

## **Effect of Peer Counseling On Self Esteem of Learners with Behavioural and Emotional Difficulties in Primary Schools in Nakuru-Sub County**

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**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of this study was to assess the effect of peer counselling on self esteem of learners with behavioural and emotional difficulties in mainstream primary schools in Nakuru Sub County. Descriptive survey design was employed in the study. The study population will comprise of 677 learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties and 59 teacher counsellors drawn from 59 public primary schools in Nakuru Sub County. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 22 teacher counsellors as study respondents. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to select a sample of 203 learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties as study respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires and interview guide. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the aid of SPSS latest version and presented in tables. The study concludes that the level of self esteem of learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties in primary schools in Nakuru sub County was generally as moderate. The study also concludes that to some extent peer counseling offered in many primary schools in Nakuru Sub County promoted self esteem of learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties thus enhancing their self esteem. The study findings are expected to guide policy formulation on the implementation of guidance and counselling programme for special needs learners.

**Key words:** Emotional and behavioural difficulties, Guidance and Counseling, peer counselling, Mainstream, Self-Esteem, Special Needs learners, Teacher Counsellor,

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Integration of learners with disabilities into mainstream classrooms began almost a century ago. This was in response to both research findings about the relative effectiveness of special education settings, and a shift in attitudes in the Western world towards how people with disabilities should be educated. A significant factor in the changing of attitudes was the principle of normalization developed by Bank-Mikkelson (2014) and Nirje (2004) which emphasized the right of all individuals to be valued equally and to have the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the society. Since the mid 2004s, the policy in many countries has been to integrate learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms wherever possible, but specialized segregated facilities remained an option for children with severe disabilities. Learners who were integrated often had some level of curriculum modification and teacher aide support (Atkinson, Jackson & Walmsley, 1997).

Over the past three decades, the notion of integration has pushed the debate regarding the education of learners with disabilities further (Gladding, 2012). Integration seeks to completely remove the distinction between special and regular education, and to provide an appropriate education for all learners despite their level of disability. It involves a complete restructuring of the educational system so that all schools would have the responsibility of providing the facilities, resources and an appropriate curriculum for all learners irrespective of disability. It is a philosophical move away from the accommodation of learners with special needs into a normal system, towards a full integration model where everyone is considered normal, and where the needs of all can be met (Atkinson, Jackson & Walmsley, 1997). This trend is situated within a broad social justice agenda, which argues that equality for all must include access for all to school. This trend has been supported by United Nations policies which affirm the rights of children.

Globally, educational policies have responded to the social justice agenda in different ways. In the United States, the rights of children with disabilities are enshrined in legislation (Education for all Handicapped Children Act; 2016; the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2015). In Great Britain, the Warnock

Report (1978) led directly to the Education Act (2011), and the subsequent amendment to the Education Act (1993) and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) established the rights of learners with disabilities to be included in regular schools. In Australia, the Disability Discrimination Act (2008) and the Disability Standards for Education (2005) support the enrolment and full participation of learners with disabilities in mainstream schools. In Asia, enabling legislations requiring integration have been more favourable towards integration.

In African countries, integration is widely seen as a means to develop human capital, improve economic performance and enhance individual capabilities and choices in order to enjoy freedoms of citizenship (Gladding, 2012). The Dakar Framework for Action adopted a World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) in 2014, reaffirmed the notion of education as a fundamental right and established the new millennium goal to provide every girl and boy with primary school education by 2015. In Nigeria, the school enrolment rate for children with disabilities is estimated to be some 2 to 5 percent (Peters, 2003). In Botswana, Malawi and Zimbabwe, integration of learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties has been marred by lack of support services, relevant materials and support personnel, government apathy (Peters, 2003). An additional constraint is the absence of qualified special teacher counsellors, educational facilities and government capacity in maintaining oversight (Birdsall, 2006).

According to Verduyn, Lord and Forrest (2012) guidance and counselling is necessary in mainstream schools to improve the self esteem of learners with disabilities. Guidance involves the expert help given to someone through teaching, directing, opinion giving, exemplifying, explaining, advising and instruction to enable the person to make informed and responsible choices so as to adjust or cope with various challenges in their immediate environment (Verduyn, 2012). Counselling is a helping process through a special kind of relationship to help individuals to get access to a greater part of their personal resources as a means of responding to the challenges in life (Zebulon, 2014). The main goal of guidance and counselling in mainstream schools is to enhance the self esteem of learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Guidance and counseling assist learners in fulfilling their basic psychological needs, understanding themselves and acceptance of others, developing associations with peers, balancing between permissiveness and controls in the educational setting, realizing successful achievement, and providing opportunities to gain independence (Heyden, 2011).

Self-esteem is an important factor in the growth and development of children. It results from viewing oneself positively within the context of one's surroundings. How well one gets along with peers and how they judge themselves in comparison with others, shapes their self-esteem. This has been identified by Raskind (2003) as the area of interpersonal relationships in which individuals with learning disabilities may have the greatest difficulty as it can foster feelings of inadequacy. With proper guidance and counseling support, however, individuals with disabilities can build the self-esteem they need to achieve success in their life.

This has shifted the instructional focus with regard to learners with disabilities from where they are educated to how they are educated (McDuffie, Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2009). It requires that learners with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum by being placed in the least restricted environment possible and therefore participate in the same assessments as learners without disabilities unless the nature of their disability is determined to be too severe to do so.

Learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties tend to deviate from appropriate behaviour. This significantly interferes with their learning and development, or the lives of others. Children with emotional and behavioural difficulties are unable to learn due to reasons that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory and or health factors. They also have a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fear associated with personal or school difficulties. According to Kochung (2011) children with emotional and behavioural difficulties have hyperactivity, aggression, delinquency difficulties. In learners with hyperactivity difficulties exhibit high level of inappropriate behaviour most of the times. Aggression is also portrayed towards objects, self and others and any use of punishment to stop the aggressive behaviour usually results in increase of the aggression and hyperactivity. Guidance and counseling services for learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties help to fulfill their basic physiological needs, self understanding and acceptance, developing associations with peers, balancing between permissiveness and controls in the educational setting, realizing successful achievement, and providing opportunities to gain independence (Heyden, 2011).

In Kenya, the challenges confronting integration of learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties include discrimination, lack of appropriate facilities, religious barriers as well as negative effects of HIV/AIDS and poverty. It also faces the challenge of access, equity, quality, relevance, attitude and stigma (Republic of Kenya, 2009). In enhancing integration in education in Kenya, the government has made efforts to promote the education of learners with handicapping conditions through policy interventions such as the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005, Gender and HIV/AIDS policies and Vision 2030 and the special needs education policy in 2009 (ROK, 2009). These policy papers emphasize the need for integration. At the policy level, Kenya has achieved several policies including, the Disability Act 2003, The Report of the Taskforce on Special Needs Education appraisal exercise of 2003, increased funding to Special Needs Education and increased support to teacher

training for SNE at KISE (GOK, 2009). The Ministry of Education has also developed the National Special Needs Education policy framework to address critical issues related to education for learners with special needs.

The guidance and counseling unit in primary schools in Kenya was established in the 2004s, however, policy response in this area remains weak. There are no comprehensive guidance and counseling services yet in place (Mutai, 2008). As a result, issues to do with guidance and counseling have been handled in an ad-hoc manner. They are basically guided by the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 and the Children's Act 2001 (ROK, 2005). Further in Kenya, the need for guidance and counseling for pupils with special needs is clearly articulated in the Special Needs Education policy, 2009. However, the policy cites inadequacies especially of trained teacher counselors, specialized resources and facilities to provide these services in primary schools.

In Nakuru Sub County, learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties face a number of challenges particularly in relation to their involvement in mainstream schools. To accommodate learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties in mainstream schools proper modification of the learning environment and psychosocial support services to help them cope with the environment are required. However, in primary schools in Nakuru Sub County, there have been no follow-ups to ensure that peer counselling is fully implemented. Thus, some schools lack organized peer counselling programmes. In schools where there were peer counseling programmes, there is inadequate staff and equipment to address the self esteem deficits of learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Thus, the effect of peer counselling on self esteem of pupils in mainstream schools is yet to be established. This study therefore sought to investigate the effect peer counselling on self esteem of learners with behavioural and emotional difficulties in mainstream primary schools in Nakuru Sub County.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Self-Esteem of Learners with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties**

Education for special needs children has not been given a pride of place in many countries in the world. Thus many of the special needs children are therefore not adequately given equal educational opportunity. If education is an instrument of peer excellence for effective development, it is desirable therefore, that all, irrespective of disabilities, impairment or life style should be provided with equal educational opportunities. This is supported by many international statements, conventions and instruments, for example, the Salamanca Statement and Frame Work for Action (2003) and UN Convention on the Right of Person with Disabilities Article 24 (2006). Special needs children are the children who for whatever reasons, are failing or unable to benefit from regular school (Fuandai, 2010) and are provided with special education. Special education is the education of children and adults who have learning difficulty because of their different sorts of handicaps, blindness, deafness, mental retardation, social maladjustment, physical disability, health difficulties or accident in later life. It is apparent that such learners have low self esteem based on the nature of their state of being.

Self-esteem has been defined as a type of belief involving judgments of self-worth. It is an affective reaction indicating how a person feels about him or herself (Pintrich & Schunk, 2013). In recent years, research on self-esteem has been gaining relevance within the context of the identification of protective factors against psychological difficulties. Self-esteem is considered to be linked to personal well being, mental health, social relationships, academic performance (Garaigordobil, Perez & Mozaz, 2008). Harter (2011) describes self-esteem as how one likes, accepts and respects oneself as a person. Feshbach and Weiner (1991), however, claimed that self-esteem is a positive or negative value based on one's own attributes. Essentially, self esteem can be described as how an individual feels about himself or herself.

Perceptions of self-esteem may develop from a person's global self-perception as well as from a variety of other sources, such as possession of attributes that are either valued or de-valued by society (Bandura, 1997). Thus, learners may establish feelings of worth if they perceive themselves as being competent in particular domains or as possessing socially-important characteristics, such as altruism and empathy. Although positive self-esteem is desirable and even necessary for adaptive functioning, the key issue is whether self-esteem is a distinctive predictor of academic performance.

Some experts believe that all learners may, at some time in their lives, have some form of special need. This may range from a physical disability to exceptional or gifted ability in a particular area (Kostanski & Gullone, 2008). Such a broad definition has implications for practice and also for the essential resources required by individual learners. However, the general understanding of learners who have special needs is that they encounter barriers to learning. Their difficulties may be specific to language or mathematics or can come from a physical impairment that affects their movement, sight, or hearing, or from a complex combination of several disabilities.

The report of the Special Education Review Committee (SERC) (1993) defines areas of special needs under four broad headings, which embrace a wide range of special educational needs and include general learning disabilities, emotional and behavioural disturbance, language and communication difficulties and disorders and physical and sensory disabilities. All learners have common needs, which include a sense of

belonging, being respected as an individual, and being challenged as a learner. Some learners, however, may have complex individual needs that arise from particular characteristics that are different from all others. Learners with special needs have a right to an appropriate education.

Self-esteem is among the most widely researched topic in psychology and counseling (Searcy, 2007). Self-esteem has been directly connected to individuals' social network, their activities, and what they hear about themselves from others (Kernis, 2003). Multiple studies have linked a positive sense of self-esteem to factors such as psychological health (Keyes, 2006), mattering to others (Marshall, 2001), and both body image and physical health (Kostanski & Gullone, 2008). Conversely, low self-esteem has been linked to outcomes such as depression (MacPhee & Andrews, 2006), health difficulties (Stinson, 2008), and antisocial behavior (Niregi, 2006). There is some disagreement in the literature as to whether self-esteem is a stable or changing characteristic; research of more than 326,600 persons, however, suggested that self-esteem changes over the life span and is particularly critical during adolescent development, when it is likely to decline (Robins, Trzesniewski, Tracy, Gosling & Potter, 2013).

Early and more recent self-esteem theorists have also suggested that self-esteem is a dynamic, changing construct. For example, William (2006) viewed self-esteem as the ratio of one's successes to one's pretensions. To increase self-esteem one must either increase one's successes or lower one's expectations. Similarly, Rosenberg (2009) referred to self-esteem as a positive or negative evaluation of the self. Combining these two perspectives, one may arrive at the following: a positive evaluation of the self stems from having more success than one expected, whereas a negative evaluation stems from having fewer successes than one expected. This interpretation suggests that one's self-esteem is not constant over time, but instead is dynamic and changes depending on one's successes and expectations. Thus, a person with high self esteem who is successfully moving through life meeting all her expectations who is suddenly fired from a job will likely experience decreasing self-esteem.

## **2.2 Peer Counseling and Self Esteem of Learners with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties**

This is a method where peer counsellors and counsees see each other as equals regardless of their different backgrounds (Hanshaw, 2001). It involves handling of individuals who could be of the same age, have same point of interest or share needs irrespective of their backgrounds and status. Kariuki (2013) in a study on peer counselling observes that peer counsellors in schools help improve academic achievement since learners help each other socially, psychologically and academically. Learners heavily conform to groups' standards and tend to value each other's opinion during their stay together (Kariuki, 2013). Teacher counsellors are therefore supposed to utilize these groups to instill self esteem and skills so that learners are able to share moral skills. They need to use such groupings to nurture good behaviour and instill a sense of hard work among learners for improved academic achievement (Mwenda, 2003).

Dobbins (2004) posits that many schools train peer counsellors on educational counselling service and social relationship but fails to set the criteria of selecting those to be trained as peer counsellors since not every learner can be a peer counsellor. The training provides learners with free interaction, thus giving them an atmosphere for sharing their feelings and experiences, thoughts and difficulties freely. Kilgariff (2003) argues that peer counsellors act as liaisons to pupil counselling by identifying difficulties and making referrals and encouraging others to seek professional help. This calls for proper training of peer counsellors to equip them with counselling skills, thus effectively assisting other learners. Gichunge (1996) posits that in a dynamic world of uncertainty and increasing changes and unknown future, learners need to acquire skills that enable them overcome social and emotional difficulties that tend to militate against peaceful learning with other learners. Encouraging the training of peer counsellors and ensuring that learners receive effective counselling services throughout their stay in school would be a sure way of enhancing self esteem.

Nyaga (2011) asserts that peer counsellors assist other learners by clarifying thoughts and feelings, exploring options or providing needed information while Davidoff (2007) observes that peer influence on adolescent development is evident since teenagers spend most of their time together and form cliques or groupings, share their interests and discuss how to find new friends. Lutomia and Sikolia (2013) state that peer counselling involves counselling learners of the same age, interests and goals. In this respect peer counsees perceive each other as equals and teacher counsellors need to train the peer counsellors to counsel each other since they have a lot of influence on each other. They can be used to pass information after a teachers meeting since it is a time saving method of guidance and counselling and helps many individuals with common interests or needs especially during crisis. Peer counsellors enable learners to be free to seek assistance, thus making it advantageous since they relate without the age gap that is at times a problem between teachers and learners.

A review of the school counseling outcome research related to peer counselling services indicated that peer counseling training programs provided many benefits to learners (Kigin & Linderman, 1991). Additionally, learners' attendance, grades, attitudes and classroom behaviors have been reported to improve as a result of peer intervention services (Tobias & Myrick, 2003). Peer mediated self-evaluation procedures helped improve the

recess behaviors of elementary learners with behavior difficulties. Carty, Rosenbaum, Lafreniere and Sutton (2014) also completed a 4-year longitudinal study of peer counseling and the effects on adolescent development. Their findings indicated that learners who received peer counseling services scored significantly higher on coping and social skills scales. However, studies on learners receiving peer counseling services in primary school are infrequent particularly among learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

### **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

The study was guided by Carl Rodgers' Person Centered Theory. This theory assumes that people are basically good, are driven to fulfill their potential and have the capacity to choose their own behaviour. According to Rogers (1951) personal growth is only possible with unconditional positive regard from significant others. This frees individuals from striving for social approval so that they can seek self actualization. The role of guidance and counselling is thus to provide a facilitative environment by providing sufficient conditions for the client to find resources within themselves (Rogers, 1951). Thus, if there is rapport and mutual understanding between the client and counselor, counsellor genuineness, unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding and growth on the part of the client would take place (Rogers, 1951). The demonstrated appreciation of individuality which encapsulates the theoretical notion of self esteem is at the core of person centered therapy. In this study guidance and counselling was conceptualized to improve the self esteem of learners which can influence personality of learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

## **III. METHODOLOGY**

The study was based on a descriptive survey design. This involves the selection of a sample of respondents and administering questionnaires or conducting interviews to gather information on the study variables (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993). Survey design also allows simultaneous description of views, perceptions and beliefs of the respondents at any single point in time and place. The descriptive survey design is suitable in this study because it will enable the researcher to obtain factual and attitudinal information about the respondents' beliefs and opinions about guidance and counselling in primary schools and its influence on self esteem of learners with behavioural and emotional difficulties in mainstream schools.

The target population for the study included 677 learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties and teacher counselors in mainstream schools in Nakuru Sub County. Currently there are 59 primary schools in Nakuru Sub County where integration of learners with special needs is taking place as per the SNE policy guidelines of 2009. In each school there is a guidance and counseling teacher appointed by the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC). The teacher counsellor is responsible for the provision of guidance and counselling to all learners and to make follow ups and ensure that pupils with special needs are provided with relevant guidance and counselling services. Therefore, teacher counsellors handle children with emotional and behavioural difficulties by providing guidance and counselling to them on issues concerning their stay in school and coping with their environment, thus they understand how guidance and counselling is impacting on the lives of these children in mainstream schools. The teacher counsellors also interact with these pupils in and out of class and can provide useful information on their coping in the mainstream integration environment.

Purposive sampling technique was used to select 59 teacher counsellors as study participants. The sample size of the learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties was determined using the guideline by Gall, Gall and Borg (2003). Out of 677 as the target population, the researcher used 30% to arrive at 203 respondents in this study. In order to give a fair and equal opportunity to the sample of learners with special needs, the researcher used stratified random sampling technique. The target population was categorized into gender and from each category a representative number of respondents were selected to constitute the sample size. This ensured equal representation of all the learners with special needs.

The study used both the questionnaire and interview schedule to collect data. The questionnaires were used to collect data from the learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The questionnaire was used because it is relatively economical and ensures anonymity, reduces bias that might result from the personal characteristics of the researcher. The questionnaire was also used because it is more appropriate compared to other methods of data collection. For this research study, all the questionnaires were personally administered to the informants. The questionnaires comprised of both closed ended and open ended questions. The closed ended questions were presented in the form of a Likert scale. The questionnaires had two distinct sections. The first comprised of items gathering demographic data of the respondents and the other sought to elicit information on the influence of sexual activities on pupil performance.

The interview schedule was used to provide the necessary qualitative data from the teacher counsellors. Qualitative data is necessary in a study to supplement the quantitative data (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2005). The interview schedule was developed according to the study objectives. The interview was held individually with the teacher counsellors to solicit information about their beliefs about the effect of guidance and counselling on self esteem of learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Data was first be cleaned then coded before being entered onto the computer for analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) latest version. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the quantitative data while that collected from interview was analyzed using thematic content analysis.

#### IV. RESULTS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

##### 4.1 Peer Counselling and Self Esteem

The first objective of the study sought to assess the effect of peer counselling on self esteem of learners with emotional and behavioral difficulties in primary schools in Nakuru Sub County. In order to ascertain the perception of the respondents about the effect of peer counselling on their self esteem, the respondents were presented with statements related to the effect of peer counselling on self esteem. Table 1 shows the distribution of their responses.

**Table 1:** Responses of Pupils on effect of Peer Counseling on Self Esteem

Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	N (%)
Through peer counselling we share our needs irrespective of their backgrounds and status	18.6	17.4	8.9	32.0	23.1	100
Peer counselling makes us do well in school since we help each other academically	15.0	15.6	12.5	40.6	16.3	100
Peer counselling makes me have self esteem and skills so that I am able to learn good morals	12.5	6.2	16.8	28.9	35.6	100
Peer counselling give me chances to develop good behaviour and instill a sense of hard work	35.0	28.8	17.4	14.4	4.4	100
Peer counselling give me encouragement	17.4	13.6	16.2	25.1	27.7	100

The results in table 4.7 indicates that 18.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that through peer counselling, they shared their needs irrespective of their backgrounds and status compared to 17.4% who agreed, 8.9% had no opinion, 32.0 who disagreed and 23.1% who strongly disagreed. This suggests that majority of the respondents (55.1%) disagreed that peer counselling helped them to share their needs irrespective of their backgrounds and status. The results also indicate that 15.0% the respondents strongly agreed that peer counselling made them do well in school since they helped each other academically compared to 15.6% who agreed, 12.5% who had no opinion, 40.6% who disagreed and 16.3% who strongly disagreed. This implies that majority of the respondents felt that peer counselling made them do well in school academically. Concerning whether the peer counselling made them have self esteem and skills so that they were able to learn good morals, 12.5% of the respondents strongly agreed, 6.2% agreed, 16.8% had no opinion, 28.9% disagreed while 35.6% strongly disagreed. This suggests that majority of the respondents did not feel that peer counselling improved their self esteem. The results also indicate that 35.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that peer counselling gave them chances to develop good behaviour and instill a sense of hard work, compared to 28.8% who agreed, 17.4% who had no opinion, 14.4% who disagreed and 4.4% who strongly disagreed. In regard to whether peer counselling gave them encouragement, 17.4% of the respondents strongly agreed, 13.6% agreed, 16.2% had no opinion, 25.1% disagreed and 27.7% strongly disagreed. From these results, it is evident that the pupils' perceptions about the effect of peer counselling on enhancing self esteem was low as majority of the respondents did not agree with most of the statements. Therefore, peer counselling programmes needed to be promoted in primary schools in the area for it to be more effective. These findings concur with Lutomia and Sikolia (2014) who noted that self esteem of pupils is could be enhanced by the contribution of fellow pupils than other factors in the school. They were also supported by Chandra (2014) who stated that peer counselling programme may help create classroom educative experience that affects pupils' intellectual development. This can make the pupil become self reliant (Hanshaw, 2001). Kariuki (2013) observes that peer counselling in schools is meant to help improve academic achievement since learners help each other socially, psychologically and academically. Learners heavily conform to peer standards and tend to value each other's opinion in their interaction (Kariuki, 2013). Teacher counsellors are therefore supposed to utilize peer groups to instill self esteem and skills so that learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties are able to support one another.

Dobbins (2004) posit that many schools that promote peer counselling can support learners facing all forms of difficulties. Gichunge (1996) posits that in a dynamic world of uncertainty and increasing changes, learners need to acquire skills that enable them overcome social and emotional difficulties that tend to militate against inclusive learning. Nyaga (2011) asserts that peer counselling assist learners by clarifying thoughts and feelings, exploring options or providing needed information. A review of the interview with teacher counsellors indicate that peer counseling programs provide many benefits to learners with emotional and behavioural

difficulties. This is reflected in their class attendance, grades, attitudes and classroom behaviors. However, the results tend to contradict Carty, Rosenbaum, Lafreniere and Sutton (2014) whose study revealed that learners who received peer counseling services scored significantly higher on coping and social skills.

However, teachers in this study were considerably less clear about their understanding of behavioural and emotional difficulties and they still seem unsure of what kind of help to give. From the interviews conducted, teachers find it problematic to group children with the same difficulties because the children are not assessed to ascertain what their problems are. Not all teachers have an understanding of the impact of the difficulties children with behavioural and emotional difficulties have to contend with. The majority of teachers in this study have not acquired advanced specialist knowledge on behavioural and emotional difficulties, and it is equally clear that a number of teachers lacked intervention skills. Teachers in this study shared helpful viewpoints on their understandings of self esteem of learners with behavioural and emotional difficulties in public primary schools in Kenya, which may be considered useful in the refinement of teaching children said to have behavioural and emotional difficulties.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the summary of the findings, the following conclusions were made

The level of self esteem of learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties in primary schools in Nakuru sub County was generally low as some of the pupils sometimes thought they were not good at all, felt that they were a loser, felt useless sometimes and were happy with themselves. Some had good feelings about themselves while a few others felt they had much to be proud of. However, some respondents felt great because they were able to do better in their studies and knew how to resolve their emotional, social and behavioral problems while others had a clearer focus and sense of direction and able to connect with their families as a whole. The study also concludes that peer counselling was not effective in enhancing self esteem of learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties as peer counselling was not extensively offered in many primary schools in Nakuru Sub County to give learners an opportunity to share their needs and make them do well academically. On this basis, learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties have not been able to learn good morals. However, in primary schools where peer counselling programmes exist the chances to develop good behaviour and instill a sense of hard work among learners with emotional and behavioural difficulties is possible.

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