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Teachers' Perceptions of Competence in Conducting Functional Vision Assessment in Selected Public Primary Schools for Learners with Visual Impairments in Kenya

By

[1]William Tataka, [2]Stephen Nzoka and [3]Margaret W. Murugami

[1]Postgraduate Student, Kenyatta University, Kenya
Email: wtataka@gmail.com,
[2]Lecturer, Kenyatta University, Kenya
Email: nzoka.stephen@ku.ac.ke
[2]Lecturer, Kenyatta University, Kenya
Email: murugami.margaret@ku.ac.ke

Abstract
The purpose of this article was to investigate Teachers' Perceptions of Competence in Conducting Functional Vision Assessment in Selected Public Primary Schools for Learners with Visual Impairments in Kenya. The contention of the article is that functional vision assessment (FVA) provides the basis when determining the visual capabilities for LVIs, which helps teachers develop effective teaching methods. However, teachers' perceived incompetence is the integral justification why its utilization continues to be limited. A descriptive survey design was used in the investigation. A purposive sample of thirty-three participants that comprised thirty teachers and 3 headteachers from public primary schools for LVIs was selected. Headteacher interviews, classroom observation checklists, and teacher questionnaires were utilized to collect data, with particular focus on the utilization of FVA tools, instructional adaptations and environmental modifications. A review by experts was performed to ensure instruments validity while internal consistency methods aided in determining questionnaire's reliability. The results demonstrated that majority of teachers were not certain about their ability to effectively utilize FVA procedures. As a result, instructional preparation rarely incorporated FVA. The study additionally showed that FVA's limited and irregular application throughout schools was the consequence of the lack of national policy guidelines. These results undercut the potential advantages of FVA in working alongside learners who have visual impairments by demonstrating significant discrepancies in preparation for teachers. The lack of policy guidance and inadequate instruction lead to a reactive approach to instructional preparation and visual assessment rather than an approach that is proactive. This effectiveness of instruction for LVIs is decreased when teachers are obligated to resort to improvised or unconventional techniques in the lack of clear guidelines and institutional support. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education develop and implement clear policy guidelines for FVA implementation. Additionally, to increase teacher capacity, specific training programmes and the availability of suitable FVA instruments are also critically required. In order to ensure inclusive and unparalleled learning to LVIs, teachers' competence in FVA need to be enhanced.

Keywords: Kenya, Functional vision assessment, Teacher competence, Visual impairment, Inclusive education

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Introduction

According to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) (2021), low vision is a visual impairment that significantly affects a person's everyday activities and quality of life and cannot be fully corrected by conventional eyeglasses, contact lenses, or surgery. According to a recent meta-analysis conducted by Johnson et al. (2021) found that giving LVIs larger fonts or texts can significantly increase their capacity to read. These demonstrate how important it is to provide LLV-friendly materials and accommodations in educational settings.

Functional Vision Assessment is crucial in determining how LVIs access and utilize visual information in educational contexts. Unlike clinical assessments that focus on ocular health, FVA assesses how learners functionally use vision to perform everyday tasks, thereby informing instructional strategies, literacy media choices, and classroom accommodations (Ferrell *et al* 2016; Ryder, 2017). Teachers of learners with visual impairments (TVIs) play a significant role in conducting these assessments. However, research indicates that many TVIs may lack the necessary training, tools, and institutional support to perform FVA consistently and effectively (Kaiser *et al* 2020).

According to Holbrook et al. (2017), teachers need to collect data on LLV's skills because it helps them understand what each learner can see and how changes in the environment affect how they use their vision. However, teachers were unlikely to completely appreciate the needs of these learners if they were not properly trained or understand how visual impairments affect learning (Ely, 2016). The effectiveness of FVAs is dependent on the teachers' skills, perceptions, and awareness of their responsibilities (Rose & Stein, 2016). Despite evidence supporting the effectiveness of FVA, there remains a significant gap between research and real-world implementation in educational settings (White & Harrison, 2020).

In Kenya, when low vision therapies are applied unevenly in schools for LVIs, this disparity is especially noticeable (Rukwaro, 2015; Munyi, 2018). As a result, learners can be denied access to appropriate accommodations or put in unsuitable literacy programs. There may be a gap in assessment procedures, as Mwangi (2014) discovered differences between learners' assigned and preferred literacy media. FVA is still a vital tool for maximizing the learning capability of LVIs, as almost 90% of them retain some functional vision (Hall *et al* 2015).

This study sought to explore the perceived competence of TVIs in conducting FVA, with particular focus on their knowledge, skills, resource access, and professional development opportunities. In order to promote FVA implementation in Kenyan public schools for LVIs and enhance learning outcomes LVIs, the research's findings aimed to inform capacity-building initiatives, which could aid bridge the gap between policy and practice.

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Statement of the Problem

Visual impairments pose unique challenges for LVIs, and effective FVAs were necessary for comprehending their visual needs and providing appropriate support. FVAs were essential tools for assessing how LVIs use their residual vision in their environment and for establishing their strengths, needs, and preferences for accessing the curriculum and the expanded core curriculum. However, FVAs requires specialized knowledge and skills from teachers of LVIs (TVIs), in addition to adequate tools and support from the headteachers.

In Kenya, LVIs experience difficulties in accessing the curriculum and frequently employ inappropriate reading resources (Njoroge, 2019). This situation hampers their educational 23 opportunities and outcomes. Teachers' perceptions about FVA may also have an impact on their assessment practices. The effective utilization of FVA for LLV is at risk if this issue is not resolved urgently. It was in light of the absence of this critically needed information that this study was conducted. Previous studies, such as Rukwaro's (2015), focused on LLV without looking at teachers' perceptions about FVA. As a result, there was a research gap on how TVIs in Baringo County perceived and performed FVAs in special primary schools for LVIs. While existing literature underscores the importance of FVAs for LVIs, there is a lack of in-depth understanding of how teachers in this particular region manage the challenges and opportunities associated with FVAs. In order to close this gap, study explored teachers' perceptions of the importance of FVAs, in Baringo County.

By doing the aforementioned, the study aimed to provide insightful information about the experiences of teachers involved in conducting FVAs and to enrich the body of knowledge on educational practices for the LVIs in Baringo County, Kenya. Through a detailed exploration of teachers' perceptions, the research sought to identify policy measures and practice interventions that could enhance efficacy of FVA in supporting the educational needs of LVIs in special primary schools in Baringo County and beyond.

Methodology

Using a descriptive survey methodology that combined both qualitative and quantitative techniques to explore teachers' perceptions of their competency in conducting FVA LVI in Kenya, the study targeted 30 TVIs and three headteachers from three public special primary schools that served LVIs. Purposive sampling was utilized to select participants with specialized training and hands-on experience teaching LVIs and performing FVAs. The study used an integrated data collection strategy, including questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations, to investigate teachers' perceptions of their competency in performing FVAs. This methodology enabled the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, offering a multidimensional view of teachers' self-reported competency and actual implementation of FVA procedures in public primary schools for LVIs in Kenya.

A structured, open-ended questionnaire was made available to thirty teachers for LVIs. The questionnaire was developed in order to gather information about teachers training backgrounds, expertise with FVA techniques, frequency of assessments, and confidence in comprehending and utilizing assessment results. The open-ended design influenced participants to provide more information on their experiences, facilitating the collection of both measurable trends and descriptive insights into teachers' perceived competency.

In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a selected sample of head teachers. These interviews concentrated on participants' practical experiences with FVA, perceived gaps in professional preparation, and suggestions for working with LVIs. The

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flexible nature of the interviews enabled additional probing and clarification, contributing to rich, contextual data that complemented questionnaire findings. The observations in the classroom were carried out utilizing a structured observation checklist to validate the self-reported data. Observations focused on teachers' instructional adaptations and utilization of visual tools, which are indicative of FVA practices. These included adjustments to lighting, seating arrangements, and the use of low-vision devices. Observational data was utilized to validate or challenge the self-perceptions pointed out in the questionnaires and interviews. The study was piloted in another public primary school for LVIs that did not participate in the study.

The combined collection of these three sets of information facilitated an extensive study of teacher capacity in conducting FVA. The quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) in SPSS version 27. Qualitative data from interviews and observations were analyzed thematically in order to identify patterns and themes concerning competence, practice, and training. The incorporation of data enhanced the findings' credibility and depth, enabling a deeper comprehension of teacher perceptions and real-world utilization of FVA.

To ensure validity, various instruments were utilized, and tools were content-validated by professional supervisors. Internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.80) was used to confirm reliability. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentages) were calculated using SPSS v27, and thematic analysis was used to find patterns and insights regarding perceived competence in qualitative data. Informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were among the ethical considerations.

Results

Teachers' competence in conducting FVAs

The objective of the study was to establish how competent teachers perceived they were at conducting FVAs. Teachers were asked to provide feedback on their own perceptions of competency when conducting FVAs. The teachers were asked to whether they were trained to conduct FVA. Figure 1 shows the findings.

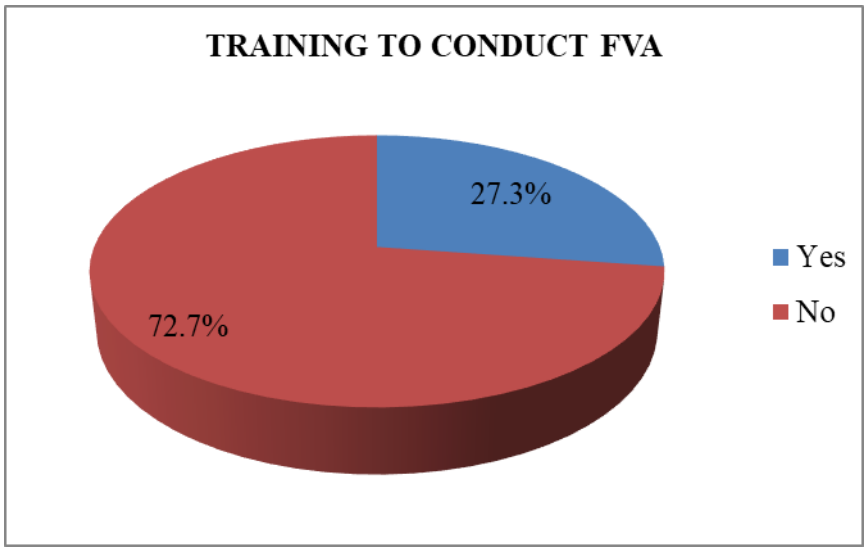

Figure 1Teachers' responses whether they were trained to conduct FVA
Source: Field Data 2025

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Based on the responses of the teachers, as shown in figure 1, the majority of teachers (72.7%) stated that they were not trained to conduct FVAs for LVI. This demonstrated that the surveyed teachers lacked training and competency in this area. A minority of the teachers claimed that they were trained to conduct such assessments. This finding showed that there may be a shortfall in the professional development and training provided to teachers in the special primary schools in assessing the functional vision of LVIs. It emphasized the importance of further training and support in this area to ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge needed to accurately assess their learners' functional vision. This was consistent with Kelley and Smith (2017) argument that a shortage of adequately trained TVIs poses a challenge to literacy skills. This demonstrated that, despite the government's attempts to train teachers, the field of special education still needs highly trained teachers, particularly in FVAs. Similarly, several countries have committed to provide continual training for teaching staff, which is not the case in Kenyan schools for LVIs. The findings additionally demonstrated that few teachers perceived adequately prepared to undertake FVA.

The teachers were additionally requested to specify where they received the training. Figure 2 shows the results.

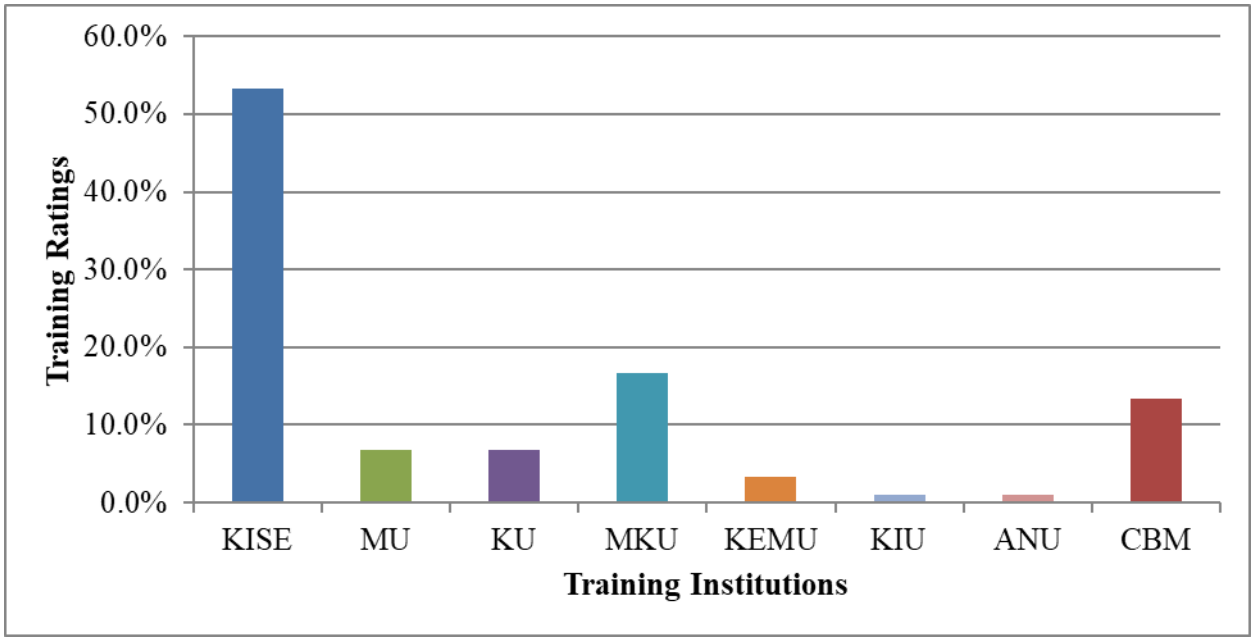

Figure 2 Teachers' responses on where they were trained to conduct FVA
Source: Field Data 2025

Based on the responses of the teachers, it can be observed that a majority of the teachers who filled out the questionnaires stated that they had received training in conducting FVAs at the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE). More than a third of the teachers reported receiving training specifically during seminars held at the school level by CBM.

These findings indicate that the majority of teachers who reported being trained in conducting FVAs received extra training at KISE. This suggested that KISE plays a crucial role in providing training to teachers in functional vision assessment.

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These figures indicate a fragmented training landscape in which teacher preparation is distributed across multiple providers. The data suggest that while no single institution overwhelmingly dominates the training process, certain institutions hold a comparative advantage in scale. The presence of multiple institutions contributing smaller but collectively significant proportions highlights the diversity and decentralization within the teacher training ecosystem. On the other hand, the significantly smaller percentages of the teachers reporting university training may suggest that more emphasis should be placed on providing comprehensive training in FVA for teachers who support LVIs.

The primary conclusion drawn from this distribution is that perceived skill in conducting FVAs is not always correlated with the amount of training received at a particular institution such as KISE. Teachers' perception of confidence in their skills can be affected by various elements.

Teachers' perceptions of their own competency were greatly influenced by the breadth and depth of each institution's FVA training program. Since KISE is a specialized institution, it might provide a curriculum that is substantially more focused, but other institutions' training programs might differ greatly, which could have an impact on how competent teachers perceive. It needs more than just theoretical knowledge to be competent in FVAs. Additionally, it is dependent on practical experience. Regardless of where they received their training, teachers who have conducted more FVAs in real-world contexts may feel more competent.

Furthermore, maintaining and improving competency requires ongoing education and professional development. Teachers who received their training at KISE or another institution could require continuing assistance to stay current with FVA methods. Institutions could vary in their training environment, resource availability, and emphasis on practical application. Smaller training institutions or those with a less effective emphasis on special education may provide more limited training, affecting teachers' confidence in their abilities. Finally, teachers conducting FVAs have experienced diverse educational backgrounds, as seen by the diversity of training among institutions. However, this variability demonstrated that perceived competency in FVAs is influenced by more than just the institution where teachers were trained. The quality of the training, practical experience and continuous professional development all has a major impact on teacher confidence and efficacy in conducting FVAs. Therefore, a large concentration of teachers trained at KISE does not necessarily imply a similarly high level of competence across all teachers.

Further research could explore the effectiveness and content of training programs provided by KISE and universities to identify areas for improvement. Additionally, investigating the impact of specialized training on teachers' perceived competence in conducting FVAs could provide valuable insights for enhancing teacher professional development in this field.

Through an open-ended question, the researcher further sought teachers' perceptions on the adequacy of the skills to carry out FVA on LVIs. Their responses were indicated in Figure 3.

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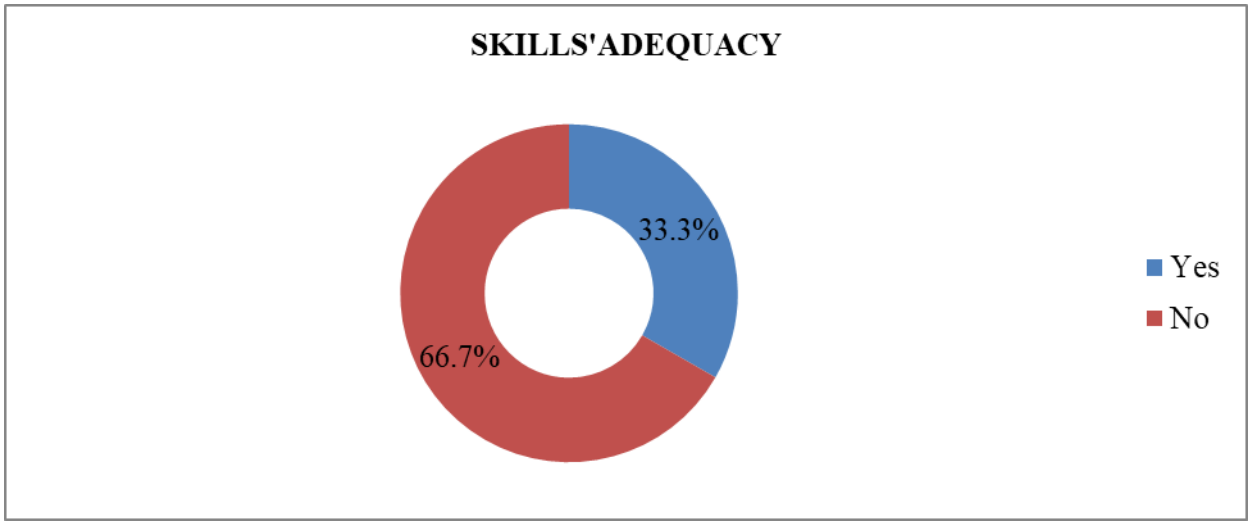

Figure 3 Teachers' responses on Adequacy of skills to conduct FVA
Source: Field Data 2025

The following analysis can be made based on the data gathered regarding the teachers' competence to carry out FVA. Of the 30 teachers who responded to the questionnaire, the majority stated that they lacked the necessary skills to perform FVA for the LVIs, while a minority of the teachers perceived they had the necessary skills. These results make it clear that a considerable number of teachers did not perceive they were competent to conduct FVAs. Thus, it indicated that in order to improve teachers' competence to conduct FVAs, more training opportunities and resources would be needed. Additionally, as these teachers' perceptions can affect the overall quality of assessments performed for LVI, efforts should be undertaken to address the issues voiced by teachers who perceive inadequately competent. Teachers' knowledge and comprehension of FVA may have an impact on how they perceive the practice. This was in agreement with Mwangi's (2009) finding that professional development is crucial for LVI teachers, especially in FVA. The researcher concluded that training in this field needed to be strengthened by emphasizing the topic in special teacher preparation programs in addition to providing better in-service training to qualified TVIs.

The teachers were then asked to elaborate on why they perceived they possessed the requisite skills to conduct FVAs. The respondents had the following perceptions:

Table 1: Teachers' responses on their Skills' adequacy

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Experience conducting placement assessments.	2	6.7
Participation in both theoretical and field training	3	10
Participation in both theoretical and field training	1	3.3

Source: Field Data 2025

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As shown in table 1 in regard to the responses provided by the teachers on their skills' adequacy, some teachers perceived they had the skills to conduct FVA confidently for LVIs. The teachers provided numerous reasons to support their perceptions. First, the majority of teachers mentioned their ability to categorize learners based on their vision ability and provide necessary support. This demonstrated that they had the requisite skills and expertise to effectively assess and evaluate learners' visual abilities, allowing them to provide tailored help based on their unique needs.

A few of the teachers asserted that their past experience conducting a number of successful school placement assessments helped them gain confidence in their proficiency. This demonstrated that significant practical experience and the proven track record of successful assessors have contributed to their confidence in performing FVAs. Furthermore, a minority of teachers underlined that FVA combines academic knowledge with actual application in the field. This implied that the teachers underwent adequate training that involved both theoretical understanding and hands-on experience, which contributed to their confidence in performing assessments. Ultimately, the teachers in this study perceived that they had the necessary skills to conduct FVAs confidently because of their experience conducting successful assessments, ability to categorize learners and provide appropriate assistance, combination of theoretical knowledge and practical application, and recognition of the importance of material retention and frequent assessments.

These findings indicate that teachers' confidence in their abilities stems from a combination of practical experience, knowledge, and access to relevant resources. This was consistent with Wang et al.'s (2015) argument that a teacher is more likely to complete difficult activities and assess their learners' abilities to achieve them when they were more competent. Similarly, teachers were asked to give reasons why they perceived they lacked the necessary skills to conduct FVAs in schools. The following responses in Table 2 were given:

Table 2 Teachers' responses on why they do not have adequate skills

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Lack of assessment tools	14	46.7
Short training duration	10	33.3
Inadequate training content	5	16.7
Long time lapse since training	1	3.3
High cost of training and tools	1	3.3
Lack of training opportunity altogether	2	6.7

Source: Field Data 2025

As indicated in table 2 from this research study on teachers' perceptions of their lack of ability to conduct functional vision assessments (FVAs) for the LVIs in schools, the majority of the teachers cited a lack of tools to carry out assessments (limited resources) as a reason for their perceived lack of ability. This suggested that there was a lack of the tools needed to conduct FVAs in schools. Schools may not have the resources, such as appropriate technologies and assessment tools, to conduct FVAs for LVIs. In the absence of these resources, teachers may find it difficult to accurately assess their learners' functional vision.

A third of the teachers said that they perceived their skills were insufficient because of the short training period and time limitations. This implied that the training period may not

have been long enough for them to properly understand and acquire the skills required to perform FVAs. Due to time constraints, teachers may find themselves lacking the time to carry out thorough FVAs because of their demanding workloads and competing demands. Hence, assessments could be hurried or unsatisfactory leading to perceived inadequate skills.

A sixth of the teachers expressed that they perceived they lacked the necessary skills since the training they had received was insufficient in content. This suggested that the skills and knowledge needed to perform FVAs may not have been sufficiently covered in the training. A tenth of the teachers indicated that the training was completed a long time ago, which may have contributed to their perception of their low competence level. This suggested that teachers who had completed their training more than a decade prior perceived a degree of uncertainty over the capacity to implement the most recent best practices. Their effectiveness in conducting FVAs was hampered by their perception that their training was inadequate or outdated for dealing with contemporary situations.

Additionally, it suggested that teachers who had received previous training may have found it challenging to adapt to the just emerging approaches and resources used in FVAs. This problem could be reduced by providing training on new technologies and ensuring that all teachers were at ease utilizing them. A tenth of the teachers cited the expense of the instruments and training costs as other reasons. This suggested that teachers' capacity to acquire the requisite abilities may have been constrained by the cost of purchasing the required materials and covering the associated training. Only a minority of the teachers stated that they had not received a request to go for the training.

This implied that not every teacher has had an equal opportunity to get the required training, which may account for their perceived incompetence in conducting FVAs. It was possible that teachers did not receive thorough training specifically focused on conducting FVAs for the LVI. Teachers could lack the information and skills necessary for assessing these learners' functional vision if they were not properly trained. Overall, this analysis identified a number of variables that support teachers' perceptions of their perceived lack of competence in conducting FVAs. These included a dearth of resources, inadequate instruction and content, extended intervals between training sessions, expensive tools and fee sets, and unequal training opportunities. By addressing these issues, it may be possible to raise the standard of FVAs in schools and improve the skills of the teachers.

It was crucial to bear in mind that teachers may solve these perceived shortcomings in their skills by receiving proper training, having access to the right materials, and receiving ongoing professional support. This result supported the observation made by Kaiser, Rosenblum, and Herzberg (2020) that there were no guidelines in the field of visual impairments that instructed pre-service teachers on how to successfully conduct, record, and share FVA with various members of the instructional team. The teachers were additionally asked about how they determine if a learner needs to use print. The responses were given below.

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Table 3 Determination of Learners' Use of Print

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Ability to read and write	5	16.7
Vision acuity, visual field	8	26.7
Vision deterioration	2	6.7
E-chart	22	73.3
Work output	4	13.3

Source: Field Data 2025

As shown in Table 3, 30 teachers were surveyed about their perceptions toward FVA for the LVI and how they determine whether or not any pupil needs to use print. Their responses can be broken down as follows:

The majority of teachers (22) use an E-chart to determine whether print was appropriate for a learner. This showed that visual acuity played an important role in their assessment. Furthermore, a third of the teachers stated assessing visual acuity and visual field to determine whether a learner needs to use print, emphasizing the significance of these criteria in determining the usage of print for LVI. Furthermore, a sixth of the teachers assessed whether a learner needs to utilize print based on their performance in written assignments. Similarly, the same number of teachers stated that they determined whether a learner needed to utilize print based on their ability to read print materials and write efficiently.

On the other hand, a minority of teachers stated that they looked for indicators of deteriorating vision as they decide if a learner should use print. This suggested that they observed stability of vision as a determining factor when utilizing print. These responses showed that teachers determined a range of variables when deciding whether a learner with VI should utilize print. These attributes included the learner's ability to read and write in print, visual acuity and field, signs of vision deterioration, written work performance, and use of an E-chart. The most prevalent strategy employed by teachers in this study was the usage of an E-chart, as reported by the majority of the teachers. This implied that many teachers perceived visual acuity assessment with an E-chart was a reliable predictor of a learner's requirement for print. The findings also emphasized the necessity of taking into account aspects other than visual acuity, as revealed by teachers' comments, which included looking for indicators of declining vision and assessing the work of the learners.

In conclusion, the findings of this study suggested that teachers considered a variety of factors and assessment methods when determining whether a LVI should use print. This demonstrated the complexities of FVA and the importance of a comprehensive approach to meeting each learner's unique needs. The findings of this study were consistent with those of Rogers (2015), who suggested that in the United States, assessments of Braille literacy skills were commonly based on reading measures designed for fully sighted children. Rogers observed that teachers frequently regarded visual processing as faster and more efficient than tactile processing. As a result, print was frequently favoured for the learners with very low vision, particularly in lower-grade classes where learners were not expected to process huge amounts of information. This was consistent with Kimani and Rukwaro's (2015) finding that the optimal literacy medium for the LVI in Kenya was based solely on classification, with no established approaches, resources, or standards in place. They also observed that in certain circumstances, teachers, learners, or parents made a decision superficially without consulting

a learning medium assessment team. This suggested a need for well-organized tools. Such a reliance on a single assessment technique demonstrates how essential it is for training development of materials and diversity to incorporate comprehensive, learner-centered strategies.

Discussion

The majority of participants reported they had not been trained to conduct FVA, revealing a significant gap in teacher preparation. This aligns with Kelley and Smith's (2017) assertion that a shortage of adequately trained TVIs compromises effective instruction and literacy outcomes. In the Kenyan context, this suggests that while efforts exist to train teachers in special education generally, specific and systematic training in FVA is lacking. As Mwangi (2009) previously noted, professional development in specialized domains such as FVA must be prioritized in teacher education and in-service training. The absence of such structured training limits teachers' ability to evaluate learners' visual functioning holistically, potentially leading to inappropriate instructional placements and literacy medium recommendations.

Although KISE emerged as the main provider of FVA training, the study found variability in teachers' perceived competence, regardless of where training was received. This reinforces the idea that the quality of training, including practical hands-on experience, significantly influences teacher confidence and skill retention. Various institutions were cited less frequently, raising questions about how thoroughly FVA content is addressed in their programs. Kaiser et al. (2020) emphasized that few teacher training programs include structured, competency-based instruction on how to conduct, document, and share FVA findings. This may explain why teachers trained years earlier or in different institutions reported low confidence, as continuous professional development in new techniques and tools appears to be absent.

Among those who perceived themselves as under-skilled, lack of assessment tools, short training durations, and inadequate training content were the most cited reasons. These findings are consistent with global literature. Without proper resources, TVIs are unable to conduct meaningful assessments, especially in resource-constrained schools. Some teachers also noted the long lapse since training and the high cost of tools and further education. These findings support Kaiser et al.'s (2020) concern that ongoing support structures and guidelines for conducting FVAs remain limited. Professional isolation and outdated knowledge can lead to low perceived competence, reducing assessment accuracy and its instructional utility.

The majority of teachers relied heavily on the E-chart, indicating a strong emphasis on visual acuity over functional assessment. This reliance reflects a limited understanding of FVA's broader scope, which includes environmental observations, contrast sensitivity, field of vision, and real-life task performance. Rogers (2015) found that in the U.S., teachers often prioritized visual processing speed over tactile processing, leading to an overemphasis on print for learners with low vision. Similarly, in Kenya, Kimani and Rukwaro (2015) found that literacy media decisions were often based on superficial classification rather than data-driven learning media assessments. This study affirms that in the absence of a comprehensive FVA process, teachers may default to simplistic tools like the E-chart, potentially leading to unsuitable literacy media recommendations.

A comprehensive approach requires teachers to consider multiple indicators, including reading stamina, environmental adaptability, learner preference, and progression of vision loss. The current findings suggest that Kenyan teachers need both practical training

and structured tools to support nuanced FVA practices. Despite the limitations in training and resources, many teachers expressed a strong desire for more professional development in FVA. This echoes Wang et al. (2015), who found that teachers with higher self-efficacy are more likely to seek improvement and engage in complex teaching tasks. The findings thus indicate that there is a motivated workforce that can benefit from structured, continuous training, preferably incorporating both theoretical instruction and supervised field practice.

Conclusion

Based on the findings discussed, several critical conclusions can be drawn regarding the current state of Functional Vision Assessment (FVA) training and practice among TVIs in Kenya. The study revealed a substantial gap in both pre-service and in-service teacher training specific to FVA, despite the existence of general special education programs. The lack of structured and consistent FVA training indicates that specialized professional development remains inadequately prioritized in teacher preparation frameworks.

The variability in teacher competence, regardless of training institution, further underscores the influence of training quality and the importance of hands-on experience. The absence of structured, competency-based instruction in FVA contributes to teachers' low confidence and skill retention over time, particularly in environments lacking ongoing professional support. Compounding this issue are the reported challenges of limited access to assessment tools, short training durations, and high costs associated with further education. Additionally, the study found a tendency among teachers to rely on simplistic tools, such as the E-chart, for determining literacy media, indicating a limited understanding of the comprehensive nature of FVA. This over-reliance indicated that literacy decisions were often made using superficial methods rather than thorough, data-driven assessments. The lack of holistic FVA potentially leads to inappropriate literacy placements, thereby affecting learners' educational trajectories. Despite these challenges, the study revealed a strong interest among teachers in further professional development, suggesting a motivated workforce willing to improve their competencies.

In conclusion, improving educational outcomes for LVIs requires urgent reform in both pre-service and in-service teacher training programs to include comprehensive, practical FVA instruction. Collaboration between ministries of education, teacher training institutions, and professional organizations is essential to develop standardized, competency-based training modules. Additionally, ongoing professional development opportunities, access to appropriate assessment tools, and national guidelines for FVA practice must be prioritized to ensure consistent and effective implementation. Future research should investigate the impact of teacher training quality on learner outcomes, particularly examining the efficacy of different institutional models and approaches to professional development.

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