The study sought to find out the factors influencing the participation of mentally retarded children in lower primary schools in Murang’a East Sub-county, Murang’a County. The objectives that guided the study were distance, policy framework, school environment and parental economical status. The target population for the study was the parents with mentally retarded children, teachers handling the MR children and MR children aged below 12 years. The respondents were 350 in number. The purposive sampling method was used to pick the sample across all the categories. The sample size for the study was 43.6% of the population. Seventy seven parents, ten special unit’s teachers and forty five MR children. The study employed the descriptive survey design. Data was collected by use of questionnaires. The study had three sets of questionnaires administered to each of the categories. The descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were the medium for data analysis which was thereafter presented by use of statistical means. The results were subjected to statistical tests which entailed chi-square tests. The study found out that most MR children went to school by foot. The distance from their homes to the schools was not an inhibiting factor to their ability to attend school. Most of the MR children were accompanied to school by their parents and caregivers. All the teachers handling the MR children in the special units were employed by the government. The enrollment of MR children in special education units was confirmed to be 0-5 children annually. Materials for use by the schools were confirmed to have been provided for by the government. The curriculum was given an approval rating by most of the teachers owing to its capacity to support proper growth of children. The teachers considered the parents with MR children as cooperative. They also confirmed that the schools provided MR children with food and had put in place recreational facilities to ensure that the school environments were supportive of MR children. Some however were of the view that the schools were too large making it difficult for the teachers to give children enough attention. The social-economic livelihoods of parents were confirmed to be depressed and an undoing to the realization of progress by the parents with MR children. The study recommended that communities should invest in more special units to cater for the MR children. This will ensure that there is adequate provision of facilities for their sake. It will go a long way in reducing the distance covered by the MR children in the wake of accessing the schools from where they undertake programmes. The government should invest in the training and equipping of more teachers to handle the MR children. This will ensure the presence of adequate manpower always at hand to handle the MR children effectively without the risk of failure. Investment in continuous upgrade of the curriculum used by the special education centers should be done. Provisions should be made for investment in recreational facilities by the respective schools handling MR children. This will certainly go a long way in making the environments favorable and amiable to the MR children. The schools should also institute programmes incorporating parents and members of households with MR children with a view of training them on awareness and how best to handle the children. Shoring up the economic mainstays of the
parents with MR children should equally be done to better the livelihoods of the children and encourage their participation in school. [8]

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