of their children for improvement nor give enough school materials to their children ».*

On the other hand, the views of one of the sector education inspectors under this study are expressed in this paragraph :

*« In our our sector, schools in partnership with local government authority, participation of parents/ guardians of slow learners in education of their children has been improved comparing to how it was in the previous years, nowadays parents/ guardians of slow learners manage to respect invitation of schools if invited for talking about the learning barriers of their children so as to improve their academic achievement and do their best to make a follow up of their children's learning progress »*

While the other sector education inspector under this study through interview stated that :

*« Though some parents/ guardians cater for better learning progress of their children, most of the parents, they don't care about learning progress of their children because of low mindset and they expect education of their children to be in only of school responsibilities ».*

Despite of decrease in need of parental assistance for children as much get as old, they still need assistance of their parents/ guardians for getting food and other baic needs, school materials and school fees, talking with them about their developmental concerns as well as other life challenges they face either in schools or elsewhere, helping them in doing home works and revising the learnt content, motivation for learning through talking or as role model of leaning benefits. However, most of the parents with low educational background are not confident to help their children in revising the learnt content and doing home works as well as visit their children at school to have a talk with teachers about learning progress of their children thus this may worsen the low academic performance of students experience slow learning (Antoine & Ramon, 2015).

In fact, students which experience slow learning need more support of parents to improve their academic performance including repetitive and remedial coaching at home, regular communication with schools about current learning needs and abilites as well as the provision of enough school materials otherwise the ongoing shortage in parents' involvement to their children's education keeps on worsening the demotivation and

failure to learn of children experiencing slow learning and other special educational needs (Oranga, J., Obuba, E., Sore, I. and Boinett, F, 2022).

#### **4.5 Major challenges encountered by lower secondary day schools during assessing learning needs of slow learners**

**Objective 4 :** To identify major challenges encountered by lower secondary day schools during assessing learning needs of slow learners.

In fact, education is a fundamental human right and every child has a right to go to school regardless of his/her unique needs thus, schools are responsible for providing adequate educational provisions for all students regardless of their special educational needs.

As children are free to go school regardless of their unique needs, schools are required to have competent personnel to ensure accurate identification of students with special educational needs as well as assessing their potential abilities and learning needs so as to offer educational provisions that meet each individual needs. However, many teachers in mainstream schools are not competent to teach children with Special educational needs and disability due to the lack of required skills and use of inadequate resources thus they fail to implement inclusive education (G Hornyby, 2015).

Jane-Francis Afungmeyu Abongdia and John Wankah Foncha and Alinda Dakada (2015) in their research work entitled « Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Identifying Learners with Learning Barriers: Toward Inclusive Education » explained that among the main challenges of schools during the practice of SEN Assessment for students with learning barriers include the lack of effective teachers' training, approach by which teachers employs for identification, overcrowded classrooms, parental involvement as well as the lack of collaboration among educators.

Addedly, Schools face the problem of lack of a functioning school-based system of assessment for identification and intervention services for children with special educational needs and there is no team of

experts or multidisciplinary assessment team so as to assess, identify, and undertake intervention programmes for children with special educational needs which are appropriate to the children's learning needs (Mapunda et al, 2017).

Based on data collected throughout this study especially information given by headteachers of secondary day schools and sector education inspectors, It was found that the problem of lack of adequate knowledge and skills required to identify learning needs of students with special educational needs and provide appropriate educational provisions that meet each individual needs is the main challenge encountered by schools regarding the practice of SEN assessment for students with special educational needs.

Indeed, lack of parental involvement in education of students with special educational needs is another challenge for schools due to the fact that parents play a significant role in identifying special educational needs of their children as they have more information about developmental background and other aspects of life of their children, parents/ guardians also play a significant role in implementing the decisions made after assessing learning needs of the child so that the special educational provisions undertaken meet the identified learning needs.

Moreover, headteachers and sector education inspectors kept on explaining that it is difficult to carry out a standard SEN Assessment for students with special educational needs in different schools while there are no common policy guidelines set by the ministry of education in order to provide a practical guidance regarding planning of SEN assessment, its implementation as well as its corresponding monitoring and evaluation framework for all educational institutions in a whole country and the absence of policy guidelines for a statutory SEN assessment in Rwanda was confirmed by the special educational needs policy of 2018 as written below :

*« Rwandan education system is not yet endowed with any formal functional assessment, carried out for early identification of learning needs upon school entry for appropriate school placements and support. Therefore, policy guidelines on this vital service are still required in the education sector, to equip it with standard assessment procedures and strategies (functional assessment) to support learners with a range of SEN » (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, 2018, p. 19).*

Meanwhile, the views of one of the headteachers under this study are expressed in the following paragraph :

*« We have many students with psychological and emotional problems that are beyond knowledge and skills of our school personnel thus we need intervention of other professionals including counselors, psychologists and other medical professionals but schools do not have means of getting them due to the lack of policy guidelines set by government so as to give an orientation on when and how referral assessment as well as other SEN assessment procedures for students with special educational needs have to be done and and set guidelines regarding collaboration and cooperation between educational and health institutions, NGOs and local government authority while carrying out a statutory SEN assessment for student with special educational needs »*

According to Regis Fanuel Gutuza, Mufunani Tungu Khosa, Philip Gazimbe, and Tichaona Mapolisa (2015) in their research work entitled « Challenges of Assessment of Students with Special Learning Needs », the lack of adequate knowledge and skills required for the identification and assessment of students with special needs and absence of clear policy guidelines on the assessment of students with special needs to specify who will be assessed, when and how a student will be assessed as the main challenges faced by schools during SEN assessment practice.

Furthermore, all sector education inspectors and headteachers kept on explaining that a big number of students to be taught in one classroom added to the lack of adequate knowledge and skills on special needs education is another challenge in identifying learning needs of each student and provide adequate support services as teachers teach in hurry to finish the expected curriculum content on time thus, students with slow learning or other learning difficulties are at risk of keeping on experiencing low academic achievement. Indeed, the interviewees explained that schools need common SEN assessment tools and guidelines set at national level for different types of disability and other special educational needs in order to carry out a standard SEN assessment for all schools in a whole country. The views of one of the sector education inspectors under this study are expressed as follows :

*« School leaders and teachers need enough training on special education and be provided with a standard SEN assessment tools and number of classrooms and teachers should be increased to decrease disadvantages of big class size on students with special educational needs »*

On the other hand, headteachers stated that sector education inspectors as local education authority representative have a limited time to visit schools due to their workload assigning them many responsibilities beyond that of related to education inspection as shown in the paragraph below to express the views of one of the headteachers :

*« It is difficult for sector education inspectors to visit all schools within their inspection and carry out monitoring and evaluation of all education concerns because of being assigned many responsibilities and duties including follow up of mutual insurance issues, community activities known as Umuganda, health and sanitation activities as well as other activities planned by MINALOC which limit their availability in education inspection thus, it is not easy for them to reach at more than 30 schools and carry out an effective monitoring and evaluation of all education activities under their inspection in order to collaborate with focal teachers that coordinate inclusive and special needs education in schools as well as school leaders in finding solutions for inclusive and special needs education related problems».*

In fact, local government authority plays a significant role in monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of national special education policy in schools under their inspection as well as carrying out an ongoing community mobilisation on education concerns including learning barriers of students with disability and other special educational needs as they act as intermediary voice of schools under its inspection to collaborate with non-government organisations and central government authority to provide a sustainable solution for challenges hindering quality education for all students regardless of individual special educational needs (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, 2018) thus, lack of enough time for sector education inspectors to carry out inspection on schools management as well as teaching and learning activities can worsen education deficiency of struggling learners especially students with disability and other special educational needs.

Decentralized education is intended for better reflecting local priorities, encouraging participation of all stakeholders, improving learning outcomes as well as quality of teaching thus, if local education authority encourages increased local participation in school management, it improves school accountability and responsiveness to student needs thus improving learning conditions for students (Sherman, 2016) & (Cilliers, J., Dunford, E. & Habyarimana, 2021).

## **CHAPTER FIVE : SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this last chapter was presenting a brief and clear summary of the findings, followed by presentations of comprehensive set of conclusions and recommendations based on the findings discussed in the fourth chapter.

### **5.1 Summary**

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine the Importance of Special educational needs assessment on academic achievement of slow learners in lower secondary day schools, Kamonyi district –Rwanda.

This study targeted all slow learners and their parents, teachers and sector education inspectors in Kamonyi District. The sample size of this study of 103 people was purposively selected including all 28 slow learners and their parents, all 36 teachers, all 7 headteachers and 4 sector education inspectors in seven selected secondary day schools with four selected sectors in kamonyi District.

The questionnaire was given to Slow learners, their parents and teachers for filling while a structured interview schedule with headteachers of secondary day schools and sector education inspectors was conducted by the researcher. Editing of data from the field was followed by the coding process then data was keyed in excel software to aid the analysis of data.

Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis from which mean, standard deviation, percentage, frequency and tables were generated while qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and emerging themes were identified.

### **5.1.1 Basic considerations undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners**

**Objective 1 :** To identify the basic considerations undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners in 9 & 12 years basic education in Kamonyi district.

This study intended to find out the basic considerations undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners in 9 & 12 years.

The findings of this study indicated that personality traits of slow learners as well as their historical health and educational background are the main factors that influence academic achievement of slow learners thus different procedures undertaken by lower secondary day schools to carry out assessment of learning needs for slow learners have to take into account these factors.

This research showed that low cognitive and intellectual abilities is the main factor of frequent low academic performance for slow learners as the source of learning difficulties of slow learners including difficulties in solving mathematical related problems and others requiring high critical thinking capacity, short attention span, slow information processing resulting in difficulties to understand easily the new concept, retain and remember what is learnt and low logical reasoning ability which leads to difficulties in comparing two phenomena based on their relationships and differences so as to draw a conclusion.

On the other hand, the research findings showed that family background, historical health and educational background of slow learners have a great influence on their academic performance as some of them they are frequently absent at school because of chronic illness or long illness, others experience frequent absenteeism because of family poverty where students take different crops to different markets in order to help their

parents earn means of life, others search for low income generating jobs in mining activities, swamp agricultural activities, construction activities among others.

Indeed, the findings of this research showed that some students experience frequent low academic performance because of having emotional problems which mostly resulted from family conflicts where some of their parents were separated, others have parents live in disharmony and deny their responsibilities regarding providing basic needs and school materials for their children, others leave their children to their grandparents then children experience self-control which may lead to indiscipline cases at school.

Furthermore, this research also showed that some students experience frequent low academic performance due to the learning gaps from the previous grade levels in different subjects either because of frequent absenteeism or the teaching methodology that didn't cater for their special educational needs then they learn difficultly the new content in current grade level.

Addedly, the findings of this research showed that most of the teachers in secondary day schools do not have adequate knowledge and skills required to identify all learning needs and talents of a student and provide adequate educational provisions as it is thus they mostly refer to their daily observations of students' behaviours, learning performance results in different subjects through home works, quizzes, examinations at school level, district level and national level as well as parents' opinions about learning progress of their children while researchers stipulated other types of tests that can be carried out to assess learning needs of slow learners including intelligence test, personality inventory and different medical assessments undertaken depends on the nature of special educational needs of the student.

Besides, teachers do not have information about the intervention of multidisciplinary assessment team to combine expertise for accurate SEN assessment thus, they use their own experience on teaching struggling learners and some learning needs and abilities of students remain unknown which may lead students to get inadequate support services and later lead to frequent low academic performance.

### **5.1.2 Parents/ guardians' contribution in special educational needs assessment of slow learners**

**Objective 2 :** To evaluate parents/ guardians' contribution in assessment of learning needs of slow learners to improve their academic achievement

The findings of this research indicated that most of the parents do not make a follow up of learning progress of their children either because of their low educational background, family poverty as they spend their much time on struggling for family life or because of poor communication between them and schools.

Moreover, this research showed that despite of unreplacable intervention of parents/ guardians in assessment of learning needs of slow learners, provision of school materials and school feeding fees, communication with schools about the burning issues regarding education of their children as well as facilitating their children in revising the taught/ learnt content and doing home works, some parents/guardians deny their responsibilities either as result of internal family conflict, low educational back ground of parents and lack of effective communication between parents and schools about existing learning gap throughout their children's studies.

### **5.1.3 Educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners**

**Objective 3 :** To examine the importance of educational placement and provisions following assessment of learning needs for slow learners on their academic achievement.

This research findings showed that slow learners in secondary day schools under this study are placed in regular classrooms with their peers with minor or no special educational needs then most of the teachers provide additional support services to slow learners based on results of daily observation of student's classroom behaviours and results from different tests and exams in different subjects.

This research showed that most of the teachers neither have information on how to prepare individual education plan to cater for individual learning needs of slow learners nor have adequate knowledge and skills to plan and provide appropriate special educational provisions for slow learners while researchers showed that slow learners require motivation, individual attention, flexible curriculum, restoration and development of self-

confidence, remedial instruction, special teaching methods involving assistive technology and periodical medical check up to learn successfully as their peer with minor or no special educational needs.

#### **5.1.4 Major challenges encountered by lower secondary day schools during assessing learning needs of slow learners**

**Objective 4 :** To identify major challenges encountered by lower secondary day schools during assessing learning needs of slow learners.

The research finding of this research indicated that schools have often meet different challenges regarding SEN assessment for slow learners including lack of adequate knowledge and skills for teachers to identify students with special educational needs including slow learners, difficulties in identifying learning needs of students with special educational needs and providing appropriate educational provisions.

Addedly, this research showed that schools meet a challenge of carrying out a standard SEN assessment for students with special educational needs while there is no clear national policy guidelines regarding the planning, implementing as well as monitoring and evaluation of SEN assessment practice in different education levels.

On the other hand, this research showed the limitations of sector education inspectors in monitoring and evaluating education activities in different schools under their inspection due the workload adding additional duties and responsibilities not normally expected.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The research concluded that slow learners are at risk of experiencing ongoing education deficiency due to inadequate SEN assessment procedures as well as educational provisions undertaken to meet their special educational needs.

Regarding procedures used for SEN assessment of slow learners, the research stipulated that most of teachers decide educational provisions based on daily observation of student's classroom behaviours, ideas from parents about learning needs of their children and results from different tests and exams in different subjects thus, slow learners are at risk of experiencing low academic achievement as some learning needs remain unknown and get inadequate educational provisions.

Regarding the parental involvement in assessing learning needs of slow learners, the study deduced that parents are less involved in education of their children either because of being busy in struggling for life, low educational background, family conflict or poor communication between schools and parents thus, some students experience some indiscipline case as result of emotional problems and self-control, miss guidance and help in revising the taught content and doing home works as well as school materials and school feeding fees which later demotivate students to learn.

Concerning the educational placement and provisions undertaken as a result of SEN assessment for slow learners, the research indicated that slow learners are placed in a regular classroom and they get almost the same educational provisions as their peers due to the lack of adequate knowledge and skills for teachers about which appropriate special education provisions required for slow learners.

Finally, the study concluded that, schools face many challenges regarding the assessment of learning needs of slow learners including low parental involvement, inadequate knowledge and skills of teachers for appropriate identification of learning needs, lack of clear policy guidelines regarding the planning, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of SEN assessment practice, overpopulation in classroom and limited availability of sector education inspectors due to different additional duties and responsibilities beyond education inspection.

### **5.3 Recommendations of the study**

After the study, there are researcher's recommendations :

1. Ministry of education should set policy guidelines regarding the planning, implementation as well as the monitoring and evaluation of a standard special educational needs assessment practice in different levels of education so that different educational institutions be equipped with standard assessment procedures for a range of different learning needs of students.
2. Ministry of Education through REB and RTB should plan and provide intensive training about Inclusive and Special needs education to school leaders, teachers and trainers from nursery to secondary education level so that they become competent to identify students with special educational needs, assess learning needs of each student and provide appropriate educational provisions that suit each individual needs.
3. Ministry of local government authority and Ministry of gender and family promotion in partnership with NGOs, should do their best to increase their community mobilisation on ways of preventing family conflicts, increase financial support and training for both rural and urban poor families to start a small business as well as keep on creating more jobs for these families to earn means of life.
4. Ministry of education in partnership with ministry of local government should work together to increase the availability of sector education inspectors so that they may able to fill their responsibilities regarding the execution of education sector policy, planning and follow up of education activities at sector level and the general administration of schools.
5. Schools should work in partnership with local government authority and local health providers as well as other neighbouring schools with skilled personnel about Special education to join expertise and provide accurate SEN assessment for student with disability and other special educational needs to meet their diverse needs.
6. Schools should work in partnership with parents and wider community to create awareness of essence of education and develop teaching and learning resources that are used to cater for a range of different students' learning needs

#### **5.4 Suggestions for further research**

Further research is needed on the impact of SEN assessment on Educational provisions of slow learners, implication of universal design for learning on academic achievement of slow learners as well as programmed learning in education of slow learners.

## References

- Abongdia, Foncha & Dakada. (2015, March). Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Identifying Learners. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 8(3), 93-501 . <https://doi.org/10.1080/09751122.2015.11890271>
- Agbenu&Martyn. (1998, June). Assessment and special educational needs: teachers' dilemmas. *British Journal of Special Education*, Volume 25(ISSN-0952-3383), 81-87. Consulté le November 22, 2022, sur <https://nasenjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com>assessment and special educational needs>
- Airth& Roundy. (2021, May 5). *Psychology courses*. Consulté le July 17, 2022, sur Study.com: <https://study.com>
- Akinleke. (2017, February). IMPACT OF FAMILY STRUCTURE ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY. *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology Research*, Vol.3, No.1, 1-10. Consulté le December 16, 2023, sur : <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326829914>
- Alawiyah & Supriatna. (2022). "COGNITIVE COUNSELING IN IMPROVING LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT". *Islamic Guidance and Counseling*. Vol. 2, pp. pp. 30-48. Bandung: Department of Guidance and Counseling, Indonesian Education University. Consulté le April 18, 2023
- Alisha M. B. Braun. (2020). "Paper commissioned for the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report, Inclusion and education". UNESCO. Consulté le September 28, 2022, sur <https://unesdoc.unesco.org>ark>
- Antoine & Ramon. (2015). THE CORRELATION BETWEEN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT. *LSU Master's Theses*, P. 185. Consulté le February 25, 2024, sur [https://repository.lsu.edu/gradschool\\_theses/185](https://repository.lsu.edu/gradschool_theses/185)
- Ardianingsih, Purbaningrum & Sujarwanto. (2019). Slow-Learners Assessment Training in Inclusive School. *3rd International Conference on Special Education ( ICSE 2019)*. Vol.388, pp. 148-151. Surabaya, Indonesia: Univeritas Negeri Surabaya, Special Education Department. Consulté le January 23, 2023, sur <https://www.atlantis-press.com>
- Areas of Need: Cognition and Learning*. (s.d.). Consulté le April 26, 2023, sur Wigan Council: <https://www.wigan.gov.uk>
- Bagadood & Saigh. (2022). Multidisciplinary Team Approach In Special Education Settings In Saudi Arabia: Perceptions And Issues. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, Vol. 6(No. 11), 1436-1447. Consulté le January 29, 2023, sur <http://journalppw.com>
- Barrocas & Lisa A. (2011, October 19). "A Study of the Relationship Between Educational Placment and the Achievement of Urban Low Socioeconomic Hispanic Middle School Students With and Without Specific Learning Disabilities. *FIU Electronic Theses and Dissertations*, 499. <https://doi.org/10.25148/etd.FI11120605>
- Beckett& Taylor. (2016). *Human growth and development. Third Edition*. LONDON: SAGE Publications Asia-Pacific Pte Ltd.

- Binu & Bhaskaran. (2015, February). Affective Teaching: An effective way to deal with slow learners in the ESL Classroom. *Researchgate*.
- Bost, A. (2007). *The Need For Cognition Scale*. Consulté le April 25, 2023, sur Center For Inquiry: [https://centerofinquiry.org/need for cognition scale](https://centerofinquiry.org/need-for-cognition-scale)
- Bueno D. (2019, July 10). Genetics and learning: How Genes influence Educational Attainment. (U. o. Purification checa, Éd.) *Frontiers In Psychology*, 10(1622), 1. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01622>
- Caffarella, R. S. (2010). "Viewing Cultural Barriers as Opportunities to Enhance Learning: An International Perspective". *Adult Education Research Conference* (pp. 64-65). Topeka: Kansas State University Libraries ,New Prairie Press. Consulté le August 20, 2022, sur [https:// newprairiepress.org/aerc/2010/papers/10](https://newprairiepress.org/aerc/2010/papers/10)
- Chew & Cerbin. (2022, May 20). *Cognitive Challenges of Effective Teaching*. (Education directorate/ precollege and undergraduate / Psychology Teacher Network) Consulté le April 25, 2023, sur American Psychological Association: <https://www.apa.org/precollege>
- Cilliers, J., Dunford, E. & Habyarimana. (2021, March). What Do Local Government Education Managers Do to Boost Learning Outcomes? *RISE Working Paper Series*. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35489/BSG-RISE - WP\\_2021/064](https://doi.org/10.35489/BSG-RISE-WP_2021/064)
- Claudia W, Diamond-Myrstern & Lisa K. (2018, December 15). School Absenteeism in Children and Adolescents. *American Family Physician*, Vol. 98(No.12), 738-744. Retrieved December 26, 2023 from [https://www.aaafp..org>afp>issues](https://www.aaafp.org/afp/issues)
- Collen. (2022, March). *Individualized Education Programs ( IEPs)*. Retrieved February 13, 2024 from NEMOURS, Kids Health: [https://kidshealth.org/parents>iep](https://kidshealth.org/parents/iep)
- Considering LRE in Placement Decisions*. (2022, April). Consulté le February 11, 2024, sur Center for Parent Information & Resources: <https://www.parentcenterhub.org>
- "Country information for Germany - Assessment within inclusive education systems". (2020, February 5). Consulté le Novmber 5, 2022, sur EUROPEAN AGENCY for Social Needs and Inclusive Education: [www.european-agency.org>assessment](http://www.european-agency.org/assessment)
- "Data Science & Business Analytics". (2023, May 18). Consulté le May 28, 2023, sur Simplilearn: [https://www.simplilearn.com>what is Data collection](https://www.simplilearn.com/what-is-data-collection)
- D.O. Kyereko et al. (2022, June 8). Understanding grade repetition from the perspectives of teachers and principals in basic schools in Ghana. *International Journal of Educational Development*, Vol. 93. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2022.102633](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2022.102633)
- Deignan. (2022, February 6). *Interactive Classrooms*. Consulté le February 15, 2024, sur Mentimeter: [https://www.mentimeter.com>blog](https://www.mentimeter.com/blog)
- Desforges & Lindsay. (2010). *Diagnostic and Assessment Procedures used to Diagnose a Disability and Assess Special Educational Needs: An International Review*. National council for Special Education. London: Centre for

Educational Development, Appraisal and Research, University of Warwick. Consulté le April 13, 2022, sur <https://ncse.ie>2014/10>5>

"*Educational Placements for Students with Disabilities*". (s.d.). (Texas Health and Human Services Commission) Consulté le May 1, 2023, sur Navigate Life Texas For families raising children with disabilities: <https://www.navigatelifetexas.org>educational placement>

"*Education Provision*". (s.d.). (Action For Children) Consulté le May 1, 2023, sur Headlands School , Action for Children: <https://www.headlandsschool.org.uk>educational provision>

*Education, Schools, learning and deveolpment, special educational needs*. (s.d.). Consulté le February 1, 2024, sur nidirect government services: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk>articles>

Eggen& Kauchak. (2010). *Educational psychology : windows on classrooms, Eighth Edition*. , New Jersey : y Pearson Education.

Ekwueme. (2023, June 21). *Strategies to Effectively Teach Slow Learners*. Consulté le January 23, 2024, sur Medium: <https://medium.com/@educareinfocus/strategies-to-effectively-teach-slow learners>

"*Evaluating School -Aged Children for Disabilty*". (2022, April). Consulté le February 1, 2024, sur Center for Parent Information & Resources: <https://www.parentcenterhub.org>

Fanuel RG et al. (2015, December). Challenges of Assessment of Students with Special Learning Needs. *Scholars Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Vol. 3*(No.9B), 1457-1459. Consulté le March 2, 2024, sur <https://www.researchgate.net>

Florence&Jeremiah. (2016). Identification of Special Educational Needs for Early Childhood Inclusive Education in Ghana. *Journal of Education and Practice, 7*(ISSN 2222-288X), 2.

"*Formal VS. Informal assessment": differences and Similarties*". (2021, November 2). Consulté le October 23, 2022, sur VOXCO: <https://www.voxco.com>blog>formal vs informal assessment>

Fraenkel, Wallen& Hyun. (2003). *How to design and evaluate Research in Education* (éd. 8th). New York: Mc Graw Hill Companies.

G Hornyby. (2015, September). Inclusive special education: development of a new theory for the education of children with special educational needs and disabilities. *British Journal of Special Education, Volume 42* (No.3), 234-256. Consulté le November 22, 2022, sur <https://nasenjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com>inclusive special education>

G. Subramonian & S. Vidhya. (2022, September 11). FINDING THE RIGHT SPARK - STRATEGIES TO IDENTIFY THE SLOW LEARNERS. *Research gate*. Consulté le January 31, 2024, sur <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363466519>

Garry Hornby & Rayleen Lafaele. (2011, January 22). Barriers to parental involvement in education: an explanatory model. *Educational Review, 63: 1*(1465-3397), 37-52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2010.488049>

- Govindarajoo, Selvarajoo & Mohd. (2022, October 7). Factors Contributing to Poor Academic Achievement among Low Performing Pupils: A Case Study. *Asian Journal of University Education*, Vol. 18(No.4 ), 981-997. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24191/ajue.v18i4.20008>
- Hartley. (2010). *Teacher Expertise for Special Educational Needs*. London: Policy exchange. Retrieved November 26, 2023 from <https://www.policyexchange.org.uk>
- Hausotter& Von Knebel. (2005). *Assessment and Special Needs Diagnosis in the Education System*. BERLIN: Assessment country project.
- Hemwati, N. (2014, December). The Concept of Academic Achievements. *International Journal of Education and Science Research*, Vol. 1(Issue 6), 93. Consulté le 1 8, 2023, sur <https://ijesrr.orgpublication>
- Henry. (2023, October 8). *IEP PROCESS, SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW*. Consulté le February 14, 2024, sur The IEP Attorney: <https://iepattorney.com>>how often should an iep be reviewed?
- Howard Taras et al. (2005, August 11). Chronic health conditions and student performance at school. *Journal of School Health*, Vol.75(No. 7), 255-266. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1746-1561.2005.00034.x>
- "How to identify , Assess and review children with Special educational needs". (2023, April). (D. C. Council, Producteur) Consulté le April 30, 2023, sur St Helen Auckland , Community Primary School: <https://www.sthelenaukland.durhamcounty county council>
- "How to write a literature review". (2020, July 7). (M. L. Kenneth Lyons, Producteur) Consulté le September 22, 2022, sur Concordia University: <https://library.concordia.ca>writing>
- Imran, Nazir, Al-Harthy & Zakia. (2023, December). Early Identification and Intervention: Amplifying the Voice of Slow Learners. *AITU Scientific Research Journal*, Vol. 1(No. 4), 17-25. Consulté le January 29, 2024, sur <https://www.aitusrj.org>
- "Informal Assessment in the Classroom: Examples & Types". (2015, July 18). Consulté le October 22, 2022, sur Study.com: <https://study.com>academy>lesson/informal assessments-in-the-classroom-examples-types-quiz.html>
- Ireland National Council for Special education. (2014). *Children with Special educational needs, Information Booklet for Parents* (éd. Second edition). Dublin, Ireland: Ireland National Council for Special education. Consulté le August 19, 2022, sur <https://ncse.ie>
- J. Walston, J. Redford & Bhatt. (2017). *Workshop on Survey methods in Education Research: Facilitator's guide and resources*. Institute of Education Sciences, US. Department of Education. Washington D.C: American Institutes for Research. Consulté le May 5, 2023, sur <https://ies.ed.gov>rel>publication>
- Joan L. & Takach. (1965, May). Meeting the Needs of the Slow Learner at the Secondary Level. *All Master's Theses*. Consulté le February 11, 2024, sur <https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/etd/464>

- John W, Creswell. (2012). *Education Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research, Fourth Edition* (éd. Fourth ). (K. Mason, Éd.) Boston, Lincoln, USA: Pearson Education. Consulté le May 14, 2023, sur <https://www.mim.ac.mw>John w,Creswell>
- Julie K. (2009, November 23). *IMPACT OF PARENT EDUCATION ON STUDENT SUCCESS*. Utah Valley University, Department of Education (. gov). ERIC. Consulté le December 17, 2023, sur <https://eric.ed.gov>
- K. Unnikrishnan & S. Ramnarayan. (2000). Individual Differences in Need for Cognition. *Journal of Research in Personality, Vol. 34*, pp. 305–328. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jrpe.1999.2274>
- Kanchan. (2023, January). A study factor affecting the personalityof slow learners. *Social science journal, Vol. 13*(No. 2), 6378-6382. Consulté le January 23, 2023, sur <https://resmilitaris.net>article>
- Kapur. (2019, July). Gender inequality in Education. Consulté le August 20, 2022, sur <https:www.researchgate.net>
- Karras. J D. (1997, January). Statistical Mthodology: II. Reliability and Validity Assessment in study Design, Part A. *Academic emergency Medecine, Vol. 4*(No. 1), 64-71. Consulté le April 2024, 13, sur <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com>
- Katy. (2020, January 15). *quantitative Content analysis*. <https://doi.org/DOI:https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781526421036>
- Kendra. (2020, December 9). *Theories: Cognitive psychology*. Consulté le July 16, 2022, sur Very well mind: <https://www.verywellmind.com>
- Kendra. (2023, April 18). *Cognition in psychology*. Consulté le April 26, 2023, sur VeryWell mind: <https://verywellmind.com>what is cognition?>
- Kigon. (2014, June). Until when does the effect of age on academic achievement persists? Evidence From Korean data. *Economics of Education Review, Vol. 40*, 106-122. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econrev.2014.02.002>
- Kimberlin & Winterstein. (2008, December 1). Validity and reliability of measurement instruments used in research. *American journal of healthsystem pharmacy, Vol 65*(No. 23), pp. 2276-2284. <https://doi.org/10.2146/ajhp070364>
- Kirsten. (2016). *Involving Parents in Assessment*. (Teach in) Consulté le May 1, 2023, sur Teach in , Progress your Teaching Career: <https://www.teachin.co.uk>resource>
- Kirsten. (2018). *Guidelines for Serving Students with Specific Learning Disabilities in Educational Settings*. NORTH DAKOTA, NORTH DAKOTA, United States of America: North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. Consulté le December 1, 2023, sur <https://eric.ed.gov>id=ED591017>
- Klepfer. (nd). *Dealing with oppositional parents*. Consulté le August 2022, 15, sur <https://www.csub.edu:https://www.csub.edu>parent>
- Komal, Ayesha & Shama. (2021, September 10). SCREENING AND IDENTIFICATION OF SLOW LEARNERS. *Journal of ISOSS, Vol. 7*(No. 2), pp. 89-99. Récupéré sur <https:www.joi.isoss.net>vol.7-no.2>

- Korikana, A. (2020). "SLOW LEARNERS- A UNIVERSAL PROBLEM AND PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO THEM TO BE A SUCCESSFUL LEARNER". *PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 6(No. 1), 29-42. Consulté le May 10, 2022, sur <https://doi.org/10.20319/pijss.2020.61.2942>
- Krishnakumar P, Jisha AM, Sukumaran SK & Nair M. (2011, October). Developing a model for resource room training for slow learners in normal schools. *Indian journal of psychiatry*, Vol.53(No. 9), 336-339. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0019-5545.91908>
- Küpper & Kohanek. (2022). *10 Steps in the Special Education Process*. Consulté le November 21, 2022, sur Reading Rockets: [https://www.parentcenterhub.org/stes in special education](https://www.parentcenterhub.org/stes-in-special-education)
- Kurtz, J Rowley, Harris & Taniesha A. (2008, July). Gender Streotypes about mathematics and Science and Self-perceptions on ability in late childhood and Early adloscence. *JSTOR*, volume 54, No.3, 386-409. Consulté le August 20, 2022, sur <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23096251>
- Lins de Holanda Coelho et al. (2020). The every efficient Assessment of Need For Cognition: Developing a Six- Item Version. *Assessment*, Vol. 27(no.8), pp.1870-1885. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1073191118793208>
- M. kumar Sharma. (n.d). Methods of Data Collection- Observation, Interview & Focus group Discussion. Motihari, Indian: Department of Social Work, Mahatma Gandhi Central University. Consulté le May 28, 2023, sur <https://www.mgcub.ac.in>pdf>
- M.Dalton & Trostle.B. (2012). Forum on Public Policy. *ERIC*. Consulté le February 16, 2024, sur <https://files.eric.ed.gov>
- Mapunda et al. (2017, October 23). Challenges in identifying and serving students with special needs in Dodoma, Tanzania. *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy*. <https://doi.org/DOI 10.1186/s40723-017-0036-8>
- Mauro. (2020, June 11). *School, Special Education*. Consulté le February 11, 2024, sur Verywell family: <https://www.verywellfamily.com>
- McCombes, S. (2022, October 10). *Descriptive , Defintion,Types, Methods & Examples*. Consulté le May 5, 2023, sur Scribbr: [https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/desriptive research](https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/desriptive-research)
- Meenakshi. (nd). *Slow learners*. Bodh Gaya, Bihar, Indian: Magadhuniversity, Department of Psychology. Consulté le September 28, 2022, sur [https://www.magadhuniversity.ac.in>slow learners](https://www.magadhuniversity.ac.in>slow-learners)
- Michael. R. (2023). *Student Assessment in Teaching and Learning*. (Vanderbilt University) Consulté le May 1, 2023, sur VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY, Center for Teaching: [https://cft.vanderbilt.edu>student assessment](https://cft.vanderbilt.edu>student-assessment)
- MINEDUC. (2016, 2022). *2015 and 2020/2021 Education Statistical Year Book*. Kigali, Rwanda: MINEDUC. Consulté le August 23, 2022, sur <https://mineduc.prod.risa.rw>
- MINEDUC. (2019). *National Comprehensive School Feeding policy*. Kigali, Rwanda: MINEDUC. Consulté le August 20, 2022, sur <https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org>
- MINEDUC. (2022). *2020/21 EDUCATION STATISTICAL YEARBOOK*. KIGALI: MINEDUC.

- MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. (2018). *REVISED SPECIAL NEEDS AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY*. KIGALI: MINEDUC. Consulté le Mars 2, 2024, sur <https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org>
- MONT & NGUYEN. (2013, August). Does Parental Disability Matter to Child Education? Evidence. *World Development*, Vol.48(ISSN 0305-750X), pp. 88–107. Consulté le Monthly 5, 2023, sur <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2013.04.001>
- Mudarris, Nu'man, Wahyuni & Saifaldin. (2022, June). TEACHER FLEXIBILITY IN APPLYING THE AIR LEARNING MODEL TO OVERCOME SLOW LEARNERS IN MADRASAH. *Edureligia : Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Vol. 6(2579-5694), pp.10-21. <https://doi.org/http://doi.org/10.33650/edureligia.v6i1.3645>
- Munir, J., Faiza, M., Jamal, B., Daud, S., & Iqbal, K. (2023). The Impact of Socio-economic Status on Academic Achievement. *Journal of Social Sciences Review*, Vol. 3(No. 2), 695-705. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.54183/jssr.v3i2.308>
- Mwangi. L. (2013). *Special Needs Education (SNE) in Kenyan public primary schools: exploring government policy and teachers' understandings*. Brunel Universty, Special Needs Education. LONDON: School of Sport and Education Brunel University. Consulté le March 28, 2022, sur <https://bura.brunel.ac.uk>
- Najma. (2012). Effect of Academic Interventions on the Developmental Skills of Slow Learners. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research*, 27(1), 135-151. Consulté le November 8, 2022, sur <https://www.researchgate.net>2771>
- Need for cognition*. (s.d.). Consulté le April 6, 2023, sur Psychology, Academic Writing Services: <https://psychology.iresearchnet.com>need for cognition>
- Neil & Bobola. (2017). *Psychology 172, Developmental Psychology*. California: College of the Canyons Santa Clarita.
- NTAWUGASHIRA. (2022, December). The role of Parents in enhancing Students' academic performance in Rwandan nine years Basic Education, A case Study of Nyagatare District, Rwanda. *Global Scientific Journals*, Vol. 10(No. 12), 1324-1340. Retrieved January 24, 2024
- NYAKUNDI. (2015). *EFFECTIVENESS OF ASSESSMENT FOR PLACEMENT DECISIONS OF LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN LEARNING INSTITUTIONS IN KAJIADO NORTH SUB-COUNTY, KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA*. Kenyatta University, Department of SPecial Needs Education. Nairobi: School of Education, KENYATTA UNIVERSITY . Retrieved April 24, 2022, from <https://ir-library.ku.ac.ke>
- O'Toole et al. (2019). *Parental Involvement, Engagement and Partnership in their Children's Education during the Primary School Years*. Dublin, Ireland: National Parents Council Primary. Consulté le February 84, 2024, sur <https://www.npc.ie/uploads>
- Okoth, Odongo & Onderi. (2022, October 4). Performance in Public Primary Schools in Alego Usonga Sub-County, Kenya. *International Journal of Novel Research in Education and Learning*, Vol. 9( No. 5), 60-74. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7144816>
- Oranga, Obuba, Inviolata & Boinett. (2022, April). Parental involvement in the education of learners with intellectual disabilities in Kenya. *Open Access library journal*, Vol. 9(No. 4). <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1108542>

- "Parental responsibilities and rights". (2020, September 22). *Parental responsibilities and rights*. Consulté le August 15, 2022, sur NSW, Communities and justice: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au>
- Paula. (nd). *THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATOR*. Consulté le Novembre 20, 2022, sur Granite State College: <https://granite.pressbooks.pub/assessment>
- Physical Disabilities*. (s.d.). Consulté le December 25, 2023, sur Supporting Students with Disabilities: <https://alc.ext.unb.ca/modules>
- Raenkwocha. (2023, December). *Public Speaking> For teachers> what isUDL?* Consulté le February 16, 2024, sur ICCOM.
- REB. (2018). *Special Educational Needs Tool and Individual Education Plan*. Kigali: REB.
- "Reliability in a research: Definition and assessment Types". (2023, March 10). Consulté le May 29, 2023, sur Indeed: <https://www.indeed.com/reliability>
- Republic of Rwanda. (2017). *7 Years Government Programme: National Strategy for Transformation (NST 1) 2017 – 2024*. Kigali: Republic of Rwanda.
- Rosilyn. (2022, December 21). *Special Education Assessment : What Schools to Know*. Consulté le February 1, 2024, sur Education Advanced: <https://educationadvanced.com/special-education-assessment>
- ROTKANGMWA & LENGKAT. (2021, March). Strategies for Teaching Slow learners in an Inclusive Setup. *KIU Journal of Social Sciences, Vol. 7*(No.1), 225-232. Consulté le February 15, 2024, sur <https://ijhumas.com/ojs/view>
- S'lungile. (2015, January 09). Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Managing Inclusive Classrooms in Swaziland. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, Vol 6 No 1*(ISSN 2039-211), p495-500. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n1p495>
- Salomi.D. (2018, DECEMBER). Slow Learning - Causes, Problems and Solutions. *International Journal of Management, Technology And Engineering, Volume 8*,(ISSN NO : 2249-7455), Page No:4210. Consulté le August 16, 2022, sur <https://ijamates.org>
- SANGEETA. (2011, December). SLOW LEARNERS: THEIR PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATIONAL. *ZENITH International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, Vol. 1*(No. 8), 279-289. Retrieved February 12, 2024 from <https://www.zenithresearch.org.in>
- Saral. (2018, December). Slow Learning - Causes, Problems and Solutions. *International Journal of Management, Technology And Engineering, Vol. 8*(No. XII), 4209-4214. Retrieved January 8, 2023 from <https://ijamtes.org/dec>
- SEN Provision*. (n.d.). Retrieved January 31, 2024 from Saint Anne's School: <https://www.st.annes-pri.durham.sch.uk>
- SEND. (2015). *Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities*. London: Department For Education .

- Shahzad, Farooq, Sammer, Farhan & Shazia. (2020, August 17). Impacts of Parental Support on Academic Performance among Secondary School Students in Islamabad. *The Explorer Islamabad: Journal of Social Sciences, Vol. 1*(No. 7), 228-231. Consulté le May 1, 2023, sur <https://www.researchgate.net>3436>
- Sherman. (2016, February 16). *The Facts on Education*. Consulté le March 3, 2024, sur EdCan Network: <https://www.edcan.ca>articles>
- "*Slow Learner*". (2022). (A. P. Association, Producteur) Consulté le September 27, 2022, sur American Psychological Association: <http://dictionary.apa.org>slow-learners>
- "*Slow Learner*". (2017). (Mumbai Psychiatrist Clinics) Consulté le September 27, 2022, sur Mumbai Psychiatry Clinics: <https://mumbaipsychiatryclinics.com>slow leaners>
- "*8 Special Education Assessments*". (2022). Consulté le October 23, 2022, sur Education.com:
- "*Special Education Assessment: How and Why It should be Conducted*". (2022, January 14). Consulté le November 1, 2022, sur Positive Action: <https://www.positiveaction.net>blog>
- "*Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*". (2001). London, England, United Kingdom: England, Department for Education and Skills. Consulté le November 1, 2022, sur <http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk>special educational needs code of practice>
- Stan L. (2022). *Back to School: The underachiever and the Slow learner*. (Healio) Consulté le October 17, 2022, sur Healio News: <https://www.healio.com>pediatrics>
- "*Statutory Assessment*". (2021, September 28). Consulté le October 30, 2022, sur Education Authority: <https://www.eani.org.uk>parents>
- Steinmayr ,et al. (2014, 6 4). Academic achievement. *Oxford Bibliographies*, 1. <https://doi.org/Do:10.93/OBO/9780199756810-0108>
- "*Student Achievement Indicators*". (2022). (O. o. Website, Producteur) Consulté le May 3, 2023, sur University of Georgia, Office of the provost: <https://provost.uga.edu>accreditation>
- Sultana. (2022, January). Slow Learning: Exploring Some Causes. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research, Vol.9*(No. 1), 348-353. Retrieved January 08, 2023 from <https://www.jetir.org>papers>
- Swaen&Tegan. (2022, August 2). *What is Conceptual Framework?* Consulté le August 22, 2022, sur Scribbr: <https://www.scribbr.com>
- "*The State of Learning Disabilities Today*". (nd). Retrieved October 8, 2022, from Learning Disabilities Association of America: [https://ldaamerica.org>ida\\_today](https://ldaamerica.org>ida_today)
- UNESCO. (1990). World Declaration on Education for All. *World Conference on Education for ALL*. Bangkok: UNESCO Digital library. Retrieved May 24, 2022, from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org>
- USAID SOMA UMENYE. (2019). *INCLUSIVE EDUCATION WORKSHOP*. KIGALI: USAID SOMA UMENYE. Consulté le March 17, 2022, sur <https://pdf.usaid.gov>

- Vasudevan A. (2017, November 19). Slow learners – Causes, problems and educational. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 3, 308-313. Consulté le August 19, 2022, sur <https://scholar.google.com>
- Virani & Ali. (2022, December). Perceived Challenges and Parental Involvement in Inclusive Education: An Exploratory Study of Primary Schools in Pakistan. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, Vol. 9(No. 2), 302–321. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.22555/joed.v9i2.669>
- Warnock. (1978). *Special Educational Needs*. Her Majesty's Stationery office, Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Handicapped Children and Young People. London: HMSO& Queen's Printer for Scotland. Consulté le November 5, 2022, sur [www.educationengland.org.uk](http://www.educationengland.org.uk)>warnock report
- Warren, Jansen &. (2020, December). *Quantitative data analysis methods & techniques*. Consulté le January 30, 2023, sur GRADCOACH: <https://gradcoach.com>>quantitative data analysis
- "What is Provision?". (nd). Consulté le November 8, 2022, sur twinkl: <https://www.twinkl.co.uk>>provision
- Williams, C. (2007, March). Research Methods. *Journal of Business & Economic Research*, Vol. 5(No. 3), pp. 65-72. Consulté le May 27, 2023, sur <https://clutejournals.com>>view
- "World Health Organisation". (2011). *World report on disability*. WHO. GENEVA: WHO. <https://doi.org/https://www.who.int/teams/world>
- Yueqi & Shaowei. (2022, October 06). The effect of cognitive ability on academic achievement: The mediating role of self-discipline and the moderating role of planning. *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol.13. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1014655>

## APPENDIX A : QUESTIONNAIRES FOR STUDENTS

### II. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS

This questionnaire is intended for gathering information about the impact of Special educational needs assessment on academic achievement of slow learners in lower secondary day schools, Kamonyi district –Rwanda.

This is part of my research work and the answers you provide are very useful. So, we would like you to be as honest as you can while giving us information which will be confidential and only used for the intended purpose of the research.

#### SECTION ONE: Demographic

1. Your age. \_\_\_\_\_ years old
2. Your gender :  male/  female
3. Class :
4. Do you have any type of disability  No/  Yes, Which type of disability :  physical disability/  Visual disability/  hearing disability/  mental disability /  Learning disability
5. Are you  married/  Single ?  Separated ?  Young mother ?
6. Are you  orphan parenting his / her siblings ?  Orphan and live alone  orphan but adopted  Child with separated parents  Child parented by grand parents  Child parented by a step-parent.
7. Are you  elder Child /  younger Child  the only Child
8. Do you suffer from any chronic disease ?  Asthma  diabetes  mental health conditions/  obstructive pulmonary disease  back pain  HIV/AIDS  Sinusitis and other allergic complications  other illness, .....
9. Have you ever repeated in the same class level ?  No/  Yes
  - a) In S1 : repeated once  Twice  more than twice
  - b) In S2 : repeated once  Twice  more than twice
  - c) In S3 : repeated once  Twice  more than twice
10. Have you ever been absent from the school during class time in this term ?  No /if  Yes, how are you often absent in a week in this term :  Once /  twice  more than twice
11. How many marks do you often get either in end unit test, midterm test or end term exam :  
 ≤ 20 marks/  20-30 marks /  30-39 marks/  40-45 marks /  45-50 marks /  50-60 marks /  60-70 marks /  ≥70 marks
12. How many schools have you changed from S1 up to current class level ?.....
13. How long does it take you to reach your school ?.....hrs|.....min

SECTION TWO :

For each statement in this part, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement by writing a corresponding number in the box on the right side of each statement referring to the 4 likert scales namely Strongly Agree (scale 1), Agree (Scale 2), Neutral (scale 3), Disagree (scale 4), and Strongly disagree (scale 5) in the table below.

Characteristics/ learning difficulties	Likert scales
1. I like tasks that require little thought once I have learnt them	
2. Thinking is not my idea of fun	
3. I would prefer complex to simple problems	
4. Learning new ways to think does not excite me	
5. It's enough for me that something gets the job done, I don't care about how or why it Works.	
6. It requires extra-time so that I finish the given classroom exercises, quizzes, tests or exam	
7. I always need additional support to learn & complete the exercises and home works	
8. I have difficulties in handwriting	
9. I have difficulties in reading and understanding what is written in English language	
10. I often have difficulties in interpreting mathematical concepts	
11. I have difficulties in solving mathematics related problems	
12. I get bored if I am learning new things or if the learning activity takes more than one hour.	
13. I enjoy working in groups than performing tasks individually even home works	
14. I often have difficulties to express my self during class presentation or any time I am asked to share my views.	
15. I have learning difficulties in almost all subjects	
16. I enjoy talking about real facts but not abstract stories	

SECTION THREE :

1. Does your previous educational background contribute to your low learning performance ?  Yes/  No

Explain your answer.....

2. Does your health state contribute to your low learning performance ?  No/  yes

Explain your answer.....

2. Does your health state contribute to your low learning performance ?  No/  yes

Explain your answer.....

3. Do your behaviour or attitudes contribute to your low learning performance ?  No/  yes, explain your answer.....

4. Does your family background contribute to your learning performance ?  No/  yes

- a) Facilitate you to do home works, b) Guide and facilitate you during revising summary notes, c) provision of school materials d) taking you to the health services provider when needed, e) Accompany or visit you at your school for talking with school leaders and teachers about your learning experience

Explain your answer.....

5. Does your parent/ guardian talk with you about your learning difficulties as well as learning experience at school ?  No/  yes

Explain your answer.....

6. Is there any influence from your cognitive abilities to your low academic performance ?  Yes /  No,

Explain.....

SECTION FOUR :

1. At your school, do you stay :

Half a day in a resource room and then join regular classroom = 1, more than half a day in a resource room = 2, some time in a resource room = 3, a whole day in a regular classroom = 4

2. Do teachers use inclusive ways of teaching that meet all learners' learning style including that of slow learners ?  No/  yes,

Use different familiar and concret teaching materials including audio-visual ones =1, use relevant and real life examples while explaining = 2, encourage collaboration of learners of different abilities through group activities = 3, use of fun tasks and activities while teaching = 4 provide remedial activities and many repetitions of the learnt topics for slow learners = 5, provide longer wait time for slow learners to allow them to think about asked questions = 6

3. Do teachers give daily evaluations ?  No/  yes, use simple vocabulary in directions and instructions = 1, break down difficult tasks and rephrasing questions = 2, provide extra-time for slow learners = 3

## APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR Parents

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR Parents

This questionnaire is intended for gathering information about the impact of Special educational needs assessment on academic achievement of slow learners in lower secondary day schools, Kamonyi district – Rwanda.

This is part of my research work and the answers you provide are very useful. So, we would like you to be as honest as you can while giving us information which will be confidential and only used for the intended purpose of the research.

#### **SECTION ONE : Demographic**

2. Your age : a) 18-24  b) 25-30  c) 31-40  d) 41-50  e) 51-60  f) > 60
2. Your gender :  male/  female, 3. Your child’s class level a)  S1, b)  S2, c)  S3
3. Academic qualification : a)  A2/ b)  A1 /, c)  A0 d) others.....
4. Category of the school of your child : Public  / government-aided  /private
8. Do you have any type of disability  No/  Yes, Which type of disability :  physical disability/  Visual disability/  hearing disability / others, specify.....
9. Are you  married/  Single ?  Separated ?  Young mother ?
10. How many are your children currently studying ?  One /  two /  more than two

#### **SECTION TWO :**

This part of questionnaire is intended for identifying the characteristics of slow learners.

For each statement in this part, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement by writing a corresponding number in the box on the right side of each statement referring to the 4 likert scales namely Strongly Agree (scale 1), Agree (Scale 2), Neutral (scale 3), Disagree (scale 4), and Strongly disagree (scale 5) in the table below.

Items on characteristics of slow learners	Likert scales
1. My child has difficulty in expressing verbally his/her ideas	
2. My child has difficulty in following multi-step directions	
3. My child consistently scores low on academic achievement tests	
4. My child works well with hands-on activities	
5. My child has low self-esteem	
6. My child masters skills slowly and do not master some skills at all	
7. My child has difficulty in maintaining relationships with their peers	
8. My child really enjoys puzzles and challenging tasks	
9. My child likes responsibility of handling a situation requiring a lot of thinking	
10. She/he often has difficulties in interpreting mathematical concepts	

11. He/she has difficulties in solving mathematical word problems	
12. She/ he needs extra-time so as to finish the given classroom exercises, quizzes, tests or exam	
13. My child would prefer complex to simple problems	
14. She/ he has difficulties in handwriting	
15. She/ he enjoys working in groups than performing tasks individually even home works	
16. My child always needs additional support to learn & complete the exercises and home works	
17. She/ he really enjoys a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems	
18. She/he has difficulties in reading and understanding what is written in English language	
19. She/he always needs additional support to learn & complete the exercises and home works	

**SECTION Three :**

In order to provide appropriate support services for students with learning needs including slow learners, it requires the Assessment of each student's learning needs, it is in this regard you are asked to give your feedback on the questions below :

1. Do you easily communicate with school leaders as well as teachers about your child's learning progress ?  Yes/  No, a) I only visit my child when there is school general assembly, b) I only visit my child if I am called by school leaders or teachers, c) I only go to school if I bring school materials for my child, d) I always communicate with schools whenever they or I suspect some thing wrong in my child's learning progress.

Explain your answer.....

2. Have you ever been involved in activity of assessing learning difficulties of your child ?  Yes/  No, a) I can't have time to join this activity because I always busy b) Ideas and decisions of school leaders as well as that of teachers are enough c) School leaders or teachers have never invited me d) others, specify.....

3. What do you think as your contribution during assessing the learning difficulties of your child ?

- a) Provide all information concerning the developmental background of your child, b) provide all information concerning the educational background of your child c) provide all information about your child's learning barriers as well as the potential abilities d) Suggest which help can be provided for successful learning, e) others, specify.....

Explain your answer.....

4. What do you think as the factors that contribute in low academic performance of your child ?

- a) My child has learning gaps from the previous class levels b) my child has serious english language barriers as medium of instruction c) she/ he has difficulties in expressing what seems difficult to him or her, d) Teaching methods and techniques used do meet his/ her learning needs

e) His /her peers laugh at him/her when she/he tries to ask or respond to asked questions, f) the child is not motivated to learn due to his/ her age, g) He/ she does not revise the learnt content at home, h) She/ he does not have enough school materials, i) She/ he has attended many schools with different ways of teaching, j) frequent absenteeism, k) She/ he frequently drops out of school, l) She/ he has been sick for a long time, m) others, specify.....  
 Explain your answer.....

**SECTION FOUR :**

1. Does your child receive additional support services ?  Yes/  No /  I don't know :

Half a day in a resource room and then join regular classroom = 1, more than half a day in a resource room = 2 c) some time in a resource room = 3 d) a whole day in a regular classroom = 4, others =5, specify.....

2. Does your child have an individual education plan ?  Yes/  No/  I don't know

Explain your answer.....

3. Are the educational provisions undertaken to your child based on Assessment of his/her learning needs done ?  Yes /  No /  I don't know, Explain your answer.....

4. Are you satisfied with the educational provisions undertaken to your child ?  Yes/  No

Teaching and learning materials = 1, teaching methods and techniques = 2, Assessment strategies = 3, additional support services = 4

- 5) Do you ever meet any challenge when you need to contribute in assessment of learning needs of your child ?  Yes/  No, Schools do not inform us about the learning gaps of our children = 1, Schools do not value our ideas while assessing learning needs and making corresponding decisions =2, Schools do not invite us at the time of assessing learning needs of our children = 3, others = 4,

**APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS**

This questionnaire is intended for gathering information about the impact of Special educational needs assessment on academic achievement of slow learners in lower secondary day schools, Kamonyi district –Rwanda.

This is part of my research work and the answers you provide are very useful. So, we would like you to be as honest as you can while giving us information which will be confidential and only used for the intended purpose of the research.

**SECTION ONE : Demographic**

1. Your age : a) 18-24  b) 25-30  c) 31-35  d)36-40  e) 41-50  f) >50
2. Your gender :  male/  female, 3. I teach in class of : a) S1  b) S2  c) S3
4. Academic qualification : A2  / A1  / A0
5. Specialisation : Sciences  / Humanities  / Arts and languages  / others, specify.....
6. Teaching experience : 1-3years  / 4-7 years  /8-15 years  / >15 years
7. Category of the school you teach in : Public  government-aided  /private
8. Do you have any type of disability  No/  Yes, Which type of disability :  physical disability/  Visual disability/  hearing disability
11. Are you  married/  Single ?  Separated ?  Young mother ?

**SECTION TWO :**

This part of questionnaire is intended for identifying the characteristics of slow learners.

For each statement in this part, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement by writing a corresponding number in the box on the right side of each statement referring to the 4 likert scales namely Strongly Agree (scale 1), Agree (Scale 2), Neutral (scale 3), Disagree (scale 4), and Strongly disagree (scale 5) in the table below.

Items on characteristics of slow learners	Likert scales
1. Slow learners function at ability that is significantly below grade level	
2. They have difficulty following multi-step directions	
3. They consistently score low on academic achievement tests	
4. They work well with hands-on activities	
5. They have low self-esteem	
6. They master skills slowly and do not master some skills at all	
7. It is difficult for them to verbally express their ideas	
8. They really enjoy puzzles and challenging tasks	
9. They like responsibility of handling a situation requiring a lot of thinking	
10. They often have difficulties in interpreting mathematical concepts	
11. They have difficulties in solving mathematical word problems	
12. Slow learners get bored if they are learning new things or if the learning activity takes more than one hour.	
13. They need extra-time so as to finish the given classroom exercises, quizzes, tests or exam	
14. I would prefer complex to simple problems	
15. They have difficulties in handwriting	
16. They enjoy working in groups than performing tasks individually even home works	

17. They always need additional support to learn & complete the exercises and home works	
18. Slow learners really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems	
19. They have difficulties in reading and understanding what is written in English language	

**SECTION Three :**

In order to provide appropriate support services for students with learning needs including slow learners, it requires the Assessment of each student's learning needs, it is in this regard you are asked to give your feedback on the questions below :

1. Is a multi-disciplinary Assessment team necessary to assess student's learning needs ?  
 Yes/  No, Explain your answer.....
2. Do learning needs of slow learners require a multi-disciplinary Assessment team to be identified and met ?  Yes/  No,

Explain your answer.....

3. Can any teacher easily identify slow learners and assess their learning needs ?  Yes/  No,

Explain your answer.....

4. When can identification of slow learners as well as the assessment of their learning needs be done ? a) at the end of year b) at the end of each term c) at the beginning of the year d) at the beginning of each term e) others.....

Explain your answer.....

5. Do you think are there the standard procedures undertaken to assess learning needs of slow learners :  Yes/  No
  - a) Pre-referral, b) referral, c) Assessment of children's performance in specific subjects based on the school marks, d) based on opinions of parents about the child's progress and difficulties in learning various subjects, doing home work, his language difficulties, emotional problems, illness, injuries as well as physical problems
  - e) Intelligence Testing, f) Test of functional behaviour, g) Day-to day observations of classroom behaviour of children by the teacher, h) Competence-based tests and diagnostic tests in various subjects i) Class Works or projects, j) Home Works, k) Oral presentations, l) Portfolios, m) others.....

Explain your answer.....

6. Is slow learner's contribution required during assessment of his/ her learning needs ?  
 Yes/  No, Explain your answer.....

.....  
.....

7. Do local government authorities' contribution needed for effective Assessment of slow learners' learning needs ?  Yes/  No,

Explain your answer.....

8. Is there any contribution of parents/ guardians in Assessment of learning needs of slow learners ?  Yes/  No, Explain your answer.....

**SECTION Four :**

1. Do you define the educational placement of slow learners based on the SEN Assessment done ? Yes/No, Explain your answer.....

2. Which educational placement is effective for learning needs of slow learners ?

a) Half a day in a resource room and then join regular classroom, b) more than half a day in a resource room/ c) some time in a resource room/ d) a whole day in a regular classroom

e) All the time in special school/ f) Half a day in special school/ g) Most of the time in special school

3. How do you define the effective teaching methods, teaching materials, assessment strategies as well as other support services to meet the learning needs of slow learners ?

Explain your answer.....

4.What are the effective special educational provisions to meet slow learners' needs ?

a) Counseling services/ b) cognitive skills training/ c) Remedial instruction/ d) use of concret and real life examples while teaching/ e) breaking down the learning tasks into small tasks/ f) use of assistive technology to encourage reading and performing numeracy tasks/ g) Give long time to think of asked questions as well as rephrasing the assessment questions/ h) provision of extra-time during tests and exams

5. Is individual educational plan necessary for successful learning of slow learners ?  Yes/  No, I don't know, Explain your answer.....

6. How often can individual education plan of slow learners be revised| ?

a) once a year b) once a month c) for the beginning of each the term d) at the end of each term

e) others.....

Explain your answer.....

**SECTION Five :**

1. Do you easily communicate with parents of slow learners about their learning progress ?  Yes/No, Parents only visit their children when there is school general assembly = 1, Parents only visit their children if they are called by schools = 2, if they bring school materials for their children = 3, they communicate schools whenever they suspect some thing wrong in their children's learning progress = 4
  
2. Is there any teacher unable to identify the slow learners as well as Assessing their learning needs ?  Yes/No, there is a big class size = 1, teachers are not trained on how to identify slow learners and assess their learning needs =2, teachers consider slow learners as learners with mental disabilities = 3, others.....= 4
  
3. Do you regularly involve sector education inspector in Assessment of special educational needs of any student with disabilities or other special educational needs ?  
 Yes /  No, a) Most of the time = 1, sometimes when they are in educational inspection =2, They are not concerned = 3, only giving them a report about what is done = 4, They can not be available = 5, no official SEN assessment undertaken for students with disabilities and other special educational needs in my school = 6
  
4. Do you have a multi-disciplinary assessment team for assessing special educational needs of students with disabilities and other special educational needs yes /  No

I do not know the role of multi-disciplinary assessment team = 1, No need of multi-disciplinary assessment team in my school = 2, we can't find the members of multidisciplinary assessment team = 3, we don't know the members of multi-disciplinary assessment team =4, others.....= 5

Explain your answer.....

## APPENDIX D : Interview guide questions for Sector Education Inspectors and Headteachers

### **Interview guide questions for Sector Education Inspectors and Headteachers**

1. Referring to your experience in secondary day schools on academic achievement of slow learners, what are the factors do you think can contribute to low academic performance of slow learners ?
2. Do learning needs of slow learners require SEN Assessment to provide appropriate support services ?
3. What are the appropriate procedures should be undertaken by schools to carry out learning needs Assessment for slow learners ?
4. How do you relate the educational placement and provisions to Assessment of learning needs for slow learners ?
5. Do you think, are the slow learners receiving the educational interventions that meet their learning needs ?
6. Does SEN Assessment require the parents and local leaders' contribution to be effective ?
  
7. What are the challenges do schools often face when they are carrying out SEN Assessment ?

## APPENDIX E : RECOMMENDATION LETTER FROM SUPERVISOR

Dr. NASIFORO Beth MUKARWEGO  
University of Rwanda – College of Education  
E-mail: bnasiforo@gmail.com  
Phone number: (+250)788845444

July 10<sup>th</sup> 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Recommendation for MUTUYIMANA Vedaste**

I, Dr. Beth M. NASIFORO a Lecturer at University of Rwanda College of Education recommend MUTUYIMANA Vedaste (Reg. number: 221027493) a master's student in Special Needs Education to get research permit for data collection.

He is one of my master's students who is conducting his research on Impact of Special educational needs assessment on academic achievement of slow learners in lower secondary day schools in Kamonyi District-Rwanda. I am satisfied with his research proposal and his ready for data collection.

This research is done in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a master's degree in Inclusive and Special Needs Education.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Beth M. NASIFORO

APPENDIX F: RESEARCH PERMIT FROM UR-CE



UNIVERSITY of  
RWANDA

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Student Name: MUTUYIMANA Vedaste  
Registration number : 221027493

The School of Inclusive and Special Needs Education offers a master's degree in special Needs Education. As part of the academic requirements students must write their dissertation on a topic of their choice after conducting a research study.

We seek your cooperation in facilitating the student to conduct research on the topic:  
...IMPACT...OF...SPECIAL...EDUCATIONAL...NEEDS...ASSESSMENT  
...ON...ACADEMIC...ACHIEVEMENT...OF...SLOW...LEARNERS IN  
...LOWER...SECONDARY...DAY...SCHOOLS...RWANDA...CASE STUDY  
by collecting data in your Institution/ Organization. OF KAMUKUZI DISTRICT.

For further information please contact the Postgraduate Coordinator  
Dr Gonzague Habinshuti; Phone: 0788809234; Email: [habinshutihgo@gmail.com](mailto:habinshutihgo@gmail.com)

Thank you for your cooperation.

Ass.Prof. Evariste Karangwa  
Dean, School of Inclusive and Special Needs Education  
Email: [karangwa28@vmail.com](mailto:karangwa28@vmail.com)  
Phone: 0785489767

EMAIL: [principal.ce@ur.ac.rw](mailto:principal.ce@ur.ac.rw)  
[www.ur.ac.rw](http://www.ur.ac.rw)

P.O. Box:55 Rwamagana, Rwanda WEBSITE:

## APPENDIX G : KAMONYI DISTRICT PERMISSION FOR DATA COLLECTION

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



SOUTHERN PROVINCE  
KAMONYI DISTRICT  
P.O.Box.03 MUHANGA  
E-mail: info@kamonyi.gov.rw

Kamonyi, on the 19 July ,2023

N° 003 /07.02/08/DM


Mr. MUTUYIMANA Vedaste

**RE** : Permission of Data Collection

Dear Mutuyimana,

With reference to your letter of 11 July 2023 requesting for the Permission of Data Collection in our District;

I hereby inform you that your request has been confirmed from 24 July 2023 until 23 September 2023. Furthermore, you will be working with the Director of Education in order to well fulfill your career practice.

  
**BUSHAYIJA Fred**  
Corporate Service Division Manager



**Cc:**

- Mayor of Kamonyi District
- District Executive Secretary
- Director of Administration and Human Resource
- Director of Education

**KAMONYI**

- Dean, School of Inclusive and Special Needs Education/ UR

---

« DUKORANE UMURAVA DUTERE IMBERE »

