UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

EXPERIENCES OF PUPILS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES IN THREE BASIC SCHOOLS IN THE ASSIN SOUTH DISTRICT IN THE CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA

DAVIS, JONATHAN AMONOO

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OCTOBER, 2015

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, ……..…….……………………………………………………………

declare that this Thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in

published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely

my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole for

another degree elsewhere.

Signature: …………………………………………

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I, hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was

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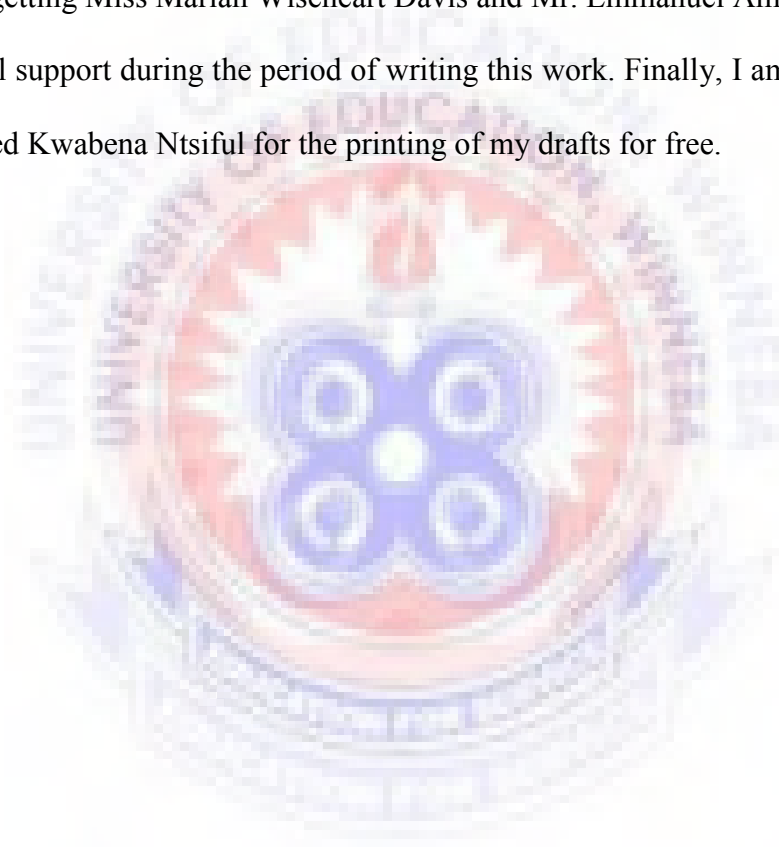
the University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's Name: Prof. Mawutor K. Avoke (Vice Chancellor)

Signature: ……………………………………

Date: ……………………....………………

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my wife, Gifty Davis, daughter, Bella Wiseheart Davis and son, Gerald Arthur Davis.

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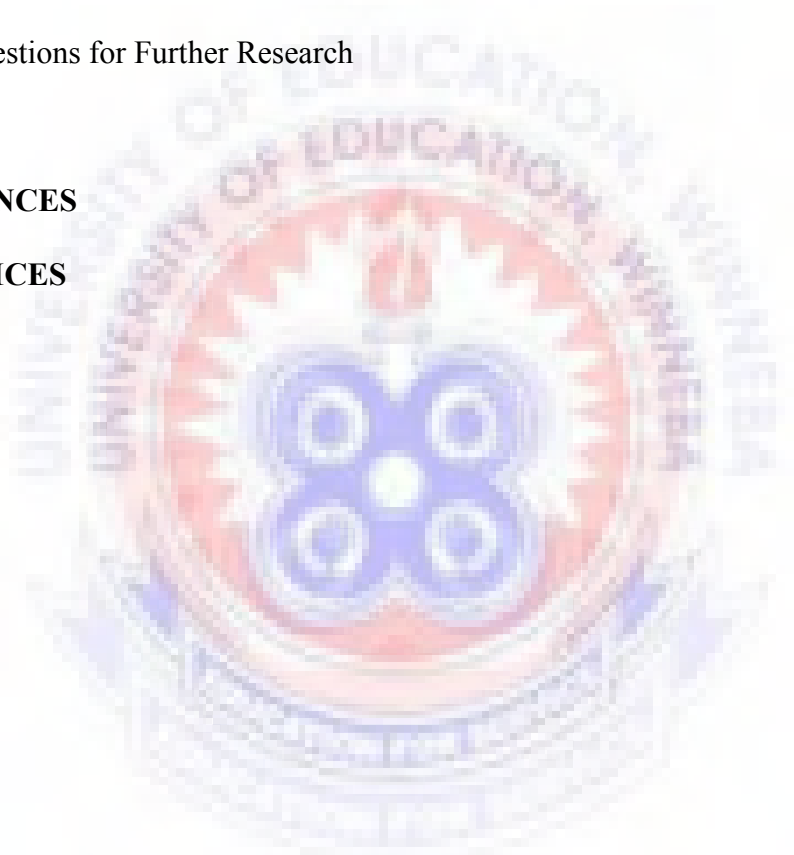
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ABSTRACT

This study described the experiences of pupils with physical disabilities in three basic schools in the Assin South District in the Central Region of Ghana. Three research questions guided the study. The study employed the phenomenological design which made use of the semi-structured interview guide to solicit for information from participants. A sample of 9 participants were purposively sampled from the Assin South District. Data from the study was analysed through the thematic approach. The findings revealed that pupils with physical disabilities had a poor social interaction with peers as their interaction was centred on peers in their neighbourhood and those who offered help. The relationship that existed between teachers and students with the disability was a fair one which accounted for improved attendance and academics of pupils. Pupils also had difficulties engaging in some academic activities as a result of not being regular to school, low self-esteem and lack of customized furniture. It was recommended that school authorities should create opportunities for pupils with physical disabilities to socialize with their peers. Also, extra tuition and counselling should be provided to pupils to improve on their academics skills.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background to the Study

Assin South District is a small district carved out of the former Assin District in the Central Region of Ghana. It is a typical farming community commonly known for their production of Cocoa. With a college of Education (Foso College of Education) at its neighbouring district (Assin Central), the district is continually served with fresh diploma teachers for the basic schools with fore knowledge in special education. There are also distance education study centres for University of Education, Winneba and University of Cape Coast at Assin Foso close to the district which allow teachers to upgrade themselves. Diploma and post-diploma programmes all have special education courses that are mandatory. With all these provisions, it can be said that teachers in the district should have the required skill in handling pupils with special needs in their schools.

The district has no special school and persons with disabilities who decide to be educated join regular schools in the district. Persons with disabilities usually found in the regular schools in the district include those with physical disabilities and visual impairments (partially blind students). This study concentrates on the pupils with physical disabilities in the regular schools. Such pupils include those with limb deficiencies or paralysis.

According to Dewey (1926) 'education is a continuous process of experiencing and of revising or non-revising experiences. It is the development of all those capacities in the individual, which enables him to control his environment and fulfil his possibilities' (Singh, 2007, p.22). Educational process of development

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occurs in physical, social, cultural and psychological environment. A proper and adequate environment is very necessary for a fruitful learning for the child. Especially the home and the school should provide the necessary stimulus for learning experience. The child spends most of his time in school and here his environment is exerting a different influence on performance through curricula, teaching techniques, relationship.

Environment plays a vital role in the development of the personality of the student. As a student spends most of his or her life at school, the school environment is highly responsible for the inculcating of greater values in him or her. Pupils' experiences at school occur within the learning environment. The physical, intellectual and social environment make up the three components of the school environment (Põhikooli riiklik õppekava, 2011). The social environment is the relationship that exists between members of the learning environment. Members of the social environment of pupils with disabilities at school include their teachers, regular peers and colleague peers with disabilities. The intellectual environment is the academic component of the learning environment. It is involves course content learning through activities like group learning, classroom discussion, and various assessment procedures. Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) are also part of the intellectual environment. The school buildings like the classrooms, library, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) labs, etc. including furniture and facilities in the classrooms constitute the physical environment.

The school as an agent of socialization inculcates into children social skills that are appropriate and needed in life. The interaction of individuals (students and teachers) results in the transmission of proper social skills. Pupils interact together through play, chats, and even eating together. Pupils with physical disabilities are

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usually at a disadvantage when it comes to play. At the basic school, most persons with physical disabilities avoid play due to the nature of most games being played. Not participating in play tends to lower pupils self-esteem. With a low self-esteem pupils lack the necessary intrinsic motivation and drive to initiate conversation with peers (Levitt & Cohen, 1977). Pupils with physical disabilities tend to have fewer friends.

Apart from the experiences of pupils at school taking place within the school environment, it is also influenced by behaviour portrayed by peers and teachers. Positive school experiences for students with disabilities depend on the positive behaviour put up by them. Praisner (2003) suggested that a reason that teachers have negative attitudes towards pupils with disabilities is that they do not possess adequate training and skills to manage such pupils. Millington, Strohmer, Reid and Spengler (1996) described negative attitudes as resulting into bias and discrimination. Discrimination and bias interferes with the student with disability's ability to have the best of experiences at school.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

Research shows that children with physical disabilities have been found to be less engaged in social play and usually count on others for social arrangements (Brown & Gordon, 1987; Mulderij, 1996, 1997; Rubin, Fein, & Vandenberg, 1983). Nabors and Badawi (1997) described pupils with physical disabilities as persons engaged in more solitary play than co-operative ones.

The researcher observed that pupils with physical disabilities in basic schools have social interaction problems. Recently, the researcher was at Appiakrom D/A Primary School in the Assin South District and noticed that a pupil with physical

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disabilities was all alone in the classroom during break time. The boy with the disability could only watch through the classroom window while some of his colleagues played football and the others cheered their various teams. Although he appeared to be interested in what was going on, he kept his distance.

Butler (2001), Kliewer (1998) and Bax (1999) postulated that young persons with disabilities perform well within mainstream setting even though, differences may be slight in some instances but in the case of Assin South, the situation is different. Comments from teachers in Assin South suggest that student with physical disabilities usually perform poorly in academics and continue to drop-out from school.

Even with provisions made for the teaching of special education at the various colleges of education and universities, to teachers it appears teachers lacked adequate knowledge about the handling of students with special needs. It also appears there exist no or good relationship between the teachers and pupils with physical disabilities in the Assin South District Schools. For instance, it is difficult seeing teachers interacting with pupils with physical disabilities during break time.

There seems to be a poor relationship between pupils with physical disabilities and peers. It seems pupils with physical disabilities do not fully participate in academics activities. Students with physical disabilities seem to isolate themselves from social interactions due to inappropriate behaviour by their regular peers towards them.

1.3   Purpose of the Study

The study explored the experiences pupils with physical disabilities go through in basic schools at the Assin South District. The study specifically sought to find out:

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1. What social interactions exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their peers without disabilities in the school.

2. The academic involvement of pupils with physical disabilities in their school.

3. What relationships exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their teachers.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What social interactions exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their peers without disabilities?

2. What are the academic involvements of pupils with physical disabilities in their school?

3. What relationships exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their teachers?

1.5 Significance of the Study

1. Findings from the study will reveal the social interaction patterns between pupils with physical disabilities and their peers. This would educate peers without disabilities on how to enhance their interaction with their classmates with disabilities.

2. The results of the study will show the academic involvements of pupils with physical disabilities which will enable teachers plan appropriate academic programmes and use teaching strategies suitable for persons with physical disabilities.

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3. Teachers of pupils with physical disabilities will be able to improve their interaction with their students with disabilities based on the results of their relationships with their students with physical disabilities.

4. The result of the study will add to scholarly literature in the field of special education in Ghana.

5. Findings from the study could also serve as a base-line for further studies.

1.6 Delimitation

The scope of the study covers pupils with physical disabilities in selected basic schools in the Assin South district. Under the broad group of pupils with physical disabilities, only those with limb deformity were considered for the study.

1.7 Limitation

The researcher had a difficulty obtaining data on schools with pupils with physical disabilities. The Assin South District Education Office does not have up to date information on pupils with disabilities. The only information on students with disabilities can be derived from a small portion of a questionnaire schools fill for their annual census. The available Census documents of schools in the district capture information for the 2013/2014 academic year. Of the 23 pupils on the documents with physical disabilities, 9 were confirmed by their headmasters to be present at school.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Academic Involvement: In this study, academic involvement is the participation of pupils in the teaching learning activities of the school.

Club foot: A deformed foot which is twisted so that the sole cannot be placed flat on the ground.

Erb's palsy (Waiter's tip deformity): In Erb's palsy, the arm hangs down with the hand turned backwards in the 'waiter's tip position'.

Paraplegic: A paraplegic in this study is a pupil with complete paralysis of the lower half of the body including both legs.

Social Interaction: For the purpose of this research, Social Interaction as used in the study is the process by which pupils act and react to their peers and teachers.

1.9 Organization of Chapters

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one deals with the whole introduction of the study. This comprises the background to the study, the statement of the problem and the purpose of the study. These are accompanied with the research questions, significance of the study as well as the delimitation of the scope and limitations of the study. The chapter ends with operational definition of terms and organization of the study.

Chapter two focuses on the review of related literature relevant to the study. The thrust of the literature was both theoretical and empirical. The third chapter describes the research methodology. This chapter deals with the organizing principles through which the researcher goes about the whole research work. The chapter is written based on the following sub-headings: Research Approach, Research Design, Population, Sample, Sampling Technique, Instruments, Pilot testing of Instruments, Procedures for Data Collection, and Data Analysis.

Chapter four presents discussion and analysis of data. The researcher presents case studies of each participant including the relevant themes gleaned from their

experiences. Chapter five consisted of a summary of findings, discussions, recommendations and suggestions for further investigation into the problem, based on the findings of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the literature reviewed for the study. The following sub-headings were covered:

1. Theoretical framework.

2. Social interaction that exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their peers.

3. Academic involvement of pupils with physical disabilities.

4. Relationship that exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their teachers.

5. Gaps in the Literature.

6. Summary of literature review.

2.2   Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

The theoretical framework adopted for the study is that of Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Vygotsky (1896-1934) is one of the Russian psychologists whose ideas have influenced the field of educational psychology and the field of education as whole. According to the sociocultural theory, learning is

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facilitated through interpersonal interactions, internalizing social activities, and using more knowledgeable persons to aid comprehension of novel ideas. He succinctly explained that "the functions of a child's mind originate as interpersonal relations between individuals" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57).

Vygotsky defines the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as defines as "the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving, and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" Wertsch (1985, p. 60). Shayer (2002) claimed that a crucial feature of learning according to Vygotsky is that it creates a ZPD, that is to say, learning a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalised, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement. Vygotsky advocated that ZPD is not the role of instruction alone, but developmental (biological) factors do have a role to play. It is jointly determined by the child's level of development and the form of instruction involved. According to him, instruction and development do not directly coincide, but represent two processes that exist in a very complex interrelationship. He argues that the child can operate "only within certain limits that are strictly fixed by the state of the child's development and intellectual possibilities". Vygotsky cited by Shayer (2002) advocated that good instruction should proceed ahead of development and should awaken and rouse to life an entire set of functions, which are in the stage of maturation and lie in the ZPD. It is in this way, as he claimed, that instruction can play an extremely important role in development. This suggests, according to Shayer, that the "natural or spontaneous" thinking lags behind the intellectual challenge of

schooling, however, at the same time; this natural thinking provides children with new tools for thinking to meet the learning demands of the school. It also suggests that teachers are responsible for offering learning contexts in which the instruction marches ahead of the development and leads it. Vygotsky claimed as Shayer reported, that good instruction must always be aimed not so much at the developed but the developing functions.

Mediation is central to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Mediation according to Vygotsky, refers to the part played by other significant people in the learners' lives, people who enhance their learning by selecting and shaping the learning experiences presented to them. Vygotsky (1978) cited by Wertsch (1985) claimed that the secret of effective learning lies in the nature of the social interaction between two or more people with different levels of skills and knowledge. This involves helping the learner to move into and through the next layer of knowledge or understanding.

Kozulin and Presseisen (1995) claimed that Vygotsky considers the learning process as not a solitary exploration of the environment by the child on his own, but as a process of the child's appropriation of the methods of actions that exist in a given culture. In the process of appropriation, symbolic tools or artefacts play a crucial role. Kozulin (2002) categorised mediators into two categories: human and symbolic. According to him, human mediation usually tries to answer the question concerning what kind of involvement on the part of the adult is effective in enhancing the child's performance, while symbolic mediation deals with what changes in the child's performance can be brought about by the introduction of the child to symbolic tools-mediators.

Donato (1994) described scaffolding in a social interaction as a knowledgeable participant creating supportive conditions in which a student can participate in and

extend current skills and knowledge to a high level of competence. In an educational context, however, scaffolding is an instructional structure whereby the teacher models the desired learning strategy or task then gradually shifts responsibility to the students.

According to Rogoff (1990) cited by Donato (1994), scaffolding implies the expert's active stance towards continual revisions of the scaffolding in response to the emerging capabilities of the learner, and a learner's error or limited capabilities can be a signal for the adult to upgrade the scaffolding. As the learner begins to take on more responsibility for the task, the adult dismantles the scaffold indicating that the child has benefited from the assisted performance and internalised the problem-solving processes provided by the previous scaffolded episode.

2.2.2 Implications to the Study

Wertsch and Hikmann (1987) claimed that determining a learner's ZPD is an act of negotiated discovery that should be realised through interaction between the learner(s) and the teacher. This interaction helps the teacher to determine precisely what the learner can achieve alone and what he/she needs assistance to achieve. Thus there is the need for a teacher to have a positive relationship with his or her pupil with disabilities. Positive relationships will enable students open up to teachers to exactly what their level of competence is. Shayer claimed mere cognitive level matching, left children's mental development stagnant, but on the other hand, conceptualising too high above students' ability may lead to frustration and disappointment and that therefore it is the teacher's role to create the balance.

The theory regards instruction as crucial to learning in the classroom. Instruction should be geared to the zone of proximal development that is beyond the

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learner's actual development level. In classes, the theory asserts that learning is a collaborative achievement and not an isolated individual's effort, where the learner works unassisted and unmediated. Donato advocated that the theory adds greater clarity to the issue of modified interaction and the negotiation of meanings in classroom settings. Teachers and learners are given opportunities to mediate and assist each other in the creation of zones of proximal development in which each party learns and develops (Donato, 2000). For the pupil with physical disabilities who has various social deficits like inability to initiate social interaction (like asking questions on tasks), it is expedient for the teacher to observe critically and provide the needed help when the need arises.

Vygotsky (1977; 1978) viewed play as highly significant to development. "Play contains in a concentrated form, as in the focus of a magnifying glass, all developmental tendencies." (Vygotsky, 1978, p.74). Vygotskians view play as the most significant "leading" activity of the early childhood years (Vygotsky 1977, Bodrova and Leong 1996). This means that the most significant psychological achievements of the early childhood age occur while children engage in play.

According to Vygotsky (1978), play creates a broad zone of proximal development, both in cognitive and socio-emotional development. In make-believe play children perform above their own cognitive abilities—logical thinking, memory and attention. Their ability for deliberate behaviour and self-regulation in make-believe play is also beyond their everyday norm. Another important influence of play on development is the separation of thought from actions and objects and the development of mental representation and symbolic function. The pretend situation of play creates an imaginative dimension in which children use substitution of things and acts. Separation of the meaning from the object promotes the development of abstract

ideas and abstract, verbal thinking. In actions like riding a broomstick as if it were a horse, children separate the literal meaning of the object from its imagined meaning—this, argued Vygotsky, sees the beginnings of abstract thought.

Vygotsky argued that make-believe play is socially and culturally determined. Playing the roles of real life characters (for example, a mother or a doctor) children achieve a mental representation of social roles and the rules of society. The toys and gestures with which children play are seen to be significant artefacts from their social and cultural settings—so, in play, children are acquiring the tools and meanings of their culture.

The physical environment, based on Vygotsky's theory, should be organised with play areas. Play items like manipulatives (pattern blocks, shape sets, connecting cubes, and unit blocks) and other objects (buttons, rocks, or beads) help pupils build representations of mathematical ideas. Teachers are also to make use of role play in presenting their lessons. Students with physical disabilities should be given roles to perform so as to prevent their feeling of being excluded.

2.3 Social Interaction that exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their peers without disabilities

2.3.1 Social Interaction Patterns

Children with physical disabilities have been found to have a variety of social deficits, including limited participation in active and social play and increased dependence on others to make social arrangements (Brown & Gordon, 1987; Mulderij, 1996, 1997; Rubin, Fein, & Vandenberg, 1983), poor social skills (Philip & Duckworth, 1982), limited intrinsic motivation (Levitt & Cohen, 1977), lack of drive, and decreased concentration (Salomon, 1983; Sheridan, 1975). They have shown a

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significantly restricted ability to initiate and direct social interactions with siblings (Dallas, Stevenson, & McGurk, 1993a) and a tendency to engage in rigidly hierarchical relationships where they assume the role of the younger child (Dallas et al., 1993b). At school, children with disabilities participate in less cooperative play, more solitary play, and more play with teachers than typically developing peers (Nabors & Badawi, 1997). Medical and therapeutic interventions during school hours can disrupt children's class and free play time, making them less accessible to peers for unstructured social interactions (Lightfoot, Wright, & Sloper, 1999).

The play deprivation caused by lack of environmental engagement can result in secondary social, emotional, and psychological disabilities that persist into adulthood (Missiuna & Pollock, 1991). These secondary disabilities can include isolation, poor self-esteem, poor social adjustment, and unemployment (Blum, Resnick, Nelson, & St. Germaine, 1991; Kokkonen, Saukkonen, Timmonen, Serlo, & Kinnunen, 1991; LaGreca, 1990; Law & Dunn, 1993; Stevens et al., 1996; Varni, Rubenfeld, Talbot, & Setoguchi, 1989; Wallander, Feldman, & Varni, 1989; Wallander & Varni, 1989; Yude & Goodman, 1999). Lack of mobility, overprotection by parents, and lack of opportunities for peer interaction have been cited as contributing factors to the poor social adjustment of many young adults with physical disabilities (Lightfoot et al., 1999; Stevens et al., 1996; Strax, 1991).

The school environment is an appropriate context in which to investigate children's socialization (Richardson, 2002). The early school environment appears to be a critical point in children's social development where they establish an attitude toward school and themselves that is closely related to the quality of peer relationships (Ladd, 1990). The amount of literature on how children with physical disabilities experience their school social environment suggests that these children

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experience physical, organizational, and interactional barriers to social participation (Lightfoot et al., 1999; Nabors & Badawi, 1997).

The concept of social networks call for investigation into how children's social environments affect their social development. A major function of social networks is to provide support, which is defined as "resources that are provided by other people and that arise in the context of interpersonal relationships [and] reach individuals through their social network connections" (Belle, 1989, p. 1). When well-functioning, social networks prepare children to become competent within the particular cultural or ecological context in which they live (Tietjen, 1989) and provide them with the skills to develop their own social networks (Cochran & Brassard, 1979). Through interactions with members of the social network, children learn the essential skills of reciprocal exchanges or the ability to offer support as well as to receive it (Richardson, 2002). Children who do not engage in reciprocal exchanges will not acquire the ability to offer help and support and, consequently, will have difficulty establishing and maintaining relationships that facilitate the development of adaptive social networks (Cochran & Brassard, 1979).

In a longitudinal study of children's social networks, Feiring and Lewis (1989) found out that the biggest change in the number of peers in children's networks occurred between 6 and 9 years of age, reflecting children's transition to school and increased exposure to peers. Lewis, Feiring, and Brooks-Gunn (1988) found out that children with handicapping conditions had larger social networks than typically developing peers, but unlike their peers, the social networks of children with disabilities did not show an increase in the number of peers relative to the number of adults with increasing age. The authors concluded that children's developmental

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delays might have limited their ability to accept peers for social interactions independently, consequently limiting the number of peers in their social networks.

The positive aspects of social networks for children with physical disabilities also have been documented. Perceived social support has been suggested as an important protective factor against psychological maladjustment for children with physical disabilities (Varni & Setoguchi, 1991). In a study of children with limb deficiencies and amputations, the most powerful predictor of depressive symptoms was lack of classmate social support (Varni et al., 1989), which was also found to be correlated with trait anxiety and general self-esteem (Varni, Setoguchi, Rappaport, & Talbot, 1992). Children who were able to develop early relationships with peers had higher self-esteem, better mental health, greater levels of independence, and better employment records as adults (Strain & Smith, 1996).

The data on social networks involving children with physical disabilities suggest, that differences in the composition of their social networks limit opportunities to engage with peers (Richardson, 2002). The author explained further by stating that children with physical disabilities value the peer support available in their social networks and have better psychosocial and functional outcomes when this support is present.

2.3.2   Making Friends

Young people with and without disabilities can form friendships (Alderson & Goodey, 1998; Bax, 1999; Sebba & Sachdev, 1997). Sometimes young people with disabilities may feel ostracised and excluded by their non-disabled peers (Llewellyn, 2000; Yude & Goodman, 1999). Friendships are considered essential in the development of social acceptance and a healthy self-esteem (Pitt, 2003; Swain & French, 2000). Some young people with disabilities may be more comfortable mixing

with pupils with whom they feel they have more in common, appreciating the peer support and sense of belonging that Mulderij (1997) and Widdows (1997) consider essential for developing social skills and a healthy self-esteem.

Children with physical difficulties may not develop friendships with their peers spontaneously (Strully & Strully 1989). Having a number of young people with disabilities in a mainstream school enable pupils with disability to choose with whom they socialise, be it peers with or without disabilities, or a mix of both. They also have the comfort of being in an environment in which they are with other students who understand them (Davis & Watson, 2001; Shakespeare & Watson, 1998). This choice may be considered preferable to the alternative of being the lone young person with a disability in a mainstream school or attending a segregated school where one can feel accepted and understood but that does not necessarily enable the development of social skills necessary for the "real world" (Graves & Tracy, 1998; Kliewer, 1998).

The views expressed by young people in research carried out in the area of peer relationship clearly show that peer relationships can be complicated by a young person's disability. Young people desire to fit in with their non-disabled peers and to be involved in class and extra-curricular activities without having to continually ask for help (Kenny, McNeela & Shevlin, 2000). Where young people with disabilities had to ask for help, this changed the nature of the relationship with their peers. One common theme that arose was that where peer relationships with non-disabled young people developed, they were sometimes dominated by an assumption of need and care. Therefore, the non-disabled young people did not act as equals but rather as guides or helpers (Watson et al, 1999). Young people reported that it was difficult to establish peer relationships that were not constrained by dependency considerations (Shevlin, 2000). In contrast to young people in mainstream schools, some students in

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special schools were not deemed to have any issues around acceptance by their peers because they had similar experiences to those of their peers, in particular those related to their respective disabilities (Reynolds, 2006).

The social adjustment of children with a physical disabilities was found to be poorer than that of their non-disabled counterparts; for example, they were found to have fewer friends and were judged to be less popular in class by their teachers (Browne, 1993). Given this evidence, it is not surprising that some research has shown that some young people developed friendships with anyone who was willing to be their friend (Ballard and McDonald, 1999). Some research carried out in Canada found that adolescents with physical disabilities had fewer closer relationships with their friends compared to a national sample of adolescents (Stevens et al, 1996).

The development of friendships in their local area could also be affected by the restriction of choice of school that they could attend, as can be experienced by a young person with a disability. Young people with disabilities may not be able to attend their local school, either because they need to go to a special school or because the only accessible mainstream school involves travelling. Therefore, young people could find that they have few friends in the area in which they lived (Watson et al, 1999).

In other studies, while there was some evidence of difficulty in being accepted by teachers and other school staff, some students with disabilities in mainstream schools spoke 'warmly' of how they felt totally accepted by their friends (Reynolds, 2006). The point has also been made that friendship is a two way relationship. Young people with disabilities both give and receive in their relationships with peers. A physical disabilities does not automatically affect a young person's sense of humour or sense of fun and adventure (Blunt-Bugental, 2003).

The importance of reciprocity in the peer relationships of children with disabilities has been emphasized in recent studies (Grenot-Scheyer, Staub, Peck, & Schwartz, 1998; Van der Klift & Kunc, 1994). Of primary importance is the opportunity for children with disabilities to develop a balance between providing and receiving help. Reciprocal relationships usually evolve into friendships (Richardson, 2002).

2.3.3   Peer Interaction and Social Acceptance

Students with physical disabilities may have limited opportunities to interact with their able-bodied classmates, which could result in lower social acceptance (Mpofu, 1999). For instance, classmates without physical disabilities may avoid interacting with students with physical disabilities because of cultural beliefs about the passing on of the physical disability to them (Jackson & Mupedziswa, 1988). Classmates may engage in play activities that are largely physical and exclude peers with physical disabilities (Arnold & Chapman, 1992). Students with physical disabilities may therefore, be (mis)perceived as lazy, unreliable, and tardy (Mpofu, 1999).

The fact that peers may regard students with physical disabilities to have lower social attractiveness could be due to the limited opportunities that students with disabilities have for peer interaction (Frederickson & Turner, 2002; Shotton, 1998). Peer interaction is the extent of involvement with similar others in a group to which one belongs (McGuire & McGuire, 1988; Shotton, 1998).

The majority of young people, including those with disabilities, have reported that friendships were an important aspect of school life (Swain & French, 2000). Positive relationships with peers are believed to contribute to feelings of social

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acceptance and a healthy development of self-esteem (Pitt, 2003). It has been argued that placement in a mainstream school provides an opportunity for all young people to mix with a diverse array of peers, in an environment that reflects the "real world" (Graves & Tracy, 1998; Pitt, 2003). In essence, one of the key reasons given for attending a mainstream school, after the human rights argument, has been that young people with disabilities have a better opportunity to form friendships with a variety of peers, and hence become known, within their local community. The social experiences available through inclusion are thought to enable young people with disabilities to be far more socially competent than their peers attending segregated special schools (Kliewer, 1998).

These are laudable claims and some research findings have indicated that young people with disabilities did mix with young people without disabilities (Alderson & Goodey, 1998; Bax, 1999; Sebba & Sachdev, 1997). There is, however, other research indicating that as young people with disabilities are likely to be perceived as different, they are more likely to be ostracised, to lack friends, and to be bullied when compared with their classmates (Dorries & Haller, 2001; Llewellyn, 2000; Yude & Goodman, 1999). It was not uncommon for classmates to be initially curious about the young person with a disability because of the novelty factor. However, this curiosity can be a problem because the young person with a disability may spend considerable time answering questions, some of which are quite personal, and still have very few friends once the "interrogation" has ceased (Lightfoot et al, 1999). Johnstone (1995) has also stated that even if there was an acceptance of young people with disabilities in school-based activities, this did not necessarily evolve into personal friendships and their inclusion in activities outside of school. There are other inappropriate interaction patterns that may exist. These are:

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Bullying

The Council on Scientific Affairs of the American Medical Association defines bullying as "…a negative behaviour involving (a) a pattern of repeated aggression, (b) deliberate intent to harm or disturb a victim despite apparent victim distress, and (c) a real or perceived imbalance of power (e.g., due to age, strength, size), with the more powerful child or group attacking a physically or psychologically vulnerable victim" (Bully B'ware Productions, 2003). Bullying consists of a series of repeated, intentionally cruel incidents between the same children who are in the same bully and victim roles. Bullying is not limited to but can include:

➢ Harassing someone because of perceived differences (e.g., a disability, sexual orientation)

➢ Being physically attacked/assaulted or abused

The rate at which bullying occurs depends on many factors, including whether or not peers and responsible adults get involved and provide support, how victims respond, and how schools or other organizations either condone and tolerate or prevent its occurrence (Council on Scientific Affairs, 2002). A general lack of leadership by youth to prevent bullying and teasing of their peers contributes to the problem (Bowman, 2001).

Teasing

Most bullying is subtle and discreet rather than overt (Hoover & Oliver, 1996). This teasing, a form of bullying, includes:

➢ Spreading rumours or gossip

➢ Ridicule

➢ Verbal abuse

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➢ Public shunning or private humiliation and embarrassment

Peer victimization, in which students are repeatedly harassed, ridiculed, teased, scorned, and excluded, is one of today's most overlooked educational problems (Brendtro, 2001). Students consistently rank verbal behaviour as the primary mode of teasing, and it has been found that long-term verbal harassment is as damaging psychologically as infrequent physical harassment. Students express a great deal of confusion about teasing and how to deal with it, and some argue that social and communication skills are central to dealing with teasing and harassment in any successful anti-bullying efforts (Hoover & Oliver, 1996; Hoover & Olson, 2000; Stein, 1995).

Harassment

Disability harassment is the form of bullying and teasing specifically based on or because of a disability. This treatment creates a hostile environment by denying access to, participation in, or receipt of benefits, services, or opportunities at school (PSEA Interactive, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 2000).

Bullying and Teasing

Bullying, harassment, and teasing within schools are not only practiced by many students, but have historically been allowed, ignored, and even modelled by adults. Bullying and teasing have been accepted by many as rites of passage for youth – a normal part of the childhood and adolescent experience. In fact, some researchers have recently wondered whether bullying may serve some purpose for society, resulting in ambivalence toward antiviolence programs (Hoover & Salk, 2003).

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However, the fact that youth who have been bullied, teased, and ostracized continue to use violence as a means of fighting back indicates otherwise.

Bullies tend to focus on peers who seem vulnerable, such as those who are passive, anxious, quiet, sensitive, or unusual in some way (example, being short or having an identifiable disability like physical disability) (Lingren, 1997; Bully B'ware Productions, 2003). Khosropour and Walsh (2001) additionally reported the personality characteristics of victims as shy, quiet, sad, weak, or helpless. However, some controversy exists about the relationship between victim status and risk of bullying. Research by Olweus (1993) argued that while bullies may seize upon a victim characteristic as an excuse for bullying or teasing, only physical weakness has appeared consistently as a predictor of victimization. Nonetheless, Hoover, Oliver and Hazler (1992) demonstrated that young people themselves believe vulnerability predicts whether or not a student becomes a victim.

Labelling and separating students based on athletic or academic aptitude provides an atmosphere ripe for support of bullying, teasing, and development of cliques (Bowman, 2001; Hoover & Salk, 2003). Continued non-participation by students with disabilities in general education classes, mainstream educational clubs and organizations, and athletic programs perpetuates a lack of understanding and interaction among students with and without disabilities, as well as among staff outside of special education.

Unless bullying is proactively addressed by school and community leaders, it can lead to serious consequences for students, including higher dropout rates, more incidents of violence in school, lower self-esteem, fewer friends, declining grades, and increased illnesses. Lifelong problems include involvement with the criminal justice system, mental health issues, and poor relationship development for both the

bully and victim (Ballard, Argus, & Remley, 1999; Rigby, 1999; Sagarese & Giannetti, 1999; Schmitt, 1999; Simanton, Berthwick, & Hoover, 2000). In addition, equal access to educational opportunities and benefits for youth with disabilities can be eroded through bullying, including denial of rights.

Other negative attitudes and behaviours

Individuals with disabilities often internalize negative attitudes (Brillhart, Jay, & Wyers, 1990). Moreover, the negative attitudes and actions of others can negatively affect the behaviour, social relationships, education, employment, and health of individuals with disabilities (Yuker, 1994) because their self-perceptions are greatly influenced by the attitudes and expectations of others (Oermann & Lindgren, 1995). For example, if educators have low expectations in terms of academic achievement and appropriate behaviour from students with disabilities (Beattie, Anderson & Antonak, 1997), then those students may be more likely to behave as expected. That is, they might exhibit inappropriate behaviour and put little effort into schoolwork.

Medina and Luna (2004) explored the experiences of Mexican-American students enrolled in special education and reported negative educational and personal/social outcomes. The students reported feeling disrespected by teachers, indicated that teachers did not notice derogatory comments directed at them by their peers without disabilities, and reported that they did not believe that their teachers cared about them. They also reported feeling "alienation, disinterest, and anxiety regarding their classrooms, teachers, and classmates" (Medina & Luna, p. 15). Similarly, Rodis, Garrod, and Boscardin (2001) reported that students with disabilities often felt misunderstood by both teachers and peers.

For all students, negative attitudes and behaviours exhibited by peers can have long-lasting effects. Bullying and relational aggression have been addressed in recent

professional literature, and the avoidance or rejection of students with disabilities by their peers as well as potential physical or verbal aggression directed toward them should be viewed as bullying and addressed as such. Numerous negative outcomes have been associated with bullying (Seals & Young, 2003), and common outcomes include academic problems, absenteeism, loneliness, and loss of friends (Roberts & Coursol, 1996).

2.4   Academic Involvement of Pupils with Physical disabilities

In their review of the literature, Sebba and Sachdev (1997) found out a small to moderate positive effect of mainstream education on the academic achievements of young people with disabilities. Butler (2001), Kliewer (1998) and Bax (1999) supported these by revealing that young people with disabilities make better academic progress within a mainstream setting even though the differences may only be slight in some circumstances. In spite of the suggested positive outcomes of inclusion, Wishart and Manning (1996) claimed that it was increasingly difficult in school to meet the educational needs of young people with disabilities in a mainstream class. One reason for this was that staff often felt they were either not skilled enough or did not have the time to adapt the curricula to accommodate the needs of young people with disabilities (Hemmingson & Borell, 2002; Llewellyn, 2000; Wedell, Stevens, & Walker, 2000). In some schools young people with disabilities did not have access to the entire curriculum. Physical education was one particular subject where participation may be problematic (Simeonsson, Carlson, Huntington, McMillen, & Brent, 2001). Schools were also reported as having difficulties in facilitating the full participation of young people with disabilities on school trips and other extra-curricular school activities (Llewellyn, 2000).

One strategy used to meet the educational needs of young people with disabilities has been the provision of learning support assistants to support them in the classroom and various other school activities. However, little research has been conducted on the effectiveness of this type of assistance. The literature review conducted by Giangreco, Edelman, Broer, and Doyle (2001) focused primarily on the need for role clarification. The authors stated that the literature did not help to "answer questions pertaining to the appropriateness, conceptual soundness or effectiveness of paraprofessional supports for student with disabilities" (Giangreco et al., p. 58).

In the conclusion of their literature review on learning support assistants, Giangreco et al. (2001) claimed that "absent from the literature are the perspectives of students who receive paraprofessional supports." Furthermore, they stated that "we need to spend more time listening to and trying to understand the perspectives of self-advocates" (Giangreco et al., p. 59). Listening to the voices of young people with disabilities has achieved prominence in recent times, as the issue of their participation rights has become recognised (Kirby & Woodhead, 2003). Several researchers have responded to this challenge and have conducted research exploring the views, perspectives, and experiences of young people with disabilities with regard to their education.

Llewellyn (2000) investigated the experiences of young people with physical disabilities in a mainstream school. Six students with physical disabilities were interviewed, as well as their parents and form tutors. The findings indicated that the school was not able to meet the psychological, social, and clinical needs of the young people who participated in this study. The author concluded that for these students their mainstream education was discriminatory, and the school was not offering the

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protection and benefits necessary to support the health and psychological well-being of students with disabilities. Llewellyn's findings were supported by Hemmingson and Borell's (2002) study in which 34 students with physical disabilities, aged between 10 and 19 years, were interviewed to identify the barriers to participation in mainstream schools. The majority of the students experienced barriers to their participation in classroom because of both the physical and the social environments.

Lightfoot et al. (1999) found that effective support systems were essential if young people with chronic illness or physical disabilities were to benefit from attending a mainstream school. They recruited 33 students with a chronic illness or physical disabilities, between the ages of 11 and 16 years, from a number of different mainstream schools, to investigate the impact of the illness or physical disabilities on their school life. Their participants managed the effects of their condition at school by developing a support network with both students and teachers, and by being included in all the decisions about the support that they would require at school. This is further supported by Connors and Stalker's (2003) 2-year study exploring young people's experiences of impairment. They examined the impact of impairment by interviewing 26 young people with disabilities (aged between 7 and 15 years), 24 siblings (aged between 5 and 19 years) and 36 parents. They found that the majority of the young people with disabilities were happy most of the time and this happiness stemmed from feeling a sense of achievement, particularly related to success at school or in sports and through spending time with friends. Success at school was dependent on having appropriate support to participate in classroom activities.

Although some researchers have been more willing to consider the views of young people with disabilities and accept the right of these young people to participate in decisions and debates that affect their lives, there is still evidence that

they are not being listened to (Morris, 1998; Watson et al., 2000). Hence, Watson et al. have argued for more research to be conducted from the perspectives of young people with disabilities that will challenge the universal concept of a homogeneous "disabled child" and lead to a more nuanced understanding of their lives.

2.5   Relationships between Teachers and Pupils With Physical disabilities

2.5.1   Teacher-Student relationships

Operating as socializing agents, teachers can influence the quality of students' social and intellectual experiences via their abilities to instil values in children such as the motivation to learn (Brophy, 1998; Brophy & Kher, 1985; Oldfather & Dahl, 1994); by providing classroom contexts that stimulate children's motivation and learning (Ames & Archer, 1988; Ames, 1992; Perry, 1998; Ryan, Gheen, & Midgley, 1998; Turner et al., 1998); by addressing children's need to belong (Connell& Wellborn, 1991; Goodenow, 1993a, 1993b; Noddings, 1988; Wentzel, 1997, 1998); by developing a social identity (Alderman, 1999; Wentzel, 1993a, 1993b); and by serving a regulatory function for the development of emotional, behavioural, and academic skills (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Pianta, 1997, 1999; Thompson, 1994; Yowell & Smylie, 1999).

Literature examining student-teacher relationships consistently points to a positive association between good student-teacher relationships and students' academic, social-emotional and mental health outcomes (Demaray & Malecki, 2002; Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Reddy, Rhodes, & Mulhall, 2003). This has been demonstrated in both regular and special education classes in community settings throughout the developmental stages. For example, children's relationships with their kindergarten teachers predict grades and standardized-test scores through fourth grade, and positive student-teacher relationships are associated with fewer

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disciplinary actions and increased work habits through middle school (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). In middle school, students' perceived teacher support has corresponded to increases in self-esteem and decreases in depressive symptoms (Reddy et al., 2003), and teachers' ratings of relationship quality has been linked to student risky behaviour (Rudasill, Reio, Stipanovic, & Taylor, 2010). In high school, feelings of relatedness with teachers are associated with positive school attitudes, including motivation, success expectations, and interest in school (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998; Wentzel, Battle, Russell & Looney, 2010), as well as improved achievement and self-esteem (Martin, Marsh, McInerny, Green, & Dowson, 2007) and fewer depressive symptoms (Pössel, Rudasill, Sawyer, Spence, & Bjerg, 2013).

Teven (2001) has argued that ''in order to maximize learning, it is essential for teachers to develop a good relationship with their students, because the rapport established between teachers and students, in part, determines the interest and performance level of students'' (p. 159). In other words, ''teaching requires relational development with students'' (Hosek & Thompson, 2009, p. 327). These relationships often do shift or change, and as a result appear to affect students' learning, motivation, self-confidence, and career aspirations, among a host of other outcomes (Docan-Morgan & Manusov, 2009).

A critical characteristic foundational to relationship building with students is to actively listen to their ideas concerns, and questions. Students have noted that the way a teacher interacts with them during the initial period of relationship building is the determining factor for promoting either a positive or a negative relationship (Cothran, Kulinna, & Garragy, 2003). Healthy teacher–student relationships also influence student motivation, including the desire to achieve academically (Deci, 1995). When students believe they have an ally on their side and that they are part of a

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classroom community, they are more likely to move away from disengagement and toward engagement in academic tasks (Daniels & Aprapostathis, 2005). Students who feel ignored, or feel that they are just "a grade" to a teacher, are more likely to be bored, unhappy, and angry (Daniels & Aprapostathis, 2005). Other researchers confirm that motivation via healthy teacher–student relationships is imperative in maintaining engagement in school and attaining academic success (Burchinal, Peisner-Fernberg, Pianta, & Howes, 2002; Deci, 1995; Dweck & Leggett, 2000).

Positive teacher–student relationships can help to prevent aggressive behaviours by students. Hamre and Pianta (2001) found that teacher–student relationships beginning as early as kindergarten affected disciplinary referrals, school suspensions, and student-to-student conflict. Interestingly, teacher–student relationships may help to reduce aggression among both students who have experienced negative adult–child interactions (e.g., abuse) and who represent minority populations. Murray and Murray (2004) studied possible correlates of teacher–student relationships for third, fourth, and fifth graders. Students' internalizing and externalizing behaviours were strongly associated with the closeness of teacher–student relationships.

Pianta and Stuhlman (2004) conducted a hierarchical regression analysis of first-grade students to explore the connections between teacher–student relationship quality and social and academic skill development. Findings confirmed that the teacher–student relationship played a role in students' development of skills needed for success in school. Birch and Ladd (1997) reported an association between increased academic outcomes for students and the quality of teacher–student relationships. Murray (2002) recommends emphasizing positive teacher–student relationships as a means for improving academic outcomes of early adolescents.

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Positive school outcomes for students at risk of school dropout also have been linked to caring teacher relationships. Muller (2001) found a relationship between test scores of students at risk and their perceptions of teachers to be caring. A study of 11,000 adolescents from more than 1,000 public and private high schools found that those students who reported being supported by their teachers were less likely to drop out of school compared to those students who did not report the same. Supportive teacher–student relationships can offset the risk of emotional and behavioural adjustment difficulties of middle school students (Fredriksen & Rhodes, 2004). For example, middle school students who experience supportive teacher relationships demonstrate decreased symptoms of depression compared to students who lack such experiences (Davis, 2003).

A sizable literature provides evidence that strong and supportive relationships between teachers and students are fundamental to the healthy development of all students (including students with physical disabilities) in schools (e.g., see Birch & Ladd, 1998; Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Pianta, 1999). Positive student–teacher relationships serve as a resource for students at risk of school failure, and conflict or disconnection between students and adults may compound this risk (Ladd & Burgess, 2001). Of importance, the quality of these relationships is not redundant with student risk factors; even students who display significant behavioural problems in school settings can develop positive relationships with teachers. Although the nature of these relationships changes as students mature, the need for connection between students and adults in a school setting remains strong from preschool to 12th grade (Crosnoe, Johnson, & Elder, 2004). Furthermore, as schools place increasing attention on accountability and standardized testing, it is important to note that the quality of student–teacher relationships contributes to both academic and social–emotional

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development (e.g., Gregory & Weinstein, 2004; Hamre & Pianta, 2001). As such, student–teacher relationships provide a unique entry point for educators and others working to improve the social and learning environments of schools and classrooms. These relationships may be a direct focus of intervention or viewed as one important feature of successful implementation of an intervention.

As children enter formal school settings, either in preschool or kindergarten, relationships with teachers create the foundation for successful adaptation to the social and academic environment. From the first day of school, young students are reliant on teachers to provide understanding and support that will allow them to get the most out of their daily interactions in the classroom. Students who form close relationships with teachers enjoy school more and get along better with peers (Howes, Matheson, & Hamilton, 1994). Positive relationships with teachers can also serve as a secure base for young students; they are better able to play and work on their own because they know that if things get difficult or if they are upset, they can count on their teacher to recognize and respond to these problems.

Relationships with teachers may be particularly important for students who display early academic or behaviour problems. In one study, a group of students were designated as at risk for referral for special education or retention on the basis of low kindergarten screening scores. Those who ultimately were retained or referred between kindergarten and second grade were compared with those who, despite being high risk, were promoted or not referred (Pianta, Steinberg, & Rollins, 1995). The students who, despite predictions of retention/referral, were ultimately promoted or not referred had far more positive relationships with their teachers than their high-risk peers who were retained/referred. Similarly, highly aggressive third and fourth graders who are able to form supportive relationships with teachers were more likely

than other aggressive students to be well liked by peers (Hughes, Cavell, & Wilson, 2001). Positive relationships with teachers may even help these behaviourally at-risk students learn more adaptive behaviour, as evidenced in one recent study among a group of aggressive African American and Hispanic students, in which supportive student–teacher relationships were associated with declines in aggressive behaviour between second and third grade (Meehan, Hughes, & Cavell, 2003).

The need for positive relationships with teachers does not diminish as students mature. Support in teacher–student relationships may be particularly salient at transition points, such as the transition from elementary to middle school (Wentzel, 1998). Middle school teachers who convey emotional warmth and acceptance and who make themselves available regularly for personal communication with students foster the positive relational processes characteristic of support. These supportive relationships help maintain students' interests in academic and social pursuits, which in turn leads to better grades and more positive peer relationships (Wentzel, 1998). Although teachers are not the only source of support for middle school students, the support students receive from their parents, peers, and teachers seem to have additive and at least somewhat independent effects (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2005). Thus, teacher support among this age group may be particularly salient for students who have low levels of parent support (Harter, 1996).

Although students have less time with individual teachers during junior high school, there is strong evidence that relationships with adults in these settings are among the most important predictors of success. Data from the nationally representative sample of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health indicate that a sense of greater connectedness to teachers was associated with lower rates of emotional distress, suicidal ideation, suicidal behaviour, violence, substance

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abuse, and early sexual behaviour (Resnick et al., 1997). Notably, connection with teachers was a better predictor of many outcomes than was students' sense of family connectedness. As with young students, the benefits of positive relationships with adults are not limited to social and emotional outcomes. Although both parental and teacher support are important in predicting students' achievement, a recent study indicated that student perceived teacher connection was the factor most closely associated with growth in achievement from 8th to 12th grade (Gregory & Weinstein, 2004).

According to Pianta (1999), emotionally warm relationships between teachers and students (characterized by open communication, support, and involvement) provide students with a sense of security within school settings, which promotes exploration and comfort, as well as social, emotional, and academic competence. Pianta and his colleagues (Pianta, 1994; Pianta & Steinberg, 1992) found that children with greater levels of support in relationships with teachers had fewer behavioural problems, greater social competencies, and better school adjustment than did children experiencing greater conflict in their relationships. Similarly, Birch and Ladd (1997) found that students who had closer relationships with teachers were better adjusted academically than students with conflicted teacher-student relationships.

Several investigations have studied the importance of teacher-student relationships during early adolescence. Eccles and her colleagues (Feldlaufer, Midgley, & Eccles, 1988; Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989) evaluated the changes in student perceptions of teachers during the transition from elementary to junior high school. The researchers found that students perceived junior high school teachers as less warm, less caring, and less supportive than their elementary school teachers. These findings were supported by independent observations (Feldlaufer et al., 1988).

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In a similar study, Midgley et al. (1989) found that changes in how students valued mathematics were directly related to changes in teacher support. Students who received support from their teachers in both elementary and junior high school valued mathematics more than students who 1) experienced high support in elementary school but low support in junior high, and 2) students who experienced low support in both elementary and junior high school. In addition, low achievers who moved from high supportive environments in elementary school to low supportive environments in junior high school had sharper declines, in terms of their valuing of mathematics, than did average achieving students who experienced similar changes. This suggests that these relationships may have particular significance for students who have experienced school-related problems.

2.5.2   Improving Teacher-Student Relationships

A number of investigators have explored ways to improve students' attachments to adults and peers as a means of promoting their social, emotional, and academic adjustment (Eggert, Thompson, Herting, & Nichols, 1994; Hawkins, Doueck, & Lishner, 1988). These investigations focus on improving students' cognitive problem-solving skills and increasing the number of opportunities students have to develop prosocial bonds with adults and peers. This approach recognizes how relationships develop through a reciprocal process, and therefore emphasizes individual student characteristics (social skills training) as well as the importance of adult behaviour.

O'Donnell, Hawkins, Catalano, Abbot, and Day (1995) investigated the effects of an intervention that included cognitive problem-solving skills training for students, parent training, and teacher training. Adolescents in this investigation

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received training in communication skills, emotional understanding, and problem solving, while teachers and parents were trained to provide youth with greater structure and increased opportunities for open communication. Following the intervention, the student participants reported stronger attachments to teachers and schools. In a similar study, Eggert et al. (1994) investigated the effects of a personal growth course on adolescents' attachments to teachers and schools, as well as the effects of these attachments on students' academic performance and illicit drug use. This course focused on building students' problem solving skills, emotional understanding, personal control, self-esteem, and interpersonal communication.

Following the course, students reported stronger attachments to teachers and increased self-esteem. Finally, Hawkins et al. (1988) examined how teacher practices influenced students' attachments to teachers. In this investigation, teachers used proactive classroom management techniques (that is, clear rules, clear consequences, and consistent reinforcement), interactive teaching techniques (that is, requiring student mastery and growth), and cooperative learning (that is, group work and interdependency). Following the intervention, low-achieving students in the treatment group reported feeling more attached to teachers, and they exhibited less inappropriate behaviour.

2.6 Gaps in the Literature

This review has identified a number of issues and straightforward gaps in information that should be considered in future to enhance understanding of the experiences students with physical disabilities go through in their basic education. Available literature provides a lot of information on the social interaction and accessibility to facilities by students with physical disabilities.

Few works (Lightfoot et al., (1999); Llewellyn (2000); Hemmingson and Borell's (2002)) were found on academic involvement of pupils with physical disabilities. Almost all literature on the social interaction and academic involvement of pupils with physical disabilities are old. Current studies into the academic and social experience of pupils will help to know what is actually happening on the ground with the advocacy of inclusive education. There is virtually no or little specific study that tries to explore the experiences of pupils with physical disabilities at the basic level of education as a whole.

Little research work on teacher-student relationships and inappropriate behaviour of peers towards students with physical disabilities exists. Works found concerning these areas relate to the group of students with disabilities in general or different forms of disability (intellectual, emotional or behavioural). Literature on relationships between teacher and students is that of persons with emotional and behavioural disorders. Fredrickson & Rhodes (2004); Hamre and Pianta (2001); Pianta and Stuhlman (2004); Davis (2003); Birch & Ladd, 1997; Pianta, 1997, 1999 all worked on studies concerned with persons with emotional and behavioural disorders.

Hoover and Salk (2003), Lingren (1997), Bully B'ware Productions (2003), Khosropour and Walsh (2001), Hoover, Oliver and Hazler (1992) all write on inappropriate behaviours directed at persons with disability in general. None of the works occurred within the Ghanaian environment. The focus of this study is therefore critical in adding to the literature in Ghana about the experiences of students with physical disabilities in basic schools.

2.7   Summary of Literature Review

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This chapter reviewed related literature on the research topic. Both theoretical and empirical literature was taken into account. The three strands that guided the discussion are Social interaction patterns of persons with physical disabilities and peers, Academic involvement of pupils with physical disabilities, Relationship between teachers and pupils with physical disabilities and the inappropriate interactions that exist between regular students and peers with physical disabilities.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter is presents the methodology for the study. The following areas were considered: research approach, research design, population, sample size, sampling technique, instrumentation, validity, pilot testing of instruments, procedures for data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Approach

The researcher adopted the qualitative approach in going about the study. "Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell, 2009, p. 1). Langdridge (2007) defined it as "a method that is concerned with the naturalistic description or interpretation of phenomena in terms of the meanings they have for the people experiencing them" (p.2). It is described as an approach to research that uses methodologies designed to provide a rich, contextualized picture of an educational or social phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Schwandt, 2001).

Qualitative approach is appropriate for the study as non-numeric data (words of pupils with physical disabilities) will be collected by exploring the experiences of pupils with physical disabilities. In Denzin & Lincoln (2000), they explained qualitative data as consisting of in-depth description of behaviours, events and interactions collected through interviews, observations, video materials and personal experience. Qualitative approaches seek to portray a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex and ever-changing (Glesne, 1999). Therefore qualitative methodological approaches tend to be based on recognition of the subjective, experiential 'lifeworld' of human beings, and description of their experiences in depth (Patton, 2002).

In this study, the researcher uncovers and interprets the experiences of pupils with physical disabilities in basic school with the use of in-depth interviews. Pupils with physical disabilities, their regular peers and teachers were all interviewed to get their observations and personal experiences on the problem

3.3 Research Design

The phenomenological research design was adopted for the study. This is due to its suitability to the research problem of finding out the experiences of pupils with physical disabilities. Phenomenological principles assert that scientific investigation is valid when the information gained comes about through rich description that allows for understanding of the essences of experience (Moustakas, 1994).

Langdridge (2007) explained phenomenology as a study of human experience and the way things are seen to be by their mind's eye. To Creswell (2009) phenomenological research is finding out the essence of human experience about a particular occurrence through the eyes of the participant of the study. Phenomenology

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is an attempt to describe lived experiences without making previous assumptions about the objective reality of those experiences (Holloway & Wheeler 1996). According to Jasper (1994), phenomenology considers that the "true meaning of phenomena be explored through the experience of them as described by the individual". "Phenomenology is anchored to the careful description, analysis, and interpretation of lived experience" (Thompson 2007, p. 16). The present study is focussed on exploring the experiences of pupils with physical disabilities at the basic school.

In addition to the general advantages of qualitative research, phenomenology has the following advantages:

➢ It is a highly appropriate approach to researching human experience (Wimpenny & Gass, 2000).

➢ It tries to uncover concealed meaning in the phenomenon embedded in the words of the narrative (Sorrell & Redmond, 1995 cited in Maggs-Rapport, 2000).

➢ As a research method, phenomenology is a rigorous, critical, systematic investigation of phenomena (Streubert & Carpenter, 1999).

In this study, the researcher wanted to uncover the meaning of the experiences of pupils with physical disabilities towards education in the Assin South district. The design provided suitable pedestal to execute such study. Limitations to the phenomenological design of research as stated by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2001) are:

➢ Data gathering can take up a great deal of time and resources

➢ The analysis and interpretation of data may be difficult

> ➢ May be harder than positivist approach to control pace, progress and end points

> ➢ Policy-makers may give low credibility to a phenomenological study

In this study, the researcher will try to eliminate the amount of time and resources with few interview guide questions which will translate to limited transcription of the interview process. Sample chosen for the study will be pupils in nearby schools to the researcher. With the assistance, support and competence of the research supervisor on this design, difficulty in data analysis and interpretation will be greatly minimised.

3.4   Population

The target population was made up of students with physical disabilities in regular schools in the Assin South district. The population for the study was 25.

3.5   Sample size

A sample of 9 persons was selected for the study. This was made up of 3 pupils with physical disabilities, 3 regular pupils and 3 teachers. The regular pupils were made up of friends of the students with the disabilities. This is essential to the researcher as they would have made critical observations about the student with physical disabilities. The sample size is deemed appropriate as it close to what Creswell (1998) says about the sample of a phenomenological study being up to 10 individuals. As Hycner (1999, p.156) states, "the phenomenon dictates the method (not vice-versa) including even the type of participants."

3.6   Sampling Technique

The purposive sampling technique was adopted. Purposive sampling refers to judgmental sampling that involves the conscious selection by the researcher of certain participants to include in the study (Burns & Grove 1998). In qualitative research, individuals are selected to participate based on their firsthand experience of a phenomenon of interest (Streubert & Carpenter 1999). Purposive sampling strategies assume that the researcher has an informed understanding of the phenomenon that he or she wants to explore and thus needs to select a specific sample that represents these experiences. At the core of the purposeful sampling strategy is the necessity for the researcher to select "information-rich cases". Information-rich cases are particularly important in a phenomenological study because of the importance of only including participants that have had specific, direct experiences with the phenomenon.

3.7   Instrumentation

The instrumentation used for collecting data was the semi-structured interview. The interview items were based on the research questions raised. Five items were raised to explore the experiences of pupils. Prompts and probes were designed to gain further understanding of interview questions raised. Three interview guides were formulated for the participants (pupils with physical disabilities, their teachers and peers). All three guides sought for the same answers as the researcher made use of respondent triangulation.

Bell (2005) identifies a major advantage of using interviews as being adaptability. She explained this indicating that interviews go with follow up ideas and probes that elicit further explanation unlike questionnaires. Bell also states that the interviewee's response (the tone of voice, facial expression, hesitation, etc.) gives more information to the researcher which is lacked by a questionnaire. These reasons

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put up by Bell are the driving force that justifies the researcher use of the interview process. The researcher seeks to gain a deeper understanding of pupils with physical disabilities experiences within the basic education. Interview has a demerit of being time-consuming and subjective (Bell, 2005). To fight the time consuming deficiency, the researcher concentrated more on the questions outlined in the interview guide.

3.8   Validity

Qualitative validity was determined through the use of strategies to check the accuracy of the findings. Respondent triangulation (Bush, 2002) or 'Within' triangulation (McFee, 1992) from different data sources (pupil with physical disabilities, his teacher and peer) was used to build a coherent justification for the themes. Member checking was used to determine the accuracy of the findings through taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to participants to determine accuracy (Creswell, 2009).

Validity was also captured through trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility (Creswell & relevance and meaning and ultimately developing themes and essences that accurately depict the experience. Credibility was established through member checking sending participants their transcript for review and verification. Each participant was to agree with his or her transcript. Dependability was established with the audit trail which involved maintaining and preserving all transcripts and audio files. Confirmability was determined by linking the data to their sources.

3.9   Pilot Testing of Instruments

Oppenheim (1992) declares the need for piloting of the instrument to establish the clarity, reliability, validity and practicability of the questions. The instrument was

pilot tested in a primary school not involved in the study. 3 participants (a pupil with physical disabilities, his teacher and a regular pupil) from Appiakrom D/A primary school were selected for the pilot study. The participants find themselves in the same district (Assin South) as the sample that took part in the study. Each one-on-one interview with participants took approximately 25 minutes. They pilot study helped the researcher to improve upon his interview guide. Questions that needed clarity were modified. And those that solicited the same answers were merged. It was also realized that the pupils felt more comfortable answering their interview questions in Asante Twi.

3.10 Procedures for Data Collection

3.10.1 Interview

In order to reduce nervousness on the part of the sample and make them feel natural to respond to interview questions, the interviewees were interviewed in their home or school as proposed by Bowden (1995) and Masson (2000, 2004). The researcher personally went to the individual schools of the sample to collect data. In each subsequent interview, they were asked whether there was anything else that they remembered about their life that they would like to talk about, in addition to questions encouraging them to expand on their stories. During each interview participants were given ample time to respond every question. Each interview lasted approximately 25-35 minutes. Each interview was audio taped and later transcribed for data analysis. Information about demographics was collected at the beginning of the interview.

3.10.2 Ethical Considerations

Researchers need to protect their research participants by developing trust with them, promoting the integrity of the research, guarding against misconduct and any impropriety that might reflect on their organizations or institutions, and cope with new challenging problems (Creswell, 2009). Phenomenological research solicits sensitive and deep answers to questions extracting meaning from statements and opinions. Additionally, the reputation and position of the participants are visible, especially since the findings of the study could be shared with other people and organizations.

Glesne (1999) stated that, "ethical considerations are inseparable from your everyday interactions with research participants and with your data." Social research needs to pay attention to the main ethical issues of informed consent, intrusiveness, confidentiality and anonymity. As a consequence, a researcher needs to have high standards of personal and professional integrity.

The researcher addresses the ethical issues of this study by tackling four key points: consent, confidentiality and anonymity, discomfort and harm and deception are some of the key ethical issues discussed in the British Psychological Society (BPS) ethical guidelines (Langdridge, 2007).

Consent

Langdridge (2007) "Consent is perhaps the most fundamental of all ethical principles." (p. 62). The researcher received a verbal permission to collect data from the Assin South District Education Office three days after submitting an introductory letter from the Department of Special Education, University of Education, Winneba. Permission was also sought from the various headmasters of the sample's schools who later upon confirmation informed their staff. The various schools received copies

of the introductory letter. Before conducting the semi-structured interview, written permission for consent by all the participants was obtained and the participants acknowledged that they were fully consenting to the tasks.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Anonymity and confidentiality refer to assurance by the researcher that obtained data would not be disclosed and participants' names will be kept secret. Participation was completely voluntary. All participants had the right to withdraw at any time of the study and this was communicated to them. There was no potential risk or hazard that could have resulted from participation in this study.

The issue of confidentiality was also addressed as it is paramount in research (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000; Robinson & Lai, 2006). All participants were addressed with pseudonyms in place of their real names. Only the researcher has access to all the data. In this study the researcher maintained all formalities in relation to anonymity and confidentiality.

Discomfort and harm

The BPS guidelines make it very clear that it is the prime responsibility of the researcher to protect the participants from physical and mental harm in any research. During the interview, pupils with physical disabilities were informed that any question that they felt uncomfortable to respond to could be skipped.

Deception

All participants of the study were informed beforehand that the research was on the experiences of pupils with physical disabilities in the basic school. Pupils and

teachers were informed that the study covers the social interactions, academic involvement and teacher-student relationship of pupils with physical disabilities.

3.11   Data Analysis

Data analysis is structuring, ordering and making meaning out of the data gathered in the field (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). The data collected were analysed using a thematic approach. Data were analysed in several stages. Firstly, each interview was transcribed as soon as possible after its completion. Before formal analysis, the researcher translated all interviews of pupils into the English language from the voice recorder because they were in Asante Twi. By using the participants' own words, the transcripts were turned into first drafts and sent to them for their comments. Follow-up interviews were conducted after the participants had read this first draft. Amendments and corrections were noted and additional material added. This stage was completed when each participant indicated that they had said all that they wanted to say. These interviews were then transcribed and the information used in the production of the second draft. The second drafts were returned to the participants for their comments and corrections before the final drafts were compiled. In this way, they were given control over the final product and any content they felt uncomfortable with was removed or altered. This collaboration was important in maintaining the integrity of the information, ensuring these were a reflection of the participants' voices (Arvay, 2003). The final stage of analysis involved the identification and interpretation of the dominant themes in each person's accounts, using a thematic field analysis as suggested by Wengraf (2000, 2001).

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of data collected. The research questions guided the analysis of the data gathered. The data were analysed based on the following themes in the research questions raised:

1. Social interactions (Friendship, Play and Teasing & Disability harassment).

2. Academic involvements (Academic activities difficult to engage in and Modifications to improve school meeting academic needs).

3. Teacher-pupil interactions (Positive/Negative Teacher-pupil interaction, Importance of Teacher-pupil interaction and Improving).

4.2   Overview of Pupils

Table 1 – Particulars of pupils with physical disabilities

Pseudonym	School	Class	Type of physical disabilities	Time of interview (mins)	Location for interview

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Kojo	St. Louis Catholic JHS	JHS 1	Paraplegic	36	Home
Kobena	Homaho D/A Basic	Class 4	Club foot	37	Headmaster's office
Kwaku	Ainyinabrim Catholic Primary	Class 6	Club foot & Erb's palsy (Waiter's tip deformity)	26	Shed on school compound

Table 2 – Teachers, Peers and their corresponding schools

School	Teacher	Peer
St. Louis Catholic JHS	Teacher 1	Peer 1
Homaho D/A Basic	Teacher 2	Peer 2
Ainyinabrim Catholic Primary	Teacher 3	Peer 3

4.3 Research question 1: What social interactions exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their peers without disabilities?

Social interactions of pupils captured how pupils with physical disabilities reacted or acted around their regular peers. This theme of the study had all participants giving more information as they were eager to start the whole interview process. With social interactions of pupils with physical disabilities with peers, the following sub-themes were identified: friendship, play and teasing and disability harassment.

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4.3.1. <u>Friendship</u>

All three pupils with physical disabilities engaged in some form of friendship. Friendship patterns were formed based on help they offered or received from peers. In this study, pupils with physical disabilities were friends to students who had given help in their time of need. The help came about in terms of academic or financial support. Play was another approach to forming the bonds of friendship used by pupils with physical disabilities. Kobena was described by his teacher as being friendly on his own and a person who doesn't find it difficult to get people closer to him. Kojo is also portrayed by his teacher as a jovial person. Unlike Kojo and Kobena, Kwaku was depicted by her teacher as a person who was reserved.

In the view of the three pupils with physical disabilities on how they form friendships, the following were what they articulated:

> *"Let say if we pay for extra-classes and the person is not having money, I can pay for him and take him as a friend. Sometimes I also make friends through play."* (Kobena)

> *"If the teacher teaches and I don't understand. I'll take it to someone to teach me. Then that someone gradually becomes my friend. It can sometimes occur through play." (Kojo)*

> *"I form friendships with people who can help me academically and provide me with entertainment.... Entertainment in the sense of someone who can make me happy in school." (Kwaku)*

Peers of these students with physical disabilities validated the stories of their friends with disabilities

> *"If he needs help and someone provides that help to him, he take that someone as a friend." (Peer 3).*

> *"He is friends to those whom if he needs help provide him some."(Peer 1).*

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"His friends are those who help him in his academics works. Sometimes he takes friends from those whom he plays with." (Peer 2)

Teachers 1 and 3 had noticed something extra from the characteristics of friends engaged by their pupils with physical disabilities and comment:

"He relates to peers from his area. Those are the people I've seen him move with." (Teacher 3)

"His friendship is based on his neighbourhood, those staying around him. Because they come to school with him in the wheelchair. They push him." (Teacher 1)

Although all interviews indicated that students with physical disabilities had friends, it was also evident from the interview that they kept a small group of pupils as friends. With a lower number of friends as two (2) and a higher number of friends as seven (7), a number of reasons were attributed by participants for the few number of friends

"He might shy that people will laugh at him or something like that or maybe at times as their playing someone will pass a comment that is going to be it as it like will be offensive and stuff. Then basically those people staying around his area, he is comfortable with them. Hence they wouldn't say anything." (Teacher 3)

"One. One could be his deformity that he is able to move. He's always stable and the other ones could be that they are all in the same neighbourhood." (Teacher 1).

"He finds himself with a disability so all the time he has to get closer to people so that he would feel happy always in the school." (Teacher 2).

The students with disability that took part in the study had their friendship affected by their disability.

"A lot. In a sense that because he cannot move, he always finds himself lonely. If his friends are not there, he cannot move. Because they always help him to move to where he wants. So sometimes he feel sad." (Teacher 1).

"Sometimes his disability when he is getting closer to some people they also see that I don't know how to describe it...they see it as a strange person all together. So they find it difficult to get to him." (Teacher 2).

"It has made him an introvert person. I can see he wishes to play with them but most at times their play is like that aggressive type and for his condition, I don't think he can cope." (Teacher 1)

"Because of the disability, when he is even in class, he is very quiet. He doesn't want to relate with anybody." (Peer 3)

In order to curb the influence of pupils' disability on their friendship, participants in the study suggested

"I think we have to talk to his classmates. As a teacher, I have to talk to his classmates that maybe let say if it is time for P.E. and those things they have to help him move to the playground so that they play together." (Teacher 1).

"I think at this point, I think the teachers must be involved to talk to the children or his friends to see him as a normal human being as they are. And also the community or the parent will also do the same." (Teacher 2).

The importance of reciprocity in the peer relationships of children with disabilities has been emphasized in studies (Grenot-Scheyer, Staub, Peck, & Schwartz, 1998; Van der Klift & Kunc, 1994). In this study, each of the pupils with physical disabilities had developed reciprocal relationships with peers in their classrooms. From the findings, these relationships had evolved into friendships. Meyer (2001) discussed "friendship frames" that characterize the social relationships between adolescents with and without disabilities. The researcher found that the "I'll

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help" frame was the most frequently used social interaction pattern. Staub, Schwartz, Galluci, and Peck (1994) described helping relationships that evolved into friendships but emphasized that both parties had something to contribute, facilitating the reciprocity of the relationship.

Results from the study also suggested that pupils with physical disabilities kept a small group of friends unlike their regular peers with agrees with Browne (1993) assertion that pupils with physical disabilities have fewer friends and are less popular in school than their friends without disability. Some research carried out in Canada also confirms this assertion when it state that it found that adolescents with physical disabilities had fewer closer relationships with their friends compared to a national sample of adolescents (Stevens et al, 1996).

Vygosky explains his sociocultural theory stating "the functions of a child's mind originate as interpersonal relations between individuals" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). This suggests that pupils must be provided with the needed environment to develop friendships. As results from the study show that pupils with physical disabilities develop friendship through play, there is the need to provide them with more opportunities to play.

4.3.2. <u>Play</u>

Another sub-theme that emerged from the social interaction of pupils with physical disabilities with their peers without disabilities has to do with play. All participants in the study indicated that the pupils with disabilities engaged in some form of play. The type of play associated with the pupils with physical disabilities involved in the study relates to the severity of the type disability.

Kobena had some form of defect with his feet, but played football with his friends. Kojo, who was a paraplegic, rather engaged in indoor games like ludo and oware. Kwaku asserted that he played football but his teacher and peer revealed that he only took part in watching the game. Peer 3 claims that Kwaku takes part in their playing of draft. Draft is a game drawn on the floor.

When it comes to the initiation of the play process, views from the pupils indicated that students with physical disabilities were usually reserved and leave it to their peers.

> *"My friend usually initiates the whole process."* *(Kobena)*
>
> *"Richard usually initiates play." (Kwaku)*
>
> *"My friends." (Kojo)*

On the issue of barriers that pupils with physical disabilities encounter during play, respondents were of the view that:

> *"It gets to sometime that when we want to play, we don't get items to play with. This is because we are the ones that bring our own ludo to school. The school doesn't have any. So when we don't bring it, we can't play. We are also afraid of always going to the house for it since we may encounter an accident when crossing the road." (Kojo)*
>
> *"I can't play with my friends when it rains unless the ground dries up. If the ground is not dried up, I feel pains within my feet. I even can't come to school during periods of rains. There are also potholes on the school park that sometimes makes playing difficult. Sometimes some students wear football boots and afraid to play with them for fear of them stepping on my foot." (Kobena)*

Although Kwaku stated that there was nothing that hindered his play, his posture showed that he just did not want to comment on the issue. His teacher and peer offered these comments.

> *"He fears to fall which prevents him from playing with friends at school." (Teacher 3).*

> *"When you tell him to play football, he will tell you that he is afraid. And that he would not know how to play it." (Peer 3).*

With respect to measures that can be used to overcome the barriers to play, participants in the study stated that

> *"He basically has to be talked to. He has to see that he can do something. Because maybe he thinks that the way he is, he can't do anything. Even sometimes holding pen. But then if someone talks to him and see people with the same disability or even worst thing. We teachers shouldn't also fear engaging him in certain things. Even if it's not for a long time. He'll feel that he can do something."*
> *(Teacher 3).*

> *"That was what I earlier said that the teacher must put their eye on the ground…look at them and then talk to them." (Teacher 2).*

> *"I was once talking to my headmaster about it that because he cannot move easily, I think there could have been ramps here which will help him. But it is not possible because we cannot afford. He could have moved easily without anybody's help" (Teacher 1).*

> *"So the government must provide us some equipment to play with." (Kojo).*

It is clear from responses from participants that pupils with physical disabilities find it difficult in initiating play. This is in harmony with issues raised by Mulderij (1997) on children with physical disabilities dependence on others to make social arrangements. Dallas, Stevenson, & McGurk (1993a) postulate that children

with physical disabilities show significant restricted ability to initiate social interactions.

Vygotsky (1977, 1978) viewed play as highly significant to development. 'Play contains in a concentrated form, as in the focus of a magnifying glass, all developmental tendencies.' (Vygotsky, 1978, p.74). Vygotskians view play as the most significant "leading" activity of the early childhood years (Vygotsky 1977, Bodrova and Leong 1996). As such opportunities should be given to pupils to engage in play. He further states that play creates a broad zone of proximal development, both in cognitive and socio-emotional development. The physical environment, based on Vygotsky's theory, should be organised with play areas. Play items like manipulatives (pattern blocks, shape sets, connecting cubes, and unit blocks) and other objects (buttons, rocks, or beads) help pupils build representations of mathematical ideas.

4.3.3. Teasing and Disability harassment

Kojo and Kobena were victims of bullying. Comments from the two and their teachers indicated that they were subjected specifically to disability harassment in a sense that they were insulted and teased based on their disability.

> *"When they insult me. I don't like it." (Kojo).*
>
> *"Sometimes they use his disability to insult him." (Teacher 1).*
>
> *"Our teacher has told all of them not to tease me with my disability. But sometimes some of them tease and laugh at me that I'm a disabled. Sometimes when I'm walking in the school, I hear some pupils say 'look at that boys feet'." (Kobena)*
>
> *"For this one, as usual, if someone is a disabled, you may hear some jokes. It may be classified as jokes. They will be calling him some names. ..... They call him names which are not allowed...." (Teacher 2)*

Although Kojo and Kobena denied any provocation from their part, their peers and teachers revealed the following

> *"As I said, that guy is jovial so sometimes he may be even joking with someone and the person would take it serious and it would result into a quarrel." (Teacher 1).*

> *"Though he is friendly, he normally get angry. The little that you do to him, he gets angry and so he would be insulting you. So when he starts insulting you, you have to say something for him to stop."(Teacher 2.*

> *"Sometimes he insults for no reason. For instance, when he is with the girls and you call him to join you in going for something to eat, he'll insult you". (Peer 1).*

Views from participants in the study suggested that pupils with disabilities reacted with anger whenever they were teased. They also felt sad that their colleague peers to subject them to such emotional pain. Teachers of the students with disabilities did well to make sure that the appropriate punishment was meted out to regular pupils who engaged in teasing mates with physical disabilities.

> *"When I get that students are behaving that way I normally punish that student." (Teacher 2).*

> *"He reports the issue. We console him and we punish the offender. So after he would be okay." (Teacher 1).*

> *"Last time someone teased me, I informed my teacher. He made me call the person for him and punished the offender in front of me. But still some of them are recalcitrant." (Kobena).*

When it came to dealing with the problem of regular pupils teasing pupils with physical disabilities, Kobena made it clear that he has started to resort to violence. He points out from previous statements that some students are recalcitrant and continue with their inappropriate behaviour.

> *"I don't do anything to them. But if they continue to do so, I've already bought a catapult." (Kobena).*

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This is confirmed by Kobena's teacher as he points out that

> *"He would be throwing stones and normally catapult.*
> *When you call him by that name then he would throw*
> *you a stone with the catapult." (Teacher 2).*

Kobena and Teachers 1&2 admitted teasing had a negative effect on their students. In their view:

> *"Sometimes it pains me deeply and I go to the back of*
> *the school to cry." (Kobena).*

> *"He would be feeling down and lonely in the school."*
> *(Teacher 2).*

> *"Sometimes he wouldn't be willing to come to school*
> *because if he comes he thinks they will laugh at him.*
> *Unless you talk to him again." (Teacher 1).*

Although, Kwaku was described as a person that is timid and shy. He is not subjected of any form of bullying unlike fellow students with physical disabilities who relate well with their peers. This does not conform to Lingren (1997) assertion of bullies targeting students who are vulnerable and quiet.

Findings from the study indicated that pupils with physical disabilities tend to form friendships with few of their peers who offer help and are in their neighbourhood. Their disability affects their formation of friendships. They shy away from the initiation of play and leave it to their friends to do it. Unavailability of games to play with, fear of playing and issues related to pupils' disability hinder pupils play. Pupils with physical disabilities are subjected to teasing and disability harassment. The social interaction of pupils with physical disabilities with their peers is poor.

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4.4   Research question 2: What are the academic involvements of pupils with physical disabilities in their school?

The majority of students with a physical disabilities require slightly more time to perform certain tasks. Coordination problems and a greater susceptibility to fatigue do not allow them carry out activities at the same pace as other students. Writing can also represent a major challenge for these students. In some cases, they have difficulty with their hand-eye coordination, making their penmanship difficult to read. With respect to the academic involvements of pupils with physical disabilities, sub-themes that emerged are: academic deficiencies of schools, academic activities difficult to engage in and modifications to improve school meeting academic needs.

4.4.1. Academic deficiencies of schools

This sub-theme focuses on the academic deficiencies in the school that affect the academic involvement of the pupil with physical disabilities. Participants complained of facilities, materials and tuition.

"I'll need books. Then a teacher to give me extra lessons since I'm not always able to come to school." (Kojo).

"Sometimes in a particular subject they may be asked to go out to view something. Maybe a trip, a fieldtrip, but because of his disability, he cannot go. There are no ramps. And one way or the other it affects his academics." (Teacher 1).

"Like I said earlier, when it rains, I can't come to school. When I come to school too, no body reviews what they have learnt with me. If I can get a teacher to give me extra lessons, like I will like it" (Kobena).

"Because of the disability normally the pain of the leg normally comes during the rainy season time so at that time he would be staying in the house. So when he comes he finds it difficult to understand things. So the school needs to put measures on grounds like part time voluntary to the child to make up when he is not in school."
(Teacher 2).

Kobena, Kojo and Teacher 2 all talked about the need for learning support students with physical disabilities. They all complained of missing out of some lessons when they fail to turn up for school, which occurs often than their regular colleagues. Wishart and Manning (1996) claimed that it was increasingly difficult in school to meet the educational needs of young people with disabilities in a mainstream class. Participants cure for the missing out on lessons is consistent with what Llewellyn (2000) prescribed as a strategy of meeting the educational needs of

young people with disabilities. Learning support assistants can take over the role of giving extra-tuition. Whenever the pupil with physical disabilities fails to turn up in school and later presents himself in school, the learning support assistant will help the pupil to catch-up on the previous lessons.

4.4.2. <u>Academic activities difficult to engage in</u>

Students with physical disabilities do not engage in all academic activities in the school. No particular reason was assigned to why the pupils were not involved in various activities.

> *"Maths. Role play. In terms of how he looks like, he feels that he'll be laughed at. Even walking to the blackboard he feels shy of coming because if you give him a chalk that he'll be feeling shy." (Teacher 2).*
>
> *"Physical Education (P.E.)". (Kwaku).*
>
> *"Basic Design and Technology (B.D.T.) and Physical Education (P.E.)." (Kojo).*
> *"In a particular subject, Technical skills. Sometimes they draw. And when they are drawing they stand. But he cannot stand. If he is supposed to stand he can't." (Teacher 1).*
>
> *"All the subjects. He doesn't want to take part in anything not even if you call to join. But I noticed he is interested in Creative Arts." (Teacher 3).*

The interview responses indicated that students with physical disabilities were not involved in all the academic activities in the school. Llewellyn (2000) reports of schools having a difficulty in facilitating the full participation of young people with disabilities in academic activities in the school. Simeonsson, Carlson, Huntington, McMillen, & Brent (2001) noted that Physical Education was one particular subject where participation may be problematic.

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4.4.3. <u>Modifications to improve school meeting academic needs of pupils</u>

In terms of modifications to ensure that the school meeting the academic needs of pupils with physical disabilities, the results were mixed. It differed with respect to the problem associated with each school.

> "The only thing is for us to create new furniture for him. Special one. Because those in the class they made it for regular pupils not for disabled. That why he finds himself with difficulty so if we're able to cater or provide furniture for him, it's going to help him." (Teacher 1).
>
> "The best thing is that to do as at now is to include him in everything. Answering of questions, playing, all those stuff so that he'll feel belonging. Because he doesn't come to school since he doesn't feel included in the school. Sometimes a whole seek and he hasn't stopped in the school. So he doesn't feel happy. That is what doesn't come to school since he doesn't feel included in the school. Sometimes a whole seek and he hasn't stopped in the school. So he doesn't feel happy. That is what I think. Especially when of his friends dropped out." (Teacher 3).
>
> "It all deals with advice and encouragement. You have to encourage him. Maybe as he is seeing it that Maths is difficult, it's not difficult as he is seeing it. Then if he tries his best, he would be able to do it. And also as I have said earlier on the teacher or teachers in the school can organize a special class for him. For these people we treat them specially." (Teacher 2).

Comments by Teacher 1 suggested that Kojo needs to be provided with new furniture to enhance his mobility to gain full access to the curriculum. Kobena needs to be motivated to promote his academics. Teacher 3 summed it all by saying that pupils need to be included in everything in the school. These concur with Connors and Stalker's (2003) argument of success at school by students with disabilities was dependent on having appropriate support to participate in classroom activities.

Vygotsky (1978) makes a point of the need to provide a suitable environment for the learner to develop academically, socially and emotionally.

Findings of pupils with physical disabilities' academic involvement show that their schools are not able to meet their academic needs. This is because of their inability to fully participate in all the activities in the school due to absenteeism. They found it difficult to engage in Physical Education, Role play, Maths and Basic Design and Technology (BDT). The participants also identified the need for learning support assistants to improve their academic involvements at school. Other suggestions put up by participants to aid the improvement of the academic involvement of pupils with physical disabilities is counselling and inclusion in all activities.

4.5 Research question 3: What relationship exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their teacher?

Sub-themes that emerged include: Positive/Negative teacher-pupil interactions, importance of teacher-pupil interactions and improving teacher-pupil interactions. Although all teachers made comments about their interaction with their pupils with physical disabilities, both pupils and peers were unwilling to speak on the issue. Most responses of participants in the study indicate that a good relationship exist between teachers and pupils.

4.5.1. Positive/Negative Teacher-Pupil interactions

Apart from Kwaku that admitted to not having any relationship at all with her teacher, the other pupils with physical disabilities (Kobena and Kojo) indicated that they had a positive relationship with their teacher. Both teachers and pupils with

disabilities attributed various reasons to their positive or negative interactions. The corresponding teachers of the pupils confirmed these through their comments:

> *"There is no interaction with her… It's me that don't approach her." (Kwaku)*
>
> *"If I'm rating. At first it was good but now. Because he has not been coming to school regularly, it's a negative one. I think he should be taken to a special school so that they would have more attention for him. Because, for me, I have 53 pupils in my class and if I'm to concentrate on him, we wouldn't reach anywhere in our studies." (Teacher 3).*
>
> *"It is a good one…… Because the teacher helps me in my studies." (Kojo).*
>
> *"Good…… Because sometimes I put myself in his situation. Like if it were to be me, what would I do? So if he is there not talking to anybody, I go to him then I would chat with him. Find out the necessary this thing." (Teacher 1).*
> *"It is a good one……He explains everything to me again if I don't understand and I ask him. He understands the situation of my disability and doesn't punish me if I miss school like the others." (Kobena).*
>
> *"Very friendly…… Because I see them as my younger brothers so I need not to maybe harsh on them. Him in particular, very friendly, in terms of him not having any books or money or something of that sort. (Teacher 2).*

Kobena and his teacher, Teacher 2 relate their positive interaction to the help they receive and give to each other. Although Kojo related his positive interaction with his teacher to the teacher helping him out in his studies, his teacher had other ideas. Kojo's teacher, Teacher 1 attributes the positive interaction to the empathy he has for Kojo. Kwaku is described by his teacher as a shy person that finds it difficult to relate with peers but Kobena and Kojo are said to be friendly and are able to relate well with peers. Kwaku's disinterest and absenteeism from school links to his

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negative interaction with his teacher as Roeser et al. (1998) and Wentzel et al (2010) point to the fact that feelings of relatedness with teachers are associated with positive school attitudes, including motivation and interest in school. Kobena and Kojo's friendliness and ability to relate well with peers is consistent with Demaray et al (2002) assertion that there is a positive association between good student-teacher relationships and student's socio-emotional outcomes.

Vygotsky (1978) was of the view that the life long process of development is greatly dependent on positive interactions and that these interactions lead to other forms of development. Indeed Vygotsky's theory of Social Development obliges the teacher or students to play untraditional roles as they collaborate with each other. A teacher should work with pupils to promote the academic, social and emotional development of pupils.

4.5.2. Importance of Teacher-Pupil interactions

Apart from Kwaku who revealed that no relationship existed between him and his teacher, Kobena and Kojo expressed the need for teacher-pupil interaction as they have gained from it.

> *"It has helped me to ask for help from my teacher if I don't know something. At times if I come to school and I don't have money I can ask her for some and she'll give me some." (Kojo).*

> *"He explains everything to me again if I don't understand and I ask him. He understands the situation of my disability and doesn't punish me if I miss school like the others." (Kobena).*

Additionally, their teachers had these to say:

> *"I made him know that we are all equal and we all have the same right despite that he is disabled. He shouldn't see himself as a disabled person. He shouldn't think that what they are doing he cannot do. He can do and*

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should be serious with his work. His attendance has also improved." (Teacher 1).

"Very encouraging. Because the interaction with them is friendly. It has brought cordial relationship between him and his friends because I normally tell them we are all friends though I am a teacher, I'm a grown up but I am relating to them as peers that's the way they also have to relate to one another in the school." (Teacher 2).

Teacher 1's comment points to the fact that Kojo has improved in his attendance to school due a positive teacher-student relationship which provides a sense of security. Teacher 2 disclosed Kobena's social and academic competence to ask for explanations to concept and relate with his friends better. According to Pianta (1999), emotionally warm relationships between teachers and students (characterized by open communication, support, and involvement) provide students with a sense of security within school settings, which promotes exploration and comfort, as well as social, emotional, and academic competence.

Vygotsky (1978) views interaction with pupils as an effective way of developing skills and strategies and the teacher must act in a way to ensure the inclusion of all pupils in the classroom. Such a view point makes Vygotsky's theoretical assumptions on the role of the teacher as a mediator of the learning experiences in class very relevant to the present study.

4.5.3. Improving Teacher-Pupil interactions

In terms of strategies of improving the teacher-pupil interactions of students with physical disabilities, it is only the teachers that offered suggestions to that. Regular pupils and their colleagues with physical disabilities didn't give any indication of knowing of what the question is demanding.

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"To me, always I have to get near to him then talking to him and sharing ideas. And the school too, I hope all teachers we are one so all the teachers here must be involved. They should take him as their own son or friend or relative so that we live together." (Teacher 2).

"I think that I have to increase the number of times I chat with him."(Teacher 1).

"I can say that these people are not found in only this school but in other schools in the district. So if they can organize a workshop or in-service training or something like that for the teachers on how to interact with them, it will be good." (Teacher 3)

Response from Teacher 3 showed that teachers needed to be upgraded on their knowledge base in handling their pupils with disability. Teachers 1 and 2 rather chose to go for an approach of getting more time to interact with their pupil. These are in conformity with recommendations by Hawkins et al (1998) in their investigation on improving student-teacher attachment. They stress the need for increasing the number of opportunities students have to develop prosocial bonds with adults and peers. They also emphasize on the need for improving the cognitive problem-solving skills.

Results from the study suggest that the Teacher-pupil relationship is a fair one. Participants in the study link their positive interaction to their giving and receiving of help. Relevance of the positive teacher-pupil interaction is also addressed, as participants point to it as improving pupils with physical disabilities' attendance and social wellbeing. With respect to ways of improving teacher-pupil interactions, participants propose the need for workshops to upgrade their knowledge on pupils with physical disabilities and more social engagements of teachers with pupils.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations made on the findings from the study.

5.2   Summary

The study focussed on the experiences of pupils with physical disabilities in three basic schools in the Assin South District. The social interaction, academic involvement and teacher-pupil relationship of the pupils with physical disabilities drove the research process. The theoretical understanding that informed the study was the Lev Vygotsky's Social Development Theory.

The phenomenology design was adopted by the researcher to investigate pupils' experiences under the qualitative research approach. The sample size was nine (9) consisting of three (3) pupils with physical disabilities, three (3) teachers and three (3) regular pupils who were selected through purposive sampling technique. The instrument used in data collection was the semi-structured interview guide. The findings from the study revealed that:

For research question 1: The social interaction of pupils with physical disabilities was a poor one. They had few friends which were formed based on the help they received and gave to such peers. They were also friends because of having them as neighbours at home. Although all the pupils with physical disabilities played, the initiation of the play process was left for their friends. Their play was sometimes disrupted by the unavailability of games to play with, fear of playing and issues related to pupils' disability. There was also the problem of teasing and disability harassment to deal with.

For research question 2: The academic needs of pupils were not met as their academic involvement was limited. Pupils were challenged when it came to activities like Physical Education, Role Play and Basic Design and Technology. Participants proposed the use of learning support assistants, counselling and inclusion in all activities as ways of improving pupils' academics.

For research question 3: The teacher-pupil relationship that exists is a fair one. Pupils claim their interaction with teachers is a positive one since they are able to ask for financial and academic help. Participants in the study identify improvement in attendance to school and social interaction with peers to the benefits of positive teacher-student interaction. Workshops on the management of pupils with physical

disabilities and chats with pupils were suggested by participants to improve teacher-student interactions.

5.3   Conclusions

The study concluded that:

The social interaction of the pupils with physical disabilities and their peers was poor. Pupils were friends to few peers and they were from their neighbourhood. This was because of the help they got and the familiarity of their disability to such peers. Also pupils were not able to initiate play due to limited intrinsic motivation and lack of drive. Pupils had a challenge engaging in Physical Education, Role play, Maths and Basic Design and Technology (BDT). This was as a result of not being regular at school, low self-esteem and lack of equipment like customized furniture and indoor games. There was a fair teacher-pupil relationship which resulted to an improvement in the attendance to school by pupils. It also opened the way for pupils to ask for help in their academics.

5.4   Recommendations

The recommendations made based on the findings from the study are:

➤ School authorities should create opportunities for pupils to socialize. Class works for instance can be done in mixed ability groupings. Peers of pupils with physical disabilities should be counselled to on how to relate appropriately with disability. School authorities should also provide and make available more indoor games for pupils to play with. They should put in place effective monitoring system to curb the incidents of teasing and disability harassment.

- ➢ Stakeholders in education should make it a point to engage learning support to aid pupils in their learning. Teachers can also organise extra classes for pupils. Teachers should motivate and counsel pupils to participate in all academic activities. Appropriate furniture and structures like ramps should be provided by school authorities to ensure that pupils can fully participate in all school activities.

- ➢ Stakeholders in education should organise regular workshops for teachers on the management of pupils with disability.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

In relation to the study, the researcher suggests the following areas for further research:

- ➢ Research into the experiences of pupils with physical disabilities' accessibility to facilities for university students.

- ➢ An in-depth exploration of the academic involvement of students with other form of physical disabilities in basic schools.
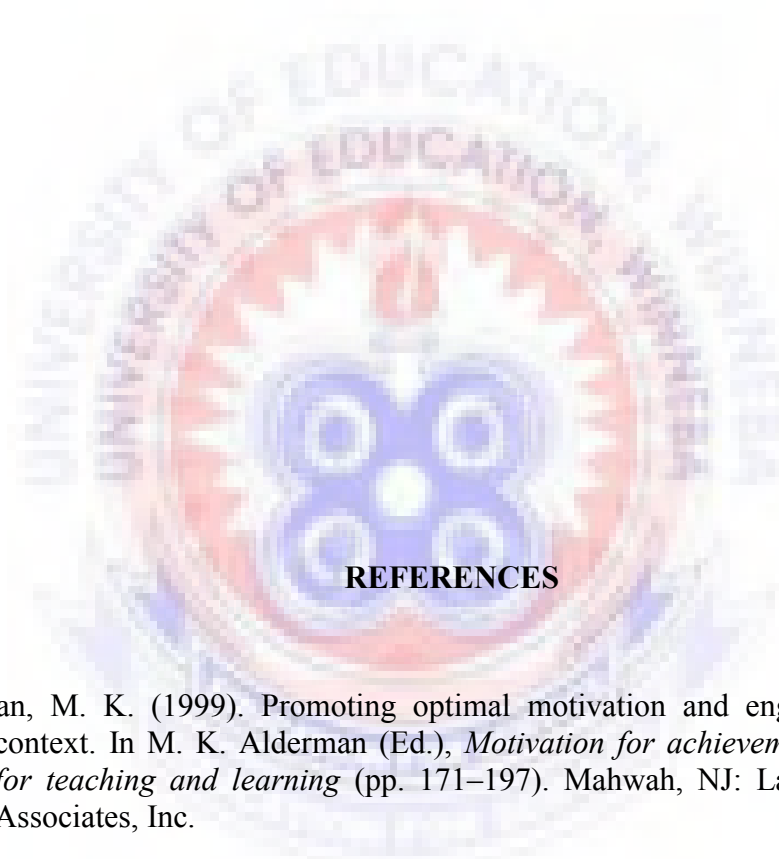
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APPENDIX A

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

(UEW)

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

May 7, 2015

The Director
Ghana Education Service
Assin South District

Dear Sir,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I write to introduce to you, Mr. Jonathan Amanoo Davis an M.Phil student of Department of Special Education of the University of Education, Winneba, with registration number 8130150002.

He is currently working on his thesis on the topic: *Experiences of Pupils with Physical Disability in Selected basic Schools in the Assin South District.*

Mr. Jonathan Amanoo Davis would want to carry out a research in some of the selected schools in the Assin South District.

I should be grateful if you could give him the needed assistance to enable him carry out his studies.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

....
SAMUEL K. HAYFORD (PHD)
AG. HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX B

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR <u>PUPILS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES</u> ON THEIR EXPERIENCES IN SCHOOL IN THE ASSIN SOUTH DISTRICT

Date: ……………………………………………………………………………

Place: ……………………………………………………………………………

Time: ……………………………………………………………………………

Duration: …………………………………………………………………………

<u>Preamble</u>

The main purpose of this study is to capture the experiences of students with physical disabilities.

<u>Research Question 1. (What social interactions exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their peers without disabilities?)</u>

1. *How do you form friendships?*

Prompts:

How many friends do you have without physical disabilities?

What are some of the things you do together?

In what ways do they offer help?

Who among them is your best friend and how did you become friends with him/her?

Why do you think he/she is best friends to you?

How would your friends describe their friendship with you?

How would you describe your friendship with them?

90

How different is your friendship with regular peers different from colleagues with physical disabilities?

How has your disability affected their friendship with you?

In your opinion, what can be done to change the situation?

2.   *What are some of the play activities you do with your friends?*

Prompts:

How often do you play with your friends?

Who usually initiates play?

What type of play do you usually engage in?

What are some of the barriers you encounter during play?

How do you overcome such barriers during play?

In your opinion, what can be done to change the situation?

What are some of the effects of your play deprivation?

3.   *What are some of the inappropriate behaviours put up by peers towards you?*

Prompts:

What do you think provoke such behaviour?

What is your reaction to such behaviour?

How do you deal with these?

How does your teachers/headteacher react to such behaviour?

What are some of the effects of such conduct(s) on you?

91

Research Question 2. (What are the academic involvement of pupils with physical disabilities in their school?)

4.   *In what ways do you think the school does not meet your academic needs?*

Prompts:

Why do you say so?

What modifications do you think can be done to improve your school meeting your academic needs?

What academic activities do you find difficult to engage in?

What do you think can be done to improve your involvement in such activities?

In what way does your disability affect your involvement in such activities?

How do the school needs and your non participation in certain activities affect your academics?

Research Question 3. (What relationships exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their teachers?)

5.   *How would you describe your interaction with your teachers?*

Prompts:

How will you rate your interaction with your teacher (positive/negative)?

Why do you say so?

How has your interactions with your teachers influenced your life in school (academics/interactions with peers/your personality and behaviour)?

In what ways does your teachers offer help during your interaction?

How does the help come about during your interaction?

92

What can be done to improve your interactions with your teachers?

General: Is there anything not brought up that you would like to talk about or something you would like to explain further?

APPENDIX C

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR <u>TEACHERS</u> OF PUPILS

WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES ON THEIR EXPERIENCES IN SCHOOL

IN THE ASSIN SOUTH DISTRICT

Date: …………………………………………………………………………………

Place: ………………………………………………………………………………

Time: ………………………………………………………………………………

Duration: ……………………………………………………………………………

Preamble

The main purpose of this study is to capture the experiences of students with physical disabilities.

Research Question 1. (What social interactions exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their peers without disabilities?)

1.   *How does your pupil with physical disabilities form friendships?*

Prompts:

How many friends does he have without physical disabilities?

What do you think account for this number?

What are some of the things they do together?

In what ways do friends offer help during their interactions?

Who is the best friend of your pupil with physical disabilities and why do you think he/she is?

How would you describe his friendship with his peers?

94

How has his disability affected his friendship with peers?

In your opinion, what can be done to change the situation?

2. *What are some of the play activities the pupil with physical disabilities does with his friends?*

Prompts:

How often does your pupil play with friends?

Who usually initiates play?

What type of play does he usually engage in?

What are some of the barriers they encounter during play?

What are some of their measures in overcoming such barriers?

In your opinion, what can be done to change pupil's situation?

What are some of the effects of play deprivation on your pupil?

3. *What are some of the inappropriate behaviours directed by peers to your pupil with physical disabilities?*

Prompts:

What do you think provoke such behaviour?

What is the reaction of your pupil to such behaviour?

How does he deal with these?

How do you react to such behaviour?

What are some of the effects of such conduct(s) on the pupil?

Research Question 2. (What are the academic involvement of pupils with physical disabilities in their school?)

4.   *In what ways do you think the school does not meet the academic needs of your pupil with physical disabilities?*

Prompts:

Why do you say so?

What modifications do you think can be done to improve your school meeting your academic needs?

What academic activities does your student find difficult to engage in?

What do you think can be done to improve his involvement in such activities?

In what way does his disability affect your involvement in such activities?

How do the school needs and his non participation in certain activities affect his academics?

Research Question 3. (What relationships exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their teachers?)

5.   *How would you describe your interaction with your pupil with physical disabilities?*

Prompts:

How will you rate your interaction with your pupil (positive/negative)?

Why do you say so?

How has your interactions with your pupil influenced his life in school (academics/interactions with peers/your personality and behaviour)?

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In what ways do you offer help during your interaction?

How does the help come about during your interaction?

What can be done to improve your interactions with your pupil?

General: Is there anything not brought up that you would like to talk about or something you would like to explain further?

APPENDIX D

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR <u>PEER (FRIEND)</u> OF

PUPILS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES ON THEIR EXPERIENCES IN

SCHOOL IN THE ASSIN SOUTH DISTRICT

Date: …………………………………………………………………………………

Place: ………………………………………………………………………………

Time: ………………………………………………………………………………

Duration: …………………………………………………………………………

<u>Preamble</u>

The main purpose of this study is to capture the experiences of students with physical disabilities.

<u>Research Question 1. (What social interactions exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their peers without disabilities?)</u>

1.   *How does your friend with physical disabilities form friendships?*

Prompts:

How many friends without disability does your friend with physical disabilities have?

What are some of the things you do together?

In what ways do you offer help?

How did you become friends with him/her?

How would you describe your friendship with him/her?

How different is your friendship with regular peers to that of the friend with physical disabilities?

How has his disability affected his friendship with you?

In your opinion, what can be done to change the situation?

2.   *What are some of the play activities you do with your friend with physical disabilities?*

Prompts:

How often do you play with your friend?

Who usually initiates play?

What type of play does he usually engage in?

What are some of the barriers you encounter during play?

How does your friend overcome such barriers during play?

In your opinion, what can be done to change the situation?

What are some of the effects of your play deprivation on your friend?

3.   *What are some of the inappropriate behaviours put up by peers towards your friend with physical disabilities?*

Prompts:

What do you think provoke such behaviour?

What is his reaction to such behaviour?

How does he deal with these?

How does your teachers/headteacher react to such behaviour?

What are some of the effects of such conduct(s) on him?

Research Question 2. (What are the academic involvement of pupils with physical disabilities in their school?)

4.   *In what ways do you think the school does not meet your academic needs of your friend with physical disabilities?*

Prompts:

Why do you say so?

What modifications do you think can be done to improve your school meeting his academic needs?

What academic activities does he find difficult to engage in?

What do you think can be done to improve his involvement in such activities?

In what way does his disability affect his involvement in such activities?

How do the school needs and his non participation in certain activities affect his academics?

Research Question 3. (What relationships exist between pupils with physical disabilities and their teachers?)

5.   *How would you describe the interaction of your friend with physical disabilities with his teachers?*

Prompts:

How will you rate your interaction with your teacher (positive/negative)?

Why do you say so?

How has his interactions with his teachers influenced his life in school (academics/interactions with peers/your personality and behaviour)?

In what ways does his teachers offer help during their interaction?

How does the help come about during their interaction?

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General: Is there anything not brought up that you would like to talk about or something you would like to explain further?

APPENDIX E

CONSENT TO CONTACT FORM

I give *Jonathan Amonoo Davis* permission to contact my ward about the **"*Experiences of pupils with physical disabilities in three basic schools in the Assin South district*"** study. I understand this does not obligate my ward to participate in the study. By providing my name and signature, I agree for my ward contacted by the researcher to learn: about the details of the study if he qualifies for the study.

_____   _____

Name   Signature/Thumbprint

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