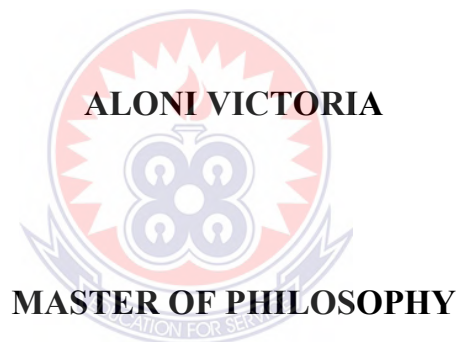**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS TOWARD INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN BASIC SCHOOLS IN GARU DISTRICT IN THE UPPER EAST REGION OF GHANA

ALONI VICTORIA

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I hereby confirm that this research 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 a degree elsewhere.

Signature: ………………………………..….

Date: …………………………………….....

Supervisor's Declaration

I, **Dr** Daniel S. Q. Dogbe hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of theses, dissertations, and projects as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Signature: ………………………………..….

Date: …………………………………….....

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband Yahuza Musah and our children, as well as to my dear sisters and their daughters and sons, especially Maxwell Gazare, for their prayers, love, and support that have brought me this far.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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GLOSSARY

ADA	Americans Disabilities Act
CAI	computer-assisted instructions
CAST	Centre for applied science technology
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
EHA	Education for All Handicapped Children's Act
GALOP	Ghana accountability for Learning Project
GES	Ghana education service
GSGDA	Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IE	Inclusive education
IEP	Individualize Educational Plan
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	Ministry of education
NCER	National Centre on Educational Restructuring
NCFSE	National curriculum framework for school education
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PD	Professional development
SEN	Special educational need
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TTS	Text-to-speech
UDL	Universal design for learning
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine the knowledge and perception of teachers towards inclusive education in basic schools in Garu District, in the Upper East region of Ghana, in an attempt to draw the attention of stakeholders to the predicament of learners with special educational needs. The proposed study was guided by Vygotsky's social constructivist theory. The study employed a concurrent mixed research design method with targeted participants of 190 teachers and 29 head teachers. The instruments the study utilized were a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. Simple random sampling was used in selecting six head teachers from the basic schools, while a proportional stratified random sampling technique was used to pick 190 participants from five different circuits in Garu District. For the quantitative data, a questionnaire was distributed to teachers in 29 schools across five circuits, while for the qualitative data, a semi-structured interview was conducted with head teachers in their respective school offices. The validity and reliability of the instruments used were assured through peer assessment, discussions with the supervisor, and pre-testing. The quantitative data collected via the questionnaire was coded, entered, and analysed using the SPSS statistical package for social science data-based software, and then translated into frequency tables and pie-charts for better comprehension. The data showed that teachers regard inclusive policy practice to be good as it gives access to learners with SEN to attend their community schools. The perceptions of teachers are generally positive toward inclusive education practice, but how to educate those with disabilities is a major problem. That is because teachers did not have sufficient knowledge of how to include learners with special needs in the regular school system. Furthermore, there were challenges identified that bedevilled successful inclusive practice in the District schools. Such as high enrolments drive with inadequate staffing, lack of furniture, teaching and inadequate teaching and learning resources, among others. The study recommended immediate training of teachers and head teachers on teaching strategies related to special needs education and provision of teaching and learning resources among others, and concluded that, the perceptions of Garu basic schools teachers are generally positive towards including learners with special needs in the regular school system.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Throughout Ghana's history, there has been a perception that people with disabilities "pollute" society. According to Obeng (2007), these perceptions stem from a prevalent belief in spirits in many cultures, which causes infirmities in individuals as a result of sins committed against the land or bad deeds committed by the victim's ancestors. Also some of these perceptions have resulted from the influence of medical and religious conceptualizations of disability so stereotyping, discrimination, stigma, and prejudice among others have become tools use to marginalize people with disabilities in our society. Meanwhile Ghana's governments on the other hand have recognized the critical role that human resource power plays in the country's socioeconomic development and have taken steps to increase and improve access to the quality of education in the country (MoE, 2015). Avoke (2005), pointed out that, this further charted education in Ghana into two categories: special residential schools for children with intellectual disabilities, visual impairments, and hearing impairments in the urban areas; and regular schools for children who are not disabled. This segregation system dates back before the country gained its independence. Individuals with disabilities are far more included at the tertiary level than they are at the basic level. According to the author, to date, few schools have sought and succeeded in breaking down these barriers.

Communities think that disabilities are a punishment from the gods, and so children with disabilities have been seen as less than humans (Avoke, 2004). Gadagbui (1998) described how new-born kids in Sparta and Athens, Greece, were abandoned or

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eliminated before the age of three if they had any form of disability. Blind males who survived in Rome were considered beggars, while their female counterparts (blind girls) were also regarded as prostitutes. According to the author, individuals with disabilities in Europe were first treated humanely in the 1700s.

On a global front, it is estimated that over one billion people worldwide have a disability, with more than four out of five of them living in developing countries and 93 million of them being children under the age of 14 with a "moderate to severe handicap." There are also 186 million children with disability worldwide who have not finished primary education (UNESCO, 2015). Worldwide inclusive education began in the 1990s, most notably through the Salamanca Declaration of 1994, which declared inclusive education as an important goal that would benefit all learners. The United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) fully endorsed and backed this one-of-a-kind policy, promising access to millions of children and adults worldwide who had limited or no access to education (Allan, 2008).

The Salamanca Declaration has received international approval, with 92 countries and 25 international organizations signing on as the first signatories (Avoke, 2005). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), signed by 160 countries by 2016, including Ghana, and the Sustainable Development goal four are all key international initiatives that have contributed to the success of the movement (Engelbrecht & Artiles, 2016). Inclusionary approaches have been recognized for teaching children with special educational needs (SEN) and those without, and the drive toward inclusion has been a reaction against segregated schooling, in which learners with SEN or disabilities are educated in a separate

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environment from their non-disabled peers (UNESCO, 1994). The fight for inclusive education is centred on human rights and social injustice. Inclusive education, which is a technique to make education accessible and beneficial to all learners, particularly those with special needs who would otherwise be excluded from the regular school system, has dominated public policy and social discourse in general (Ainscow, 2014). So Ghana has adopted an inclusive education plan, and the country's 1992 constitution guarantees equitable access to high-quality education for all Ghanaians. To mention but a few, the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA), the Education Strategic Plan (2018–2030), and the Disability Act of 2006 are all national legal documents that support inclusive education according to Ghana's IE policy document (MoE, 2015). The worldwide commitment to achieving education for all by 2015 was reaffirmed in the Dakar Framework for Action, and children who have been uprooted by wars and other natural and human disasters are included in the Dakar Framework (Avoke, 2004; CSIE, 2003). Particularly those who, due to cultural practices and prejudice, have been denied education for early marriages, and children who, due to their parents' economic circumstances, are forced to engage in economic ventures (child labour), are found in many of our local communities, and it is our responsibility as Ghanaians to ensure that they benefit from quality education (Avoke, 2005).

For instructional purposes Stub and Peck (1995), explained that inclusion is a placement option that accommodates all students with SEN in the same learning setting as their non-disabled peers. Inclusion has two goals: socially, it is expected to improve some processes in place to meaningfully concretize the integration of people with special needs into society; and educationally, to improve processes to make sure that learners with SEN are integrated into the mainstream of the educational system

(Olukotun, 2004). Also, because non-disabled and individuals with disabilities inhabit the same world, teaching them to accept and tolerate one another in the same society is always a common goal in special education (NBA, 1995). In terms of politics, inclusion is associated with the United Nations' efforts to democratize some current structures and practices that promote segregation and class awareness (Okuoyibo, 2001). In other words, inclusion is a method used in education to achieve some politically motivated goals, such as equalizing opportunities for all learners regardless of class, status, or disability. Inclusion is based on the premise that the world is an inclusive community, allowing for the acceptance of people with a variety of disabilities (Heward, 2004). As a result, the fundamental aim of inclusion is to integrate special-needs learners into the general education system, regardless of the origin or degree of their disabilities. Inclusion and participation are vital to human dignity and the exercise of human rights, according to the Salamanca Declaration's Framework for Action for 1994.

On the part of education, this demonstrates itself in the creation of "true equality of opportunity" (NBA, 1995). It assumes that human differences are normal and that learning should be tailored to the needs of the learner rather than the learner fitting into the process. Inclusive schooling is the "most effective" way of fostering unity, compassion, and love among students with special needs and their peers (Kanu, 2001). The most successful approach for battling or eradicating discriminatory attitudes, fostering amicable communities, constructing inclusive societies, and obtaining education for all is through regular schools with an inclusive perspective. They give the majority of children an effective education, boost proficiency, and, in the end, increase the cost-effectiveness of the overall educational system (UNESCO, 1994).

The inclusive education practice is also thought to depend heavily on teachers as they play a crucial role in educating learners with and without disabilities in regular classes (Haskell, 2000). Also according to research, the knowledge and perceptions of teachers are crucial to the effectiveness of the inclusive education practice. The knowledge and perceptions of teachers towards inclusive education has been widely studied across the globe, but little is known about it in Garu district education area, so the study seek to close that gap. Besides, the researcher also observed that, in the Garu district area, many children of school-going age, including children with special educational needs (SEN) are not attending school. The study assessed teachers' perceptions of inclusive education and shared best practices to help reduce school dropout rates by enabling children to complete basic school education.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Inclusive education is the answer to years of segregation, discrimination, and degradation suffered by children with SEN. However, despite being consistent, putting it into practice has been too slow due to the fact that children with SEN have been denied privileges that their peers without disabilities take for granted (UNESCO, 2009). Furthermore, the Ghana Education Service (2004) stated that perceptual, architectural, curriculum, and teacher training and preparation are among the barriers to inclusive education in Ghana. Avoke (2005), pointed out that many individuals with disabilities, unlike their able-bodied peers, drop out of school as a result of these encounters. Also according to MoE, (2019 p.8); EMIS data, 2016-2017 indicated that, "the enrolment of children with disabilities ranges from just 0.2% to 0.4% of the total enrolment in basic Schools. The attendance rate of children with special educational needs are far lower as compared to children without disabilities at all levels of pre-tertiary education".

The National Education Strategic Plan (2010–2020) indicated that learners with mild to moderate disabilities could be educated in regular schools by 2015 and those with severe disabilities by 2020 (GES, 2004; Hayford, 2013).

Literature and statistics have shown that a sizable segment of learners with SEN population is still not receiving an inclusive education, as outlined in Ghana's Inclusive Policy Draft, despite the commendable efforts made by succeeding Ghanaian administrations to strengthen inclusive education policy and practice (MoE, 2013). Ghana strongly endorses and supports the Education for All movement through national and international commitments, such as ratifying the Salamanca Declaration of 1994 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Avoke, 2005). According to earlier studies, teachers find it more challenging to work with students with emotional or behavioural difficulties disabilities in the classroom than they do with students with other type of mild (Chhabra et al, 2010) Teachers do not believe they are capable of teaching both learners with special needs and students without special needs in the inclusive class settings. For inclusive education practice is thought to depend heavily on teachers' endorsement as they play a crucial role in educating learners with disabilities in regular school system (Haskell, 2000). Also literature has shown that, the knowledge and perceptions of teachers has been studied worldwide, however, little is known about it in Garu district education area, so this study seek to close that gap. Also according to Ghana's inclusive education policy document (MoE, 2015), inclusive education practice was first implemented on a pilot basis in 39 districts, and then the training was expanded to all 275 districts in the country by 2016. Though much seems to have been done, finding out about the knowledge and perception of teachers toward inclusive education policy practice is equally important. Besides, the researcher also observed that, in the Garu district area, many children of

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school-going age, including special educational needs (SEN) children, are not attending school. The study assessed the perception of teachers toward inclusive education, and shared best practices to help reduce school dropout rates by enabling children to complete their basic school education.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study examined the knowledge and perception of teachers toward inclusive education, in an attempt to draw the attention of stakeholders to the predicament of learners with special educational need in basic schools in Garu District

1.4 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were to;

1. Investigate the perception of teachers toward inclusive education in Garu District basic schools.
2. Investigate the elements that influence the perception of teachers toward inclusive education practice.
3. Examine the knowledge of teachers toward inclusive education in basic Schools in the Garu District.
4. Find out strategies teachers use to teach learners with special needs.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were prepared based on the objectives to steer the study towards examining the knowledge and perception of teachers toward inclusive education in Garu District basic schools.

1. What perception do teachers have toward inclusive education practice?

2. What factors influence the perception of teachers toward inclusive education?

3. What knowledge do teachers have toward inclusive education practice?

4. What strategies do teachers employ in teaching learners with diverse needs?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study shed more light on the condition of children with special needs, allowing educational stakeholders to better understand the progress of inclusive education in Garu District. This study could also be valuable in combating discriminatory attitudes, establishing friendly schools, fostering an inclusive society, and achieving universal education for all. The study would also provide teachers with information on their views toward inclusive education as well as the best inclusive practices to apply in their classrooms. Furthermore, this study may also be added to the body of knowledge for use by researchers in the future.

1.7 Delimitation

Though basic schools include kindergartens, primary schools, and junior high schools, this study focused on only kindergartens and primary schools' teachers and head teachers in the Garu district. This was due to the time frame for the study and limited resources and other logistics. It would not be possible to assess the perceptions of all the basic school teachers and head teachers. Besides, the out-of-school children observed to be in existence are more of the primary school age in the Garu District. UNESCO (2015) also indicated that, around the world, there are 62 million primary school-aged children with disabilities and another 186 million children with disabilities who have not completed primary school education.

1.8 Limitation

One major problem is that the study area schools are geographically scattered. The schools are quite far apart, and due to that, the researcher spends more time and

resources collecting the study data. Besides, the period of collecting data for the study was a time when the rainy season was setting in in the northern part of Ghana. So on some of the days, the researcher and her team could not go out to collect data as a result of rain fall.so more time was used in collecting data than the speculate time plan. Besides two or more of the questionnaire data could not be retrieved from respondents. The researcher depended on her annual leave to carry out her research study and work hard to ensure that the study's' data results was not affected badly.

1.9 Operational Definition of the Terms

Inclusive education, IE is based on a value system that asserts that all persons who attend an educational institution have an equal right to equitable access to high-quality teaching and learning, and that transcends the concept of physical location to include basic values that encourage participation, friendship, and interaction. It also necessitates that SEN learners be allowed to regular schools in their neighbourhood, where existing curriculum, teaching, and learning procedures must be restructured to benefit all students including those with disabilities or learners with special needs.

Basic schools consist of two years of kindergarten (KG), six years of primary school, and three years of junior high school (JHS), and it is free and compulsory for all children, including children with special educational needs or disabilities.

Perception of teachers: These are teachers' viewpoints, main ideas or perspectives on including learners with special needs in the classroom in the regular school system in Ghana.

Students with special educational needs (SEN) have a range of impairments or challenges that limit or make it difficult for them to learn, such as sensory, physical, intellectual, or behavioural problems among others.

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1.10 Organization of the Study

This research is divided into six chapters. The study's first chapter covered the following: introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations, limitations, operational definitions of words, and study organization. Chapter two included the study's theoretical framework as well as a review of related literature. The third chapter focused on the study's overall methodology. Demographics, sample size and sampling methods, data collection procedures and instruments, validity and reliability, pre-testing, and data analysis were all covered. The results of the study were reported in Chapter 4, and the findings were analysed in Chapter 5. Chapter six captured the summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations, and further research plans.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The study's literature review is presented in this chapter. The review begins with a theoretical framework, which is followed by important issues presented in the study's questions as well as associated literature on the knowledge and perception of teachers toward inclusive education in Basic Schools. The following subheadings were used to review the literature:

a. The theoretical framework

b. History and concept of inclusive education in Ghana

c. Perceptions of teachers towards inclusive education

d. Factors that influence the perception of teacher towards inclusive education

e. The knowledge of teachers towards the inclusive education policy practice.

f. Teaching strategies for teaching learners with special need

2.1 The theoretical Framework

The framework of Vygotsky's social constructivist theory forms the basis of this study. According to Vygotsky (1998), disability is a socially constructed phenomenon and is defined by justifications that aim at labelling, classifying, and the exclusion of people with disabilities from their cultural setting. In addition, Vygotsky's theory takes into account the substantial influence that society has on children's growth and development. This theory stresses the significance of human relationships and interaction to the development of the culture in which they live. According to Vygotsky, parents, caregivers, peers, and society at large are responsible for the development of higher-order functions in individuals with and without a disability.

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Also, Vygotsky emphasize the importance of children with disabilities participating in social and shared life experiences. Children obtain a wide variety of social behaviours and skills through interactions with peers. Their social experiences have an impact on how they develop emotionally and socially as well as how they adjust as adults (Rubin, Bukowski & Parker, 2006). This situation is one of the reasons the UN Convention encourages students with disabilities to participate in society at large and in general classroom learning settings.

Vygotsky, (1998) stressed the importance of collective nurturing in the socialization and development of children with and without impairments, stating that interaction allows children to expand their "internal" boundaries and so surpass their zone of proximal development." According to Vygotsky's social constructionist view of learning and development, the social environment is not only a setting in which children develop but also a source of mental processes or higher cultural function and development.

Also, According to constructivists (Karpov, 2005, pp.10–11), "adults help in the development of mental and social functioning through engagement with children with disabilities." Vygotsky's contributions to developmental psychology, particularly his idea of the "zone of proximal development," have had an extensive impact on SEN instructions. His work on the influence of the social environment on learning is crucial to contemporary instructional practices for students receiving special educational services and supports. In both biology and society, disability is viewed by Vygotsky as an "abnormality" (Gindis, 2003, p. 2). He held that differences in a person's biological make-up only become "abnormal" when they are exposed to social situations. In the case of individuals with neurological processing impairments or

attention difficulties, for example, the concept of "disability" cannot be recognized until the individual is unable to interact and act like a typical peer in a social environment (Karpov, 2005). For example, an individual who is hearing-impaired living in community where sign language is the common language will have no visible disability. However, outside of that context, where the individual has no other means of communicating with the hearing population, the "disability" may be apparent.

His concept of "primary or biological disability," "secondary disability," and their relationships was an extension of his line of thoughtfulness on the substantial influence of societal factors on the state of individuals with disabilities. The biological impairment that is caused by both endogenous and external factors is referred to as a primary disability. Higher psychological functions that are distorted as a result of social influences are referred to as secondary disabilities. According to Vygotsky, 'primary disability' impede children with disabilities from obtaining knowledge and learning some or most social skills at the same pace as their peers without disabilities. This therefore has a negative impact on the entire developmental process, resulting in delays and inadequacies. Hence, many handicapping illnesses' symptoms, such as the primitivism of emotional responses in the intellectually impaired children, are thought to be secondary disabilities attained through societal interaction.

The social environment of a child with disability, rather than the biological impairment itself, causes flaws in the child's development. This is what alters a child's course of development. His educational philosophy focuses on delivering a high-quality education through a range of social influences as well as appropriate and suitable educational methods that support "different but equivalent cultural

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developmental roles" (Gindis, 2003, p.3). We still employ this paradigm in special education today, advising students with SEN to enrol in the "least restrictive environment" in an effort to provide kids with the social contacts in typical settings that Vygotsky talks bout.

Students must also be assessed using different metrics as part of their Individualized Education Program (IEP) to establish their present level of achievement (Gadagbui, 2017). This helps teachers determine what a student can do with or without support. Through inclusive schooling, individuals with SEN can be liberated from the social and cultural isolation that hampers their development. Individuals with SEN, however, must be provided with the tools they require to overcome their disability. In order to offer these kids with the best support possible, teachers, who are the key players in the delivery of educational services, must be aware of the socio-cultural demands on the development of education for children with SEN.

2.2 History and Concept of Inclusive Education in Ghana

Prior to the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children's Act (EHA) in 1975, many children around the world were denied admission to educational institutions. In 1970, only one out of every five children with disabilities was educated in the United States, and many countries had laws prohibiting children who were deaf, blind, emotionally unstable, or had an intellectual deficiency from attending school (Kavale & Forness, 2002). The Act was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1990, and the government has been revising its recommendations to address the IDEA's implementation and clarity on a regular basis since then. Also in the 1990s, the Americans' Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed to guarantee that individuals with disabilities have the same rights and

opportunities as everyone else retrieved from https://sites.ed.gov/idea/final-regulation on January 25, 2022.

In Ghana, as in most other nations, children with disabilities have gone through four stages of education: exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion. The exclusion period, which began before the country's gained independence in 1957, was marked by a disregard for children with disabilities' educational rights and capacities, as well as a denial of access to educational institutions (Hayford, 2013; Hayford, 2018). Also according to the special education experts such as Gadagbui, 1998; Avoke, 2008; Hayford, 2013, Hayford, 2018, socio-cultural factors such as entrenched beliefs and cultural practices, ignorance, stigmatization, and prejudices motivated the exclusion of disabled children from education in pre-independence Ghana. Segregation, which separates children with special needs from their peers who do not have any disabilities, as a result led to the establishment of special schools in Ghana (Avoke, 2005).

The integration movement, which focused on integrating children with SEN into already-existing mainstream educational institutions as long as the child could adjust to fit the institutions' standard requirements, was the precursor to inclusive education in Ghana, just like it was in any other country (Hayford, 2013). Many children with disabilities were put in the mainstream without any specialized support or adaptations to the school environments, curriculum, or pedagogies, which resulted in high school dropouts and the continuous poor general performance and repetition of grades (Boakye-Yiadom, 2011; Hayford, 2007, 2008).

Ghana was not a forerunner in inclusion. The inclusive education system can be traced back to the international human rights movement, which can be traced back to

the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the United Nations (UN) Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993), the Salamanca Declaration of (1994), and others (Gadagbui, 2017). These international policies paved the way to encourage more equitable forms of schooling which specifically focused on meeting the needs of individuals who are excluded and marginalized as well as children with disabilities. This has led to the concept of inclusive education approach where many nations got interested with which Ghana is no exception (Avoke, 2005). Ghana completely endorses and supports the Education for All initiative through national and international commitments and commits itself through signing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Salamanca statement of 1994.

The most significant of these is the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which contains several articles which, when taken together, provide full support for inclusive education. This Convention has been ratified by 191 out of 193 eligible countries worldwide. Ghana is among the countries that ratified the Convention (Avoke, 2005). Other initiatives include the 1990 World Conference on Education for All. Meeting the basic learning needs of all children, the 1993 UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, and UNESCO's 1994 Salamanca statement, (Avoke, 2004). Also, the Ghanaian parliament passed an Act, Act 715 (2006), which established laws for individuals with disabilities in the country; and under this legislation, children with SEN will be educated in regular schools according to the Ghana IE policy document (MoE, 2015).

According to article 20(1) (Hayford, 2013), "A person with a disability requesting admission to a school should not be denied admission on the basis of their disability

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unless the person is assessed and determined to be a person who can only benefit from attending a special school." Individuals with physical and mental disabilities, orphans, and those who are slow or quick learners will all benefit from the Ghana Education Strategic Plan (2010-2020), which intends to integrate them as much as possible into the regular school system (MoE, 2013). According to (MoE, 2015p.3), the "IE Guiding Principle is supposed to provide a platform for meeting the diverse educational requirements of all Ghanaians of school age using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and establishing a welcoming teaching and learning environment for all pupils and students". As a result, the policy's conceptual framework is based on UDL and the notion of child-friendly schools. Also, Gadagbui, (2017), UNESSCO (2009), IE policy is based on a set of basic principles that:

1. Every child has the right to a quality education.

2. No child should be excluded from school or treated unfairly because of his or her race, colour, sex, language, age, class or social group, religion, political or other beliefs, national or ethnic origin, poverty, disability, birth, or any other status.

3. Ensure that the educational system adapts to the learner's needs rather than the learner adapting to the system. Reforms must be made across the educational system and in communities.

4. All areas of education, including curriculum, teaching methodologies, assessment, school culture, and the environment, should promote inclusion.

5. Children's diverse demands and developmental patterns should be met with a diverse and adaptable set of solutions.

Through proper curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching practices, resource use, and collaborations with their communities, inclusive schools must be aware of

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and react to the diverse needs of their students, and very school should provide a continuum of support services to match the spectrum of special needs (Hayford, 2013).

2.2.1 Concept of inclusive education

According to Staub and Peck (1994, p.67) inclusion is "the full-time placement of children with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in regular classrooms". Inclusion goes a step farther than mainstreaming by proposing methods by which a school strives to attend to all children, by managing its curricular organization and offering, and allocating resources to achieve educational equality (Sebba & Sachdev, 1997). Inclusive education also strives to remove or reduce barriers to access, participation, and learning for all children, particularly those who have been socially isolated as a result of poverty, disability, gender, religion, ethnicity, or other differences (UNESCO, 2006).

The inclusive education (IE) approach accommodates and creates responsive ways in lesson delivery to account for individual differences and ensure that all learners participate in and benefit from learning (Elkins, 1998). According to the policy document, (MoE, 2015) indicated that, IE is based on a value system that asserts that all persons who attend an educational institution have an equal right to equitable access to high-quality teaching and learning, and that transcends the concept of physical location to include basic values that encourage participation, friendship, and interaction. It also necessitates that SEN learners be allowed to regular schools in their neighbourhood, where existing curriculum, teaching, and learning procedures must be restructured to benefit all students (Hayford, 2013). The equivalent is valid for educational aids and learning settings to permit extra educational plan or change

educational programme and learning materials required for the fusion of learners with disabilities into regular schools (Kanu, 2001). So there would be the need for retraining of both special and regular educators to provide necessary school services to the students (Avoke, 2005). Existing learning settings for regular classroom may be redesigned to accommodate special needs students, when proper structures are put in place inclusion could assume its real status. It would be as Heward (2004) described inclusion as to create a more inclusive universal education system that serves all children, especially those who need more than the ordinary educational support, inclusion is the obvious blending of excellent approaches from special compensatory and general education.

It is about removing special-needs pupils from their usual living environment and fully integrating them with students who do not have disabilities in a regular classroom setting (Ademokoya, 2004). As a result, inclusive education tries to create a consistent learning environment for all children with disabilities, regardless of their abilities. Inclusion is commonly understood to indicate how schools welcome and value children with special needs as members of the group (Choate, 1997). Inclusion is a systematic reform process in education that incorporates adjustments and adaptations of materials, instructional techniques, approaches, structures, and teaching strategies in order to overcome barriers. Its goal is to provide all students in the relevant age range with an equitable and participative learning experience (MoE, 2015).

The National Centre on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion (1995) defines inclusive education as providing age-appropriate classrooms to all students, including those who require supplementary aids and support services, in order to prepare

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students for a productive life and as members of society. Ainscow (2004) defined inclusive education as a process that involves identifying and removing barriers; it is concerned with all learners' presence, involvement, and achievement, with a special focus on those who are on the margins of marginalization or underachievement. Gyimah (2006 p.722) defines inclusion as "complete participation in regular age-appropriate classrooms in their neighbourhood schools, as well as access to relevant help and support services and individualized programs." Also Gadagbui (2017), defined inclusive education as a method of socially integrating students with special needs into regular classrooms at all levels of education, from elementary to tertiary, in order to prepare them for careers and vocational training that can be combined with financial planning. According to the author, policy formulation, equal opportunity, access to school choices, acceptance, resource/equipment, appropriate space, teacher competency, dedication and commitment, and assessment of learners by a multi-sectral team with current and functional equipment by efficient specialists using flexible and adaptable curricular and approaches are all required.

Inclusive education aims to provide all students of the relevant age range with an equitable and participatory learning experience and environment that best corresponds to their needs and preferences (Hayford, 2013; MoE, 2017). Hayford (2018) however cautioned that, inclusion does not occur when students with disabilities are placed in mainstream courses without concomitant structural modifications to the organization, curriculum, and teaching and learning strategies. According to the author, the education of children with disabilities is increasingly considered to be an integral element of the educational system of Ghana, and as a result, future policies and programmes must reflect this notion.

2.2.2 Benefits of inclusion

Salend (2005); Smith et al. (2006) addressed the benefits of inclusion, claiming that at the basic school level, learners with SEN who are included in schools can benefit socially and academically without facing stigma or discrimination. As the expectations for behaviour and instruction are raised, learners have the opportunity to meet higher standards and become more independent learners. Children with disabilities are also seen as benefiting from inclusion since it enables them to gain from the stimulation of socializing with a greater number of classmates who are not disabled, as well as from modelling appropriate behaviour and improving academic performance (Elkins, 1998). These confirmed what Vygotsky's (1998) emphasized that, the importance of collective nurturing in the socialization and development of children with and without impairments, stating that interaction allows children to expand their "internal" boundaries and so surpass their "zone of proximal development." Choate (1997) also outlined the advantages of inclusive education for disabled students as follows:

i.   More social connections, networks, and initiations.

ii.   Peer role models for social, behavioural, and intellectual skills.

iii.   IEP goal achievement increased.

iv.   Expanded access to general education.

v.   Improved skill acquisition.

vi.   More inclusive environments in the future

vii.   More chances for conversations

viii.   Greater anticipation

Collaboration between faculty and staff at the school and parental involvement is high in most inclusive settings. According to Avoke (2005), inclusion encourages children

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without disabilities to accept their peers with special needs, lowers the cost of special schooling for disabled children, and eliminates the social stigma and discrimination associated with children with special needs. It encourages all children to have a friendly attitude toward people with disabilities and helps a child's entire development, both with and without special needs.

The basic premise of inclusive education is that all students should be accommodated at all educational institutions in their neighbourhood, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social-emotional, or other circumstances. Students with and without SEN must be given equitable access to formal education, as specified by Ghana IE policy document (MoE, 2015). Regular classroom teachers, who are the major implementers of the IE policy, will need to understand the concept of the IE policy and be fully equipped with all the necessary knowledge and understanding of the policy in order to provide support services to children with SEN in their classrooms. As a result, typical classroom teachers in basic schools must grasp the inclusive education policy in order for the IE to be practiced properly.

2.3 Perception of Teachers towards Inclusive Education

The outcomes of the research on inclusive education policies varied according to Evans and Lunt (2002). While there have been many success stories, there have also been some failures, which have been attributed to a variety of factors, including a lack of funding and resources (Ainscow, 2014). One of the major hurdles to the rise of inclusion has also been stated; most teachers lack the necessary knowledge, abilities, good attitudes, or perception to effectively carry out this work (Forlin, 2001). Symeonidou & Phtiaka, (2009) defined teachers' perception as the degree to which teachers believe it is their responsibility to teach children with SEN in an inclusive

environment. De Boer et al. (2011) point out that effective inclusive education practice is strongly reliant on teachers' endorsement of the inclusive education philosophy because teachers are the primary actors who make inclusion possible in the classroom. According to a study conducted in Europe that analysed the literature of 26 studies, indicated that teachers' opinions on including learners with SEN should be investigated in order to improve educational practice. Teachers' judgments of inclusive education are also influenced by flaws in the educational system (De Boer et al., 2011). Teaching students with SEN can be relatively challenging at times, and a positive attitude might help to make the process go more smoothly.

Despite the fact that there has been numerous research studies on teachers' knowledge and perceptions toward inclusion, different studies have found different results. Studies on teachers' views toward including children with SEN in regular classrooms in both developed and developing countries produced mixed findings (Nketsia, 2016).This is because special education is varied in many nations and educational systems. It is not surprising that different research provides varied results. According to Monje (2017), teachers are supposed to exhibit a favourable attitude toward inclusiveness. One of the most crucial determining factors of successful inclusion is the positive perception of teachers who practice inclusive education (Winzer et al., 2000). Instructors' negative impressions have an impact on their commitments, which can result in lesson delivery that does not meet the learning goals of all students in the classroom (Campbell & Gilmore, 2003; Cook et al., 2000).

According to De Boer et al. (2011), teachers' negative attitudes regarding including children with SEN in ordinary schools lead to low expectations for their students, resulting in fewer learning opportunities and poor academic achievement. A teacher's

attitude and ideas about SEN students will influence their expectations and instructional decisions (Sze, 2006).

Furthermore, some teachers believe that children with learning disabilities who are unable to function in a classroom have a problem, and that it is thus impossible to include such children with learning disabilities in traditional education settings due to their diverse learning demands (Gadagbui, 1998). These viewpoints are based on the idea that students should be divided into groups based on their learning needs. According to Kaufman et al. (2005), successful instruction of children with varying learning needs necessitates grouping them homogeneously so that teachers who have been trained to do so can employ certain pedagogical approaches to enable them benefit from learning. It could be argued that conceptualizing special education in this way creates a barrier to inclusion because it frees up other teachers from taking on responsibilities to teach learners with special-needs.

Dogbatse (2010) carried out a research study on inclusive education at two pilot schools in the Manya Krobo District. The study was conducted using a qualitative approach. It necessitates the use of mixed data collection methods such as interviews and observation. The results of the data analysis revealed that the teachers were unfamiliar with inclusive education and were unprepared for it. In Eritrea's central and Anseba areas, Ringlaben and Price (1981) explored the factors that influence instructors' views about the admission of individuals with disabilities to primary schools. The survey found that, most ordinary primary school teachers had positive attitudes toward enrolling children with disabilities. Some teachers, on the other hand, had a limited understanding of the practice of inclusive education.

In a study of teachers' perceptions of inclusive education in the Cape Coast metropolis of Ghana, Boakye-Akomeah (2015) discovered that teachers also have a positive attitude toward inclusive education and their perceived knowledge and skills in inclusive education practice were good at the fundamental level. The findings also demonstrated teachers' willingness to change teaching strategies to accommodate learners with SEN in the classroom. Also, Abudu (2018) conducted a study in Nalerigu, North East Region, on teachers' readiness for inclusive education, and discovered that teachers lacked sufficient knowledge of inclusive policy practice and that teachers did not support the move toward inclusive education. According to Sharma et al. (2003), special education training helps to alleviate pre-service teachers' anxieties regarding inclusive education. Subban and Sharma (2001) found that special education teachers were passionate about promoting inclusive education. Similar findings were observed by Loreman et al. (2007), who found that teachers' perceptions of inclusive education were influenced negatively by their training or lack of expertise in inclusive practice. As a result, teachers believe that any child with a disability should be placed in a special school.

Subban and Sharma (2006) agreed that teaching children with SEN is difficult and stressful, and that some teachers and school authorities are concerned about refusing to accept students with severe difficulties, with the claim that they are unable to adhere to the instructional timetable. Aniwaa (2017) conducted a study on teachers' opinions of inclusive education in Bekwai Municipality, Ashanti Region, Ghana, involving sixty regular school teachers who were randomly selected to participate in the survey. According to the study's findings, (1) general education teachers had a negative attitude toward inclusive education, despite agreeing that it is important for all students; (2) general education teachers indicated that they were not adequately

prepared for inclusive practice; (3) and that they were not adequately supported in terms of the availability of teaching resources and other special supports for special-education students. Some other studies have reported that teachers have a neutral attitude towards inclusive education.

Poon et al. (2016) employed a sample size of n = 131 in Singapore and discovered that typical primary school instructors were neither accepting nor refusing but had a neutral attitude towards the inclusion of students with impairments. Monje (2017), in contrast to the foregoing, conducted research and uncovered three distinct perspectives on inclusion, believers, non-believers, and true believers. Believers and true-believers both called for full inclusion. Nonbelievers argue against full inclusion for all students with special needs. Negative attitudes toward IE among teachers have an impact on the teaching-learning process and prevent good inclusive education practice.

According to a qualitative survey of Bahamian teachers' perspectives on inclusive education, the majority of primary school instructors (90 percent) reject the inclusion of learners with SEN in basic schools. This research revealed that elementary school instructors hold an unfavourable view of inclusion (Hunter-Johnson et al., 2014). In a study also conducted by Muwana (2012), instructors in Zambia have indicated negative attitudes towards the inclusion of children with SEN in regular classrooms. Teachers perceive children with SEN as slow learners and time wasters, particularly those with severe disabilities.

According to Yekple and Avoke (2005), many teachers have also expressed their displeasure, especially when it comes to teaching students with severe intellectual disabilities or other multiple disabilities. Another study found that learners with

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special needs should be placed in special schools rather than be integrated into regular schools, based on teachers' impressions of inclusion in pilot inclusive education settings in one Cameroon region. According to the findings, teachers agree on the benefits of inclusive education, and their negative attitudes toward inclusion derive from a lack of confidence in their competence to manage and teach children with disabilities (Mngo & Mngo, 2018). In a longitudinal study of teachers' views toward inclusive education, Stanley (2015) discovered that inclusion is not appropriate for every learner with special needs. According to Hallahan & Cohen (2008), inclusion is not the best option for all students. Because of the large class size nature of today's schools and the high school-going age population, their conclusion on the findings on learners with SEN in general classroom settings is that little attention is given to them.

Some studies appear to have also linked classroom teachers' perceptions toward inclusion to their previous experience with children with disabilities. For example, a study on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion conducted in Jordanian schools disclosed that teachers who had experience with learners with SEN in mobility and other physical impairments were most supportive of the idea of including learners with special needs but were negative towards including learners with behavioural disorders (Stanovich, 2004). Similar research conducted by De Boer et al. (2011) indicated that teachers may agree on a theoretical level with inclusion but have negative attitudes toward its implementation.

These researchers discovered that collaborative work between special education teachers and their colleagues did not yield any result in increase in the academic performance of learners with disabilities. Regular school teachers believe that, they have little to offer to learners with intellectually challenged students in the regular

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schools compared to special education teachers, Hallahan and Cohen (2008). Avramidis and Norwich (2002), pointed out that, teachers believe special schools have more to offer, and that they help relieve learners from the stress of constant performance pressure in regular schools, such as failure and underachievement. As a result of these instructors' opposition to the shift toward inclusiveness, the practice process is likely to be fraught with difficulties. Teachers who allow learners with SEN into their classes argue with some justification that, these students are unable to follow school lessons due to a lack of appropriate resources and assistive technologies (Manrique et al., 2016). Teachers also cite the instructional time factor, indicating that when teaching learners with SEN, they need a slower pace in order to attend to all the students, resulting in a delay in subject planning in such lessons (Moreira & Manrique, 2014). As a result, teachers are expected to get professional development in the area of special education, inclusion experience in terms of technology use, and the preparation of the school environment for the realities of inclusive education practice. This includes everything from infrastructure upgrades and assistive technology to help students with SEN learn to the adoption of public policies that include initial and ongoing teacher training, specialist support, and curricular considerations (Boer et al., 2011).

Finally, Monje (2017) believes that examining teachers' perceptions or attitudes about enrolling children with disabilities or SEN in mainstream education settings can have two major advantages. For starters, such research can help to better prepare pre-service teachers through training and preparation. Second, school administrators can decide how to implement professional development programs for general education teachers based on the findings of the study, as well as provide the essential support services and teaching materials where appropriate. It is crucial to understand general

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education teachers' perceptions since they are central to maintaining inclusive practices and their attitudes about the execution of the policy of inclusion are likely to influence their commitment to the policy practice.

2.4 Factors that Influence Teachers' Perception towards Inclusive Education

Teachers are the key stakeholders and actors in making inclusion a reality in every country (Ackah, 2010), thus their perspectives on inclusive education are crucial. As a result, one of the most important success indicators for inclusive education is instructors' opinions (Engelbrecht et al., 2015; Nketsia, 2016). Teachers' negative attitudes may form as a result of tough conditions encountered while teaching kids with special needs, and changing teachers' attitudes might take time (UNESCO, 2009). This is because teaching students with special needs can be challenging at times, and having a positive attitude can make it easier. According to De Boar (2011), teachers' differing perceptions can be caused by a number of connected factors, including child-related variables and teacher-related variables, as well as environmental factors.

Teachers' beliefs, which is a teacher-related variable, can influence their perspectives on inclusive education. Nketsia (2016) conducted a study to learn how people felt about the causes of disability. The study surveyed 501 pre-service teachers from three Ghanaian public colleges of education. It was revealed that participants agreed with cultural and religious notions about the causes of disability to some extent. According to the findings, just 25% of participants believed religion and cultural beliefs influenced their attitudes toward inclusive education. Teachers with limited cultural and religious influences have positive attitudes toward disability. Parents of children without disabilities have threatened to withdraw their children from regular

classrooms if students with disabilities attend regular school, and some people refuse to associate with students with disabilities because they believe disabilities are caused by spirits, Gadagbui, (1998). According to Obeng (2007), the parents' attitude stems from a prevalent belief in spirits in many cultures, which causes infirmities in individuals as a result of sins committed against the land or bad deeds committed by the victim's ancestors. Ministry of education (MoE, 2008), also pointed out that, teachers in Ghana's mainstream schools pay less attention to students with disabilities than their counterparts without disabilities.

It is also possible that personal experiences influenced teachers' professional beliefs. Jordan and Stanovich (2004) discovered that "inequalities in perspectives are associated with variations in practice" (p. 40) in teachers' ideas about inclusion, which led to discrepancies in student accomplishment. Jordan and Stanovich looked at anecdotal evidence and concluded that effective inclusive classroom practices can improve instructors' attitudes toward inclusion. They agreed that encouraging instructors to improve or alter their ways could lead to pleasant experiences that change their attitudes, which would be an interesting research topic to pursue in the future. According to Jordan and Stanovich's advice, successful inclusive education can have a positive impact on teachers' perceptions of inclusion, which is confirmed by qualitative data from Smith's study. Successful inclusive education, according to Jordan and Stanovich's recommendation, can have a positive impact on teachers' perceptions of inclusion, which is confirmed by qualitative data from Smith's (1997) research on teachers' perspectives on high school inclusion.

Teachers' perceptions have been reported to be influenced by the severity of the handicap, which is a child-related trait, according to Avramidis and Norwich (2002).

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Teachers accept SEN children with minor cognitive difficulties with care (Forli, 1995) and reject the inclusion of children with severe disabilities, motivating them to adapt or adjust their activities. According to Gyimah (2006), the kind and severity of impairment appear to be the primary source of instructors' difficulty in integrating pupils with SEN into the regular Ghanaian education system. Teachers who promoted inclusion for children with moderate disabilities were more likely to do so for children with mild disabilities, Park and Chitiyo (2011). Many teachers consider that including children with behavioural difficulties, intellectual challenges, or major physical limitations is inappropriate (Obeng, 2007). Teachers' perspectives are important, according to Park and Chitiyo (2011), because their perceptions influence their commitment on the inclusive education practice.

Teachers' views on inclusive education are influenced by empirically specific teacher characteristics such as age and gender, as well as support services and personal experiences (Kavale & Forness, 2002). Female instructors showed a more positive opinion of inclusive education practices than their male counterparts, according to Avramidis et al. (2001). Female teachers were also reported to be more positive toward kids with SEN in various research (Vaz et al., 2015). Female instructors, according to several studies, were more hopeful and tolerable when it came to supporting inclusive education (Ellins & Porter, 2014). The extent to which this research conclusion is global, however, is yet to be determined. Gender has no effect on negative views toward inclusiveness, Leyser et al. (1994), Boh-Pajooh (1992), and Berryman (1989).

Teachers' age had an impact on how they delivered inclusive education, which was similar to earlier research findings (Wangio, 2014). They believed older teachers had

more expertise and were better suited to assisting learners with special needs than younger ones. According to the head teachers, younger teachers were more supportive of inclusive education since they were eager to learn and could do so through the use of computer technology in the classroom (Wangio, 2014). Another study looked at primary school teachers' perspectives. It was revealed that freshly qualified primary school teachers had a strong theoretical understanding at the outset of their employment, which enabled them to be effective Taylor and Ringlaben, (2012). According to some studies, older teachers showed a negative attitude toward inclusion and had little or no training in inclusive education (Vaz et al., 2015).

The next teacher-related characteristic that affected teachers' perceptions of learners with SEN in mainstream schools is teaching experience, which has been identified in multiple studies as having an impact on teachers' perceptions of inclusion. According to (Taylor & Ringlaben, 2012) studies have showed that, teachers who have dealt with children with disabilities have more positive attitudes toward inclusion than teachers who have never worked with disabled pupils. Clough and Lindsay (1998), also indicated that, young teachers and those with less six years teaching experience are more supportive of inclusion. Children with physical disabilities were accepted more readily by teachers with fewer than six to ten years of experience. This claim, however, is refuted by (Leyser et al., 1994). Norwich (2002), discovered that teachers with a lot of experience have a much more positive attitude toward inclusion. Wangio (2014) also discovered that teachers' backgrounds influenced how inclusive education was implemented. Other studies on inclusion and teacher working experience, on the other hand, have found no link between the two (Sharma et al., 2017).

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Education and training in the field of special education are another teacher-related aspect that affects teachers' opinions. Teachers' views toward inclusion are heavily influenced by their education and training, Salisbury (2006). Also Sharma and Nuttal, (2016), found that teachers with inclusive education had a more positive attitude towards inclusion than teachers without such training. According to Oswald & Swart (2011), pre-service teachers' perceptions of inclusion, as well as their general attitude toward people with SEN, improved after taking an inclusion course, while the majority of instructors were pleased about inclusive education, some teachers were not. They discovered that a brief instruction on inclusion had a noticeable positive impact on instructors' attitudes.

Mukhopadhyay (2014), used a large sample size of (n = 2950) to perform a comparable study with primary school teachers in Botswana, and found that the majority of the participants agreed with the basic notion of inclusion. Teachers, on the other hand, were not excited about having students with SEN in their classes. This was primarily due to a lack of knowledge on how to accommodate kids with disabilities in the classroom.

Another factor that influences teachers' perceptions is their experience in working with children with special needs. This includes professional development, special education training, and inclusion experiences. Avramidis and Norwich (2002) found that teachers with a lot of experience working with people with impairments have considerable more positive attitudes toward inclusion than those who haven't. This was revealed in a poll of educators' attitudes toward inclusive education. In Nigeria, Kenya, and Zimbabwe, Peresuh et al. (1997) performed investigations on special education perspectives towards inclusive education practice. According to their

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findings, those countries are well-equipped to cope with pupils with special needs since instructors are assigned to different institutions for in-service training. Workshops, seminars, and exchange visits were employed by the three countries to achieve their objectives. However, other research has found that social contact alone does not contribute to a positive attitude, but that pre-service training.

Teachers' qualifications are another aspect that may impact their opinions. Teachers' attitudes were not influenced by their schooling, according to some research. Individuals with a higher educational background were found to be more opposed to pupils with special needs being integrated into regular classrooms (Antonak et al., 1995; Stoler, 1992). A statistically significant difference did not exist between teachers who had finished a special education course and those who had not (Nketsia, 2016). In contrast, teachers with advanced degrees were more passionate about inclusive education than those with less advanced degrees (Prakash, 2012).

Aside from teacher characteristics, educational ambient factors appear to have influenced teachers' attitudes toward the construction of inclusive education. The availability of support services in the classroom and at the school level, according to Clough (Lindsay, 1998), can have a significant impact on teachers' positive attitudes. According to the authors, learning support assistants, aids, special teachers, and speech therapists can be both physical and human. They can include learning support assistants, aids, special teachers, and speech therapists, as well as instructional resources or an organized physical school environment. These can reduce teachers' anxieties about workload levels in inclusive classrooms with the help of key partners and authorities. Teachers' attitude may change if such tools and assistance are made available, teachers' attitudes may improve, Vaz et al. (2015). According to this review

of research, the perspectives of the most responsible staff members are a vital component of the policy's successful practice. De Boer et al. (2011) pointed out that teachers' negative attitudes toward inclusion may cause students to have low expectations, resulting in fewer learning opportunities and lower academic achievement.

Large class sizes, is also one of the challenges to the successful practice of inclusive education, Agran et al., (2002). They pointed out that, large class size post a huge workload to teachers making it difficult to be able to focus on each student's unique learning needs. However, it was recommended by Gadagbui (2017) that a class size for inclusive education practice should have a maximum of 20 pupils to enable all children to benefit from teaching and learning process.

The available data revealed the following: (1) beliefs; (2) personal experience: (3) disability type and severity; (4) previous training and professional development; (5) large class size; and (6) classroom and school support service. In addition to teacher-related characteristics such as gender, age, and teaching experience, and level of certification were found to be the most influential variables in teachers' attitudes towards including students with special needs in ordinary schools, particularly in African countries.

What determines this viewpoint is also a challenge for today's inclusive educators and academics. According to the researcher, since the implementation of Ghana's inclusive education policy practice in 2016, there has been little research on teachers' perceptions of inclusive education in Garu district. As a result of this, the goal of this research is to close that gap.

2.5 The Knowledge of teachers towards Inclusive Education Practice.

Ainscow (2014), pointed out that UNESCO conducted a survey on teacher education in fourteen countries around the world, including Ghana, in the early 1990s, and three primary findings emerged. (1) Providing compulsory education in regular schools for all children in the population, (2) including all learners with disability in regular school system; and (3) transforming teacher education and training to achieve the preceding two priorities.

Regular school teachers were also eager to take on the responsibility of SEN students, but they were unsure whether they possessed the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to carry out such assignment. The findings have consequences for teacher education and development, according to the authors, demanding in-service training to include special education and inclusive experience. In accordance with international requirements on teacher education and training (Hayford, 2013), special education is one of the core disciplines taught in a semester at all Colleges of Education and all Universities that produce teachers in Ghana.

There is no arguing that education and training are not the same thing, and that distinction is crucial. The broader concept of in-service education is linked to the idea of providing a foundation for teachers' professional, intellectual, and personal development (Cole, 1997). Morant (1981), defines training as "an activity concerned with improving employee performance in current jobs by imparting skills, knowledge, and attitudes through standard learning procedures and sequences," whereas Cole (1997) defines it as "an activity concerned with imparting knowledge and attitudes through standard learning procedures and sequences." Henderson (1997) defends his training option by claiming that it implies a closer link between learning and action,

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making measurement. He believes that the training's results can be put to immediate use to improve learning outcomes.

According to (Morant, 1981), in-service training should not be considered as a replacement for formal education but rather as a component of the whole in-service education framework. In-service education is referred by Lipham and Hoch (1985), as "all professional activities in which one engages after initial certification and employment and continues until termination of service" (p.183). They think that in-service training should be a continuous process aimed at improving teachers' knowledge, skills, competencies, and teaching abilities. Teachers' abilities and knowledge are vital for student learning since they are the major facilitators who make students learn (Morant, 1981), and in order to provide effective instruction and aid to SEN learners, teachers' knowledge and talents must be continually developed. This implies that a teacher's knowledge and skills determine their efficacy and competence.

A study conducted by Vaz et al. (2015) found out that secondary school teachers lacked the knowledge and competence to educate children with special-needs self-advocacy skills. As a result, they were less prepared to teach these skills to special-needs students during the transition from elementary to secondary school. This problem occurred as a result of a lack of awareness and training regarding the importance of self-advocacy skills for children with special needs from the outset (Blackhurst, 2005). Another reason is that they lack reference tools and clear regulations, so teachers are constantly searching for the best way to teach self-advocacy skills to special-needs students. Teachers must understand how children

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learn, eliminate learning barriers, and establish flexible learning environments (Gyimah, 2006).

More research has also found a link between teachers' self-efficacy and student achievement (Klassen et al., 2010). Individuals' ideas about their capacity to carry out a specific course of action successfully are referred to as self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). According to extensive studies (Bandura, 1997), self-efficacy is a key influence on human accomplishment in a range of settings, including education, health, sports, and business. Students' self-efficacy beliefs have been found to play a crucial role in determining achievement and behaviour in educational research. Furthermore, researchers have discovered that teachers' self-efficacy affects the way they teach as well as the motivation and achievement of their pupils (Tschannen et al., 2001; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). Specific circumstances or domains influence one's level of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). According to Lundgren et al. (2017), a competent instructor plays their professional roles with complete discipline and enthusiasm. Teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills can best instruct and lead students, including those with special needs (Mazzotti et al., 2018).

According to studies, there is a disconnection between goals and principles, as well as how inclusion may be practiced in the educational system (Haug, 2017). As a result, it is vital to create opportunities for teachers to receive professional development (PD), such as through legislation to ensure that "no teacher is left behind." Teacher efficacy is also linked to improving teachers' capacities through professional development so that they can teach special-needs students as well (SENs) (Wong et al., 2015). One's incentive to act is driven by one's conviction in one's own talents (Donohoo & Katz, 2017; Donohoo, 2018). As a result, a teacher who believes in their own skills and

competence becomes more active and prepared to face difficulties. They discovered that teachers require at least eight hours of professional development over a long period of time in order to improve their self-perceived ability to modify instruction for students with varying needs (Mazzotti et al., 2018).

According to Alexander et al. (2015), inclusion is a difficult goal to achieve, and when national curriculums and inclusion goals are combined with the goal of meeting the many different needs of children, demands are created that place more pressure on regular school teachers and create challenges. There are professional development programmes targeted at bridging the gap between classroom practice and inclusion (Hinton et al., 2008; Higginson & Chatfield, 2012). Successful programs include a "whole school approach," in which all school personnel share beliefs and knowledge of on-the-ground experiences that can improve and expand professional skills in teaching and address disparities in children's learning, as well as the importance of modifications of teaching strategies. When teachers are well-prepared to deal with a wide range of situations, they are always eager to persevere and endure what they believe is within their own abilities (Bandura, 1997).

According to Gadagbui (2017), teachers with a high level of knowledge and abilities in special education can help children with special needs, particularly those with learning difficulties, during the teaching and learning process in the school. As a result, strategies and techniques employed in teaching will have a direct influence on the academic and social development of students. According to the author, teachers who adapt their teaching strategies to the needs and talents of students with special needs can develop meaningful relationships with them. Taylor and Ringlaben (2012), indicated that pre-service and in-service teachers with special educational knowledge

and skills will be able to: practice an inclusive education agenda in which children with a variety of educational needs, such as physical, emotional, behavioural, cognitive, and other sensory impairments, are accommodated in the classroom. Besides such teachers would be able to:

i. Identify SEN students as soon as possible so that classes can be tailored to their needs and make redress referrals as needed.

ii. Be aware of special education procedures when a child is being identified and referred, as this is critical information.

iii. Examine technical advancements and applications.

iv. Recognize the causes of disability and value diversity.

v. Work with children who have severe behavioural issues and be an advocate for children with special needs.

Professional development, pre-teacher education, and special education training, as well as successful inclusive education techniques, are essential for inclusive policy practice. These enable teachers to gain the information and skills needed to manage students with SEN, as well as modify teaching strategies to meet the diverse learning needs of all students, including those with SEN, in order to achieve social and academic success. Every teacher's theoretical and practical awareness of inclusive education policy practices is essential to the uninterrupted delivery of the inclusive education agenda.

2.6 Teaching Strategies for Diverse Leaners in the Classroom

According to Mara et al. (2012), the national curriculum framework for school education (NCFSE) stated that, the pursuit of inclusivity is a way of giving to all students a high-quality education. Isolation or segregation approach to education is

neither good for children with special needs nor those without special need education. The authors argued that children with SEN should attend regular classes with their peers in locally funded schools that employ efficient teaching strategies in accordance with social norms.

Teachers must maximize each student's knowledge and experience as the movement to include learner with SEN in general education classes in Ghana grows. In order to effectively and efficiently impart high-quality education to all students, curriculum adaptation and teaching strategy modifications will be necessary, according to Gadagbui, (2017). Traditional curricula and instructional methods or strategies cannot provide equal access and participation for learners with SEN. Additionally, Hayford (2013) noted that an essential component of excellent inclusive practice that increases the likelihood that all students will succeed in their academic work is modifying the "standard" to accommodate individuals who do not fall within predicted margins. According to Salisbury et al., "the reality of today's society is that any child can be a child with special needs on any given day" (2006, p. 311). Because of the diverse needs and skills of the students in their classes, teachers must adapt their curricula and modify their strategies. According to Morant (1981), teachers should select the teaching methods that are best suited to the subject matter being covered as well as the students' level of expertise and background knowledge. Teachers employ a number of tactics to teach students in the classroom in accordance with their learning needs by including information on specific conditions, adapted equipment, or special organizational arrangements in strategies to enhance the teaching and learning process (Gadagbui, 1998).

Also, according to the conceptual framework of the Ghana IE policy document (MoE, 2015p.5), "the IE Policy is expected to provide a platform for addressing the varied educational needs of all Ghanaians of school-age using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and ensuring that the teaching and learning environment is friendly to all learners." Rose and Meyer (2002) pointed out that, digital media, learning, and brain development form the basis of UDL.

They saw a gap between electronic media and small pieces of mental health and educational content. They saw the gap between an ever-diversifying student body and a "one-size-fits-all" educational program and its approach, which would not result in the expected increases in academic accomplishment. The idea of universal design for learning, which is based on the historical use of universal design in architecture as a manner of focusing on the educational practice of comprehending diversity and leveraging technology to facilitate learning, was a significant step forward for CAST. In terms of instructional goals, methods, resources, and assessment, UDL is a method of creating a curriculum that is adaptable enough to take into account the diversity of learners.

The UDL also represents a change in how educators understand learner differences because it is founded on the premise that learning barriers occur as a result of the learner's interaction with the curriculum rather than being inherent simply in the learner's ability, Meyer and Rose, (2005). As opposed to requiring students to follow a rigid curriculum. It underlines how important it is to modify the curriculum and teaching methods in order to fulfil the needs of students' learning. "Choices and supports that ensure that a varied range of children in their classes have access to

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standards-based education." The following ideas, which represent the fundamental elements of UDL, summarize CAST's philosophy of UDL:

i.   A variety of ways to engage students that take advantage of their interests, challenge them appropriately, and inspire their learning.

ii.   Learners with diverse representational modalities to give them a selection of learning opportunities.

iii. A diversity of means of expression, as suggested by Ghana's proposed IE policy, to allow students different ways to demonstrate what they know and can do (MoE, 2015 p.7).

A comprehensive framework called the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) enables all students to have flexible and all-encompassing access to course material. UDL assists teachers in meeting students' visual or auditory needs while taking into account a variety of student learning preferences by presenting content both verbally and graphically (Rose & Meyer, 2002).

Differentiated instruction is closely related to the aforementioned teaching methods. Differentiated instruction is good instruction that is adapted to students' abilities, interests, and learning styles (Tomlinson, 2001). According Tomlinson (2001), the ability to connect new learning to prior information and preferred working methods is made possible by three learner characteristics: readiness, interests, and preferences. The process of differentiating teaching for students, according to Tomlinson et al. (1997), depends on the use of assessment to gather data on students' readiness, interests, and learning preferences as well as their readiness and where they are in their learning. Teachers use this data to alter the educational environment, assessment methods, and evaluation procedures.

According to Tomlinson (2001), providing students with many options for obtaining content, processing information, and demonstrating what they have learned is differentiated education. Differentiated instruction and individualized instruction are not the same thing. Instead, it requires assessing and choosing from a variety of teaching methods as well as frequently utilizing adaptable, short-term groups to satisfy a wide range of learner requirements and preferences (Tomlinson et al., 1997). We can increase the likelihood that students will be able to create new learning through linkages to existing knowledge and preferred working methods by paying attention to their readiness, interests, and learning preferences at various points. According to (Anderson, 2007), there are four ways to differentiate instruction in the classroom: through content, method, product, and learning environment. Each of these options depends on the learner's talents, preferred learning styles, readiness, and interpersonal skills.

Pre-assessment, according to Tomlinson (2001), is a crucial component of differentiated instruction because it identifies each learner's learning barriers, interests, and prior knowledge. This information enables the use of the proper support, teaching strategies, and learning aids or resources to help students access the curriculum's content. These learning assessments let teachers make thoughtful plans for each learner's development. The author claims that teachers can create student assignments based on the findings of pre-assessments, particularly when a student needs more assistance, enrichment, or has a distinct learning style (Anderson, 2007).

1. **Content differentiation**

Anderson, (2007) noted that (Tomlinson, 2000) suggested that the fundamental subject matter of a lesson should cover the learning requirements established by the curriculum. Applications, analyses, and evaluation activities may be assigned to students who have only partially mastered the material. Tasks on the lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy could be required of students who don't understand certain ideas. Students that have a high level of mastery may be highly skilled in evaluation and synthesis. Different texts, novels, or short tales might be used by teachers, each at a reading level suitable for the specific learner.

2. **Differentiation by process**

Process differentiation describes how a learner absorbs knowledge, ideas, and skills (Anderson, 2007). Students may be grouped by teachers according to readiness and preferred learning methods. The primary idea is that a teacher cannot instruct all students in the same way because they all learn in various ways. Which approaches in any subject area make it easiest for students to develop concepts can be used to guide their learning. Teachers take into account the various learning styles of their pupils while creating classes to match their needs. The author claims that when creating lessons, teachers may take into account a wide range of factors, such as culture, socioeconomic status, language, gender, motivation, ability or impairment, learning styles, individual interests, and more

3. **Differentiation by performance**

Differentiation based on product execution is prioritized over providing students with various opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned in class (Anderson,

2007). It is designed to enable students to exhibit their learning in accordance with their unique learning preferences, interests, and characteristics. The student uses tests, evaluations, tasks, reports, or other activities at the conclusion of the class to demonstrate what they have learned in accordance with their learning preferences, areas of interest, and areas of strength.

4. **Differentiation of the environment**

The ideal learning environment can be created by using the environment to differentiate. According to Tomlinson et al. (1997), "the context" can support or interfere with a student's demand for affirmation or participation in the classroom. The physical infrastructure layout of the classroom includes easily accessible urinals and bathrooms. A variety of furniture configurations and quiet areas for individual work are also essential components of a well-structured and supportive learning environment. The best degree of engagement and benefits for the students are achieved as a consequence of the flexible and dynamic employment of a variety of teaching tactics or approaches. Because it is frequently lengthy, demanding, rigid, and non-flexible, the curriculum has always been one of the main barriers to or tools in the educational system for the development of more inclusive provision, giving teachers little or no room to try out new ways to deliver certain curriculum components (Gadagbui, 2017).

The framework for how lessons are planned, developed, and executed in classrooms is created when teachers employ the process of asking questions as a structure to select how content should be taught, in accordance with Udvari Solner's (1996) thesis. The following answers to these queries:

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1. Can the learner participate fully in the session without making any alterations and still get the desired outcome?

2. Will it be necessary to create learning objectives tailored to each student?

3. Is it possible to increase student engagement by switching the delivery method of instruction?

4. Is it feasible to increase student engagement and comprehension by switching up your teaching strategies?

5. Is it possible to alter the surroundings physically to facilitate participation?

6. Will the learner need individualized help in order to participate?

7. Will a separate activity need to be implemented?

8. Can you increase student engagement by modifying the lesson plan's organization?

Following a set of questions, such as those listed above, can assist teachers in determining when and how to modify content methods for learners with SEN. Another teaching strategy is sophisticated organizers. According to King-Sears et al. (1996), when teachers employed advanced organizers at the beginning of classes to show the sequencing and flow of content, students with learning disabilities had fewer questions than when the organizers were not used. The organizers were on the board, and they frequently used visual icons to accompany their statements. For students with unique needs, specific modifications may be quite beneficial.

In addition to the aforementioned strategies is an individualized education plan. An IEP is a written document developed for a single student that outlines the learning objectives the student must meet over a predetermined period of time. According to Blackhurst (2005), the goal of an IEP is to provide evidence of the special educational

interventions and other supports that have been agreed upon to be provided for the child with a special educational need as well as to record the professional opinions of parents, students, and teachers. The author pointed out that an IEP also documents the techniques that must be implemented in order for the child to advance in the educational system. These recommendations give teachers the tools they need to make sure they're taking a holistic approach.

Students with SEN absorb and remember knowledge in a variety of ways, according to Gadagbui (2017), not all of which require traditional reading and listening. Teachers identify areas where each student needs more help, and then utilize personalized strategies to provide planned opportunities for the student to review and master the concept that have already been taught to the entire class. Teachers can also use some particular strategies such as peer tutoring, cooperative learning, behaviour control systems, and technology, Yessledyke et al. (1990). The author pointed out that peer tutoring at the class level allows each student to work at their own instructional level, work as a tutor and tutee, speak with students of varying skill and ability levels, and participate in arrangements cantered on a collective performance.

Another area that can be utilised for the benefit of learners with SEN is computer-assisted instruction (CAI). It refers to software applications that provide education and practice possibilities on a variety of platforms, including laptops and cell phones (MacArthur et al., 2001). Students with learning disabilities may benefit from computer-assisted training since it provides quick feedback and allows them to drill and practice in a non-judgmental environment (Stetter & Hughes, 2010). Computer-assisted teaching approaches have been found to improve spelling and expressive writing skills, practice math skills, and arithmetic information retention in children

with learning difficulties (Bouck & Flanagan, 2009). Children can learn to read more rapidly, practice math concepts, and retain information more easily with the use of computer-assisted devices, claim the authors, resulting in improved academic accomplishment. A technology for converting speech to text is text-to-speech (TTS). For instance, the text-to-speech application Kurzweil 3000 can read written or digital texts out loud. This is advantageous since reading to youngsters increases the likelihood that they will comprehend new words and their meanings (MacArthur et al., 2001).

Decoding and word recognition, as well as reading fluency and comprehension, can all benefit from text-to-speech. Morrison (2007) stated that students who recall more knowledge by listening rather than reading may benefit from text-to-speech software. Students can use this software to help them revise by listening to their typed work.

Furthermore, according to Pritchard (2005), computational intelligence algorithms have been used to form effective student groups, with members of each group having homogeneous skills, difficulties, psychosocial, or cognitive profiles as a result of a holistic assessment of the student's particular characteristics and needs. Regardless of their differences, heterogeneous grouping allows students to learn from one another, improve their communication and social skills, and improve their overall academic performance (Hallahan et al., 2011). Students with special educational needs struggle to maintain a conversation, express their views, participate in group activities, and respond constructively to criticism (Heward, 2004). These obstacles can be overcome if different learners are given ample opportunities to interact with one another. According to the author, such students should be allowed to learn alongside others in the classroom.

Having control of your classroom management is critical to having an effective course delivery in inclusive classrooms (Johnson & Pugach, 1990). It is vital to develop clear standards and goals that are accessible to all students, and the environment in your classroom should be designed to fit the needs of diverse learners. According to the authors, the following are some specific behaviour control strategies that aid in effective instruction:

1. Displaying classroom norms and expectations

2. Encouraging peer-to-peer education and leadership

3. Using signals to settle down, begin working, and put away items

4. Organize supplies by giving students folders, labels, and containers.

5. Checking in with students while they work

6. Using proactive rather than reactive interventions as required.

7. Speaking with students individually about any concerns about stinging daily schedules

Behavioural intervention strategies are strategies that are designed to assist students in modelling the behaviours that are most conducive to their own and their classmates' learning Baer, et al, (1968). Well-managed classrooms ensure disciplinary and foster a positive learning environment. When a teacher's time is spent interacting with students whose behaviour is not focused on the subject being taught, time is taken away from aiding other students. According to Gadagbui (2017), behavioural intervention strategies should be considered as an opportunity to teach in the most effective and efficient manner possible. One of the ways teachers use to help students learn how to control their behaviour is through verbal reinforcement. The most common type of verbal reinforcement is praise.

It is well acknowledged that teaching strategies are multidimensional and their effectiveness is dependent on the context in which they are used. There is no one-size-fits-all solution that will ensure greater student outcomes. However, research has identified a variety of strategies that help children learn (Hattie, 2009; Marzano et al., 2001). Strong classroom management, clear directions, assisting students in engaging meaningfully with the learning concepts, using formative assessment, and providing constructive, supportive feedback are examples of these strategies (Wragg, 2002). Most teachers who have a good attitude toward inclusive education are willing to alter their curriculum, assignments, and instructional approaches to match their students' particular learning requirements. Teaching strategies can have a positive impact on student learning and help all children learn, feel included, and accomplish their educational and social goal.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology of the study in the following areas: research approach; research design; population; sample size; sampling technique; instrumentation; validity; and reliability; procedure for data collection; data analysis; and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Approach

The study adopted the mixed method approach. A study employing mixed methods is one in which the researcher gathers and analyses data, integrates the results, and draws conclusions while using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methodologies in a single study (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). According to Creswell (2007), mixed methods research offers a wider range of tools to accomplish a study's goals and addresses research questions that cannot be answered just by a quantitative or qualitative approach. Geene et al., (1989) outlined the following reasons for undertaking a mixed methods: Triangulation; It aims to improve the validity of a study by comparing quantitative and qualitative data. Completeness: Combining several research methods gives a more thorough and complete view of the phenomena under inquiry. According to Creswell (2007), mixed methods research offers a wider range of tools to accomplish a study's goals and addresses research questions that cannot be answered just by a quantitative or qualitative approach. Many writers contend that using a mixed methods approach can enable the limits of each

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methodology to be neutralized while strengths are built upon, hence generating stronger and more accurate conclusions. Offsetting weaknesses and providing stronger inferences (Bryman, 2006; Creswell et al., 2003).

3.2 Research Design

This study focused on the concurrent mixed-method design. According to Bryman (2012), research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data. Creswell (2005) defined research design as a distinguishing feature used by researchers to collect, analyse and interpret data using either a qualitative or quantitative approach. The concurrent mixed-method allowed the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data in order to provide an in-depth analysis of the research problem (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, concurrent mixed-method collection strategy is used to validate, compare or address different type of questions (Creswell & Plato, 2011).

The researcher used the concurrent mixed-method because it allowed her to collect both the qualitative and quantitative data at the same time during the study and compared the data during the interpretation of the results in order to have better understanding of research inquiry. In this study the concurrent design method enable the quantitative and qualitative data collection occurred at the same phases and at the same time, and both data integration occurs during the interpretation phase.

3.3 Population

According to Creswell (2005), the population is defined as the whole pool from which a sample is chosen. The study's target population was all teachers, which included the head teachers of the various KG and primary schools in the Garu District of the Upper

East region. The target population of the study was 400 teachers, which comprised 88 KG teachers, 267 primary teachers, and 45 head teachers.

3.4 Sample size

The sample is a subgroup of the target population (Creswell, 2005). According to the author, a researcher must choose a sample size in order to meet the study's goal. The study used Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) table to determine the sample size. Per the table, the sample size for KG and primary school teachers is 190. The targeted sample size for the head teachers is six.

3.5 Sampling Technique

The study employed simple random, and proportional stratified random sampling techniques. Sampling is the method of picking individuals or a subset of the population in order to make statistical inferences and estimate population characteristics (Creswell, 2005). According to Hayford (2013), the goal of sampling is to choose a group of people who will either represent the entire population or give specific information needed to answer the research questions.

Amedahe and Gyimah, (2008) stated that five to twenty percent of a population is good enough a sample to be used for generalisation in a research which could give credible results. In this study 20% of the 29 head teachers gives a sample of six which can be used to collect data. To get the six participants out of the 29 head teachers, simple random sampling was used to select them.

Simple Random Sampling is the "simplest method of selecting a sample, in which the sample is selected unit by unit, with equal probability of selection for each unit at each

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draw" (Singh, 2003, p. 71). According to Acharya (2013), in simple random sampling method, every individual has an equal chance of being selected in the sample from the population" (p. 330). Simple random sampling makes sure that every person in a population has an equal probability of being chosen to respond since all have same characteristics (Rahman, et al, 2022)

The researcher wrote 'No' boldly on each of twenty- three small pieces of paper and 'Yes' boldly on six pieces of paper. She wrapped them into further smaller sizes, mixed and put them in a small box. At each school visited, each of the 29 head teachers was asked to select one piece of paper from the box. Only those who picked a paper with 'Yes' were interviewed at their offices respectively, and have their responses recorded on a phone with permission. This interview data was used to triangulate data collected from the responses of the teachers' questionnaire items.

The 190 teachers were considered to have responded to the study's questionnaire using proportional stratified random sampling. Proportional stratified random sampling is non-probability sampling which involves taking random samples from stratified groups in proportion to the population (Creswell, 2014). The researcher used proportional stratified random sampling because the communities where schools are located are heterogeneous.

In using proportionate stratified random sampling, random samples were taken by the researcher from the groups of five circuits in proportion to the population of teachers per each circuit. According to Creswell (2005), this form of stratified random sample is typically more precise statistics because it more accurately represents the total population. It involves making a statistical inference from a sample of the population.

By utilizing proportional stratified random sampling, it allowed the researcher to obtain a sample population that most closely reflects the entire community being studied. The Garu district basic schools are classified into five circuits and the sample size population obtained by the researcher from each circuit's schools is shown on table one.

Table 1: List of circuits with number of KG/Primary Schools, and teacher population in Garu district.

S/N	List of circuits in Garu district	Number of kg/ primary schools for each circuit	Number of teacher population for each Circuit	Number of schools visited in each circuit	sample size
1	GARU EAST	8	83	5	41
2	GARU WEST	9	92	6	45
3	SONGO	10	74	6	36
4	DENUGU	9	68	5	33
5	WERIKAMBO	10	83	7	41
	Total	**46**	**400**	**29**	**196**

3.6 Instrumentations

A closed-ended questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide were utilised to gather the study's data. A questionnaire was used by the researcher because it allowed to sample many participants' thoughts. Additionally, the use of the questionnaire ensured that, a required quantity of the data needed for the study was gathered. Besides, it permitted privacy, which encouraged frankness when responding to sensitive questions (Robson, 2002). The researcher generated (24) items on a few critical aspects linked to teachers' opinions of inclusive education in basic schools; elements that influence teachers' perceptions of inclusive practice; level of expertise in inclusive practice; and teaching methods for teaching diverse learners. On a Likert-

scale rating methodology, respondents were asked to evaluate each question as follows:

Agree. Strongly agree, disagree. Strongly disagree.

3.6.1 Interview

A semi-structured interview guide was used. Maxwell (2005) stated that, interview is a popular and efficient way to understand someone's perspective, or claims. Also according to Avoke (2005), an interview can be thought of as a form of two-person communication. Wragg (2002) noted that this instrument allows the interviewer to ask initial questions, follows by probes meant to seek clarification of issues raised. Probes are either pre-stated or posed in the course of the interview, making the interview process flexible.

The researcher used semi-structured interview guide to collect the data, hence it allows for a more in-depth study of issues from respondents about the research study. So head teachers who are the administrators in control of the day-to-day operations of the schools, were subjected to one-on-one interviews through the use of an interview guide. In order to draw right responses, each head teacher was interviewed separately in their offices. The participants' responses were captured on a phone recorder so that they could be easily transcribed. The in-person interview was held at a number of carefully chosen schools and lasted between 10 and 15 minutes. They were also open to discussing inclusive education practices in traditional classrooms.

3.7 Instrument Validity and Reliability

The supervisors at the Department of Special Education at the University of Education, Winneba, were extensively consulted in order to validate the study's tools. Validity refers to the reliability of the results' application. Validity explains how well the collected data covers the actual area of investigation (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005). According to the authors validity basically means "measure what is intended to be measured"

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Robson (2002) also pointed out that the technical expertise of the researcher significantly affects the validity of questionnaire responses. This study's validity was ensured by the use of content validity. This is achieved by developing questionnaire items that cover every facet of the topics studied. Reliability concerns the extent to which a measurement of a phenomenon provides stable and consist result (Carmines & Zeller, 1979).

Reliability describes the consistency of the outcomes, Dependability, according to Joppe (2000), is the extent to which a collection of results may be relied upon over time. The interview guide and questionnaire items were given out to colleagues for peer assessment and to my supervisor for professional judgment in order to ensure their dependability.

3.8 Pre-Testing

The researcher ran the pre-test on five schools, where ten teachers participated by attending to the questionnaire items and two head teachers attended to the interview guide outside of the study area. Convenient sampling was used to select the ten teachers and the two head teachers from five schools. The pre-test was used to determine the questionnaire's validity and reliability by examining the items and instructions' clarity. The pre-testing was conducted at Bolgatanga municipal directorate basic schools which share similar characteristics with basic schools in the Garu district. The pre-test also determined if the sample polled would understand the questions. This was done two weeks before the actual study data was collected.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

The head of the Department of Special Education at the University of Education, Winneba, provided the researcher with an introduction letter to the Director of

Education of the study area, Garu district. After receiving approval from the Director, the researcher personally met with the school improvement support officers (SISOs) to discuss the study and the intention to collect data at their respective circuit's schools based on the proportions of the number of teachers in their circuit's schools. So the SISOs informed their head teachers to also inform their school staff. The researcher visited schools and spoke to the head teachers and their staff about the study and how teachers could respond to the questionnaire. Volunteers assisted the researcher in distributing questionnaire items at each school they visited. A 95% response rate was supplied by the participants. The targeted heads agreed to be interviewed while their responses were recorded on a phone, and all teachers who reported for duty on the visit days filled out the questionnaire items. The researcher then conducted interviews with the head teachers in their offices.

3.10 Analysis of the Questionnaire and Interview Data

The data from the interviews was transcribed using a code assigned to each interviewee. The data gathered was brought together and analysed under each thematic area, and then discussed with the findings of other similar studies. Thematic areas were formed based on the study questions.

The questionnaire data was analysed with the use of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) data-based software. The researcher used the SPSS software because its simplicity to use in data management. The four Likert type scaled responses of "Agree" and "Strongly agree" were considered as one idea. And "disagree" and "Strongly disagree" as also one ideas. This resulted in only two subgroups, "Agree" and "Disagree". This was done to make the data analysis easier to comprehend and debate. The cumulative totals for the subscale responses were determined teachers'

replies. The items on the questionnaire were numbered 1 to 24 to make cross-checking easier in the event of entry errors. The two subscales, as well as the sum of the responses, were represented on four tables. The responses at the extremes, such as "Agree" and "Disagree," were included and commented on for the data analysis and debates.

3.11 Ethical Implications

The term "ethics" refers to a set of statements that indicate how one should act in a given situation (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Any type of study necessitates dealing with ethical dilemmas, which, according to Punch (1998), can arise at any point of the research process in both qualitative and quantitative methodologies and must be considered. Before, during, and after carrying out research study and as well as during data processing. The researcher was conscious of the ethical implications because educational research should be undertaken within a broad ethical tone framework to ensure that it is done in the acceptable manner.

The study was carried out in a private and confidential manner, according to the laid down of research principles. The participants were told that their participation in the study was completely voluntary and that they might leave at any time if they felt threatened (Bryman, 2012). In addition, the researcher informed the participants that, the information gathered was only for academic purposes. Participants' identities were not allowed to be written on the questionnaire data obtained, ensuring a high level of confidentiality.

3.12 Conclusion

The study adopted a mixed concurrent design method. A questionnaire and interview procedure were utilised. The 190 basic school teachers in the Garu district of Upper East Ghana completed a questionnaire to provide quantitative data, and seven head teachers participated in a semi-structured interview for the qualitative data. This study instrument went through pilot testing to show its consistency and dependability. The researcher found that all 189 of the teachers responded to the questionnaire. This indicated a response or return rate of 99.8%. The collected data was analysed and translated using SSPS into frequencies and tables, bar and par charts for simple comprehension.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings and analyses of data from the field. The chapter has three sections: the demographic data of the respondents; quantitative data from the questionnaire administered to teachers; and qualitative data transcribed from the recorded interview collected from head teachers.

4.1 Demographic Data of the Respondents
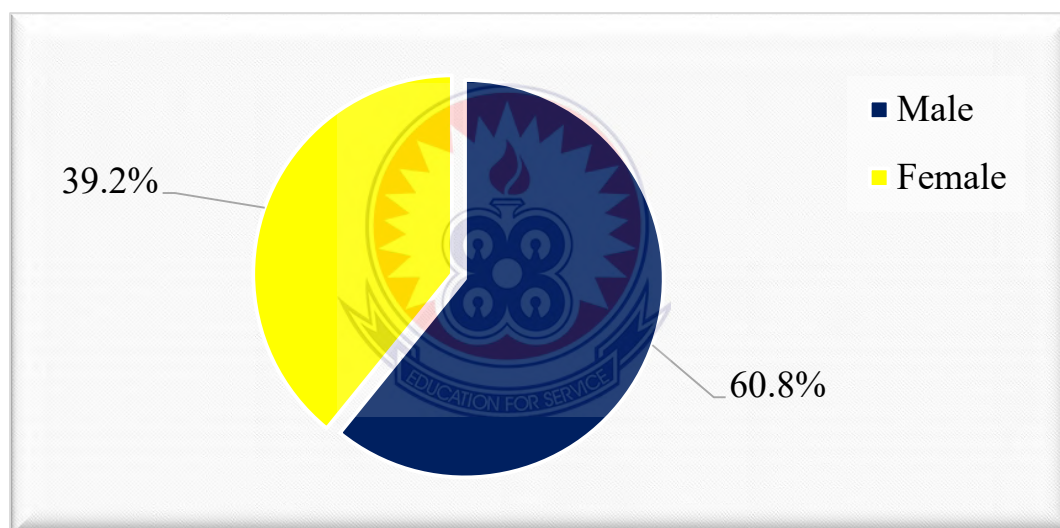
Figure 1: Gender distribution of the respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The data collected was analysed using the statistical package for social science (SPSS) data-based software and translated the data into frequency tables and figures for clearer comprehension and discussion. The researcher used SPSS data based software because of its effectiveness and efficiency in data management. The figure one shows the gender distribution of the study. The study's sample population was 196, where six head teachers out of the twenty nine were selected using simple

random sampling to attend to the interview guide, and the rest of the 190 respondents were considered to have participated in attending to the questionnaire. The number of female respondents in the study was 73, representing 39.2%, and that of male respondents was 116, representing 61.1%. The nature of the teaching staff at the basic schools in Garu district seems to be male-dominated.
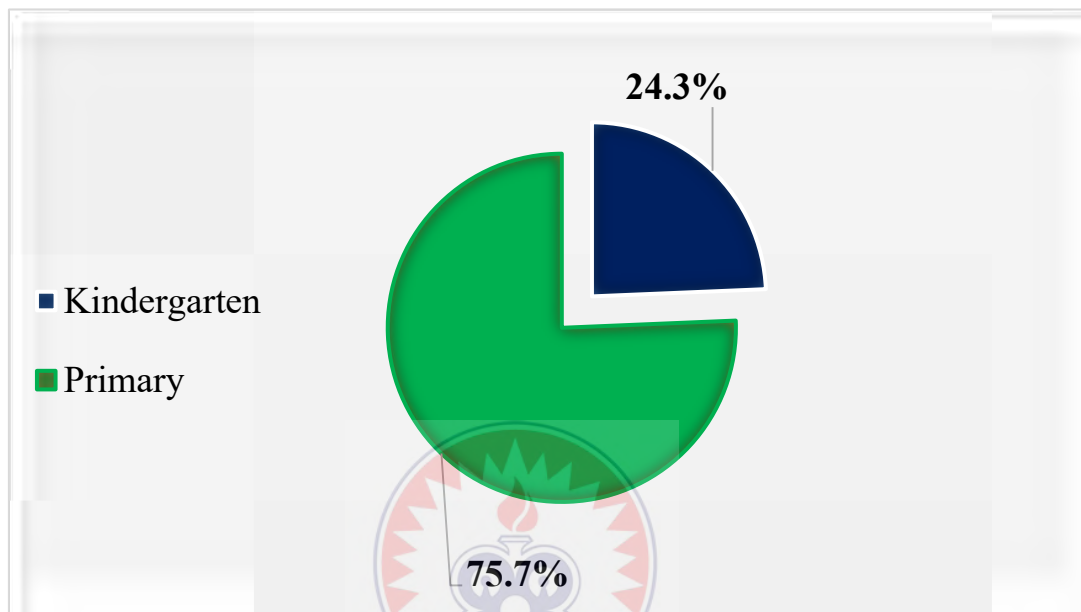
Figure 2: Distribution of the respondents' levels at which they teach

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The figure two is an illustration of the distribution of respondents at the basic, which includes kindergarten (KG) and primary school levels at the Garu district education directorate. A total of 46 respondents, representing 24.3% at the KG level, responded to the questionnaire. Among these respondents were 17 males and 29 female teachers. 143 respondents, representing 75.3%, also attended to the questionnaire at the primary level. Staffing at the KG level seems to be inadequate. Some of the head teachers who were interviewed confirmed this fact by complaining that their schools were understaffed, especially at the KG level.

Table 2: Results of respondents' ages, qualifications, and years of teaching experience

Age	Frequency	Percent (%)
20-29	61	32.3%
30-39	87	46.0%
40-49	33	17.5%
50 and above	8	4.2%
Total	**189**	**100.0%**
Qualification		
Masters	4	2.1
Degree	62	32.8
Diploma	119	63.0
SSCE/WASSCE	4	2.1
Total	**189**	**100.0**
Years of teaching experience		
0-4	89	57%
5-9	58	30.7%
10-14	25	13.2%
15+	17	9.0%
Total	**189**	**99.8.0%**

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table two has the results of the study's respondents' age ranges, highest qualifications, and number of years of teaching experience. With regard to the respondents' age ranges, 61 respondents, representing 32.3%, were aged 20–29. The 87 respondents, representing 48%, were also aged 30-39. While 33 respondents, representing 17.5%, were of the ages 40–49, and 8 respondents, representing 4.2%, indicated their ages to be 50 years and above. The working force will be high if things are equal because almost all the respondents are at their prime ages.

Also, in the area of highest qualifications or attainment for teachers, four respondents, representing 2.1%, had Masters in the field of education. Among the 62 respondents, representing 32.8%, had a degree, while 119, representing 63%, had a Diploma in Basic Education. There was no response for 3-year certificate A. Finally, four respondents, representing 2.1%, attained SSSCE/WASSCE as their highest qualification.

The number of years of teaching experience: Eighty nine representing 57%, had 0–4 years of teaching experience. Fifty eight respondents, representing 30.7%, have also taught 5-9 years. Twenty respondents representing 13.2% had 10–14 years of teaching experience. The 17 respondents, representing 9%, had 15 or more years of teaching experience.

4.2 Analyis of Quantitative Data

The SPSS data based software was used to obtain the frequencies and percentages for each item to make it easier to understand the data entered. The four Likert type scaled responses of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" were considered as one idea. And "strongly disagree" and "disagree" as also one idea. This resulted in only two subgroups, "Agree" and "Disagree".

4.2.1 The perception of teachers toward inclusive education practice.

The study sought to know the perceptions of teachers in Garu basic schools towards inclusive education. The table three, shows the expression of the perceptions of teachers towards inclusive education in Garu basic schools.

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Table 3: Perception of teachers toward inclusive education practice in Garu

      Basic Schools

Code	Perceptions	Agreed %	Disagreed %	Total
P01	It is good that head teachers admit all children including those with mild to moderate disabilities from the community	148 (77.9%)	41 (21.6%)	189 (99.5.0%)
P02	Children with disabilities or with special educational needs can follow instructions in ordinary schools	75 (39.4%)	114 (60%)	189 (99.4.0%)
P03	Head teachers and staff should look for out-of-school children to enroll them in their schools	85 (45%)	104 (54.0%)	189 (99.0%)
P04	Including children with special needs or with disabilities does not slow down teaching and learning process.	41 (21.5%)	148 (77.8%)	189 (99.40%)
P05	Inclusive education is the best approach for teaching all diverse learners	137 (72.1%)	52 (27.3%)	189 (99.4.0%)
P06	Children with disabilities should be educated in special schools only	83 (43.6%)	106 (56.1%)	189 (99.4.0%)
P07	Inclusive education is the solution to discrimination attitudes toward specialneedsd and children with disabilities	137 (72.1%)	52 (27.5%)	189 (99.6%)

Source: Field Survey 2022

It is good that head teachers admit all children, including those with mild to moderate disabilities from the community, was posted: One hundred and forty eight respondents, representing 77.8%, agreed that it was good that head teachers do so, while 41 respondents, representing 21.5%, disagreed. Children with disabilities or with special educational needs can follow instructions at ordinary schools was also stated: Seventy five respondents, representing 39.4%, agreed, and 114 respondents, representing 60%   disagreed with the statement.

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In another statement, head teachers and their staff should look for out-of-school children including those with SEN and enrol them in their schools, eighty five (85) respondents, representing 44%, agreed, while 104 respondents representing 54.70%, disagreed with the statement. Again, a statement: including children with special needs or with disabilities, do not slow down the teaching and learning process, 41 respondents representing 21.5%, agreed while 148 respondents representing 77.8% disagreed. One hundred and thirty nine respondents, representing 73.1%, agreed that inclusive education is the best approach for teaching all learners with SEN, while 52 respondents representing 27.3%, disagreed with that. Children with disabilities should be educated in special schools only. Eighty three representing 43.6%, agreed with the statement, while 106, representing 55.6%, disagreed. In reference to the last statement, inclusive education is the solution to discriminatory attitudes towards individuals with disabilities 137 respondents, representing 72.1%, agreed with the statement, while 52 respondents, representing 27.3%, disagreed.

4.2.2 What are the factors that influence teachers' perception toward inclusive education?

The study also sought to identify the possible factors that influence the perceptions of teachers towards inclusive education. The table four, has the expression of the factors that influence the perception of teachers toward inclusive education in Garu basic schools.

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Table 4: Results on factors that influence teachers' perception

Code	Factors	Agreed %	Disagreed %	Total
F01	Inclusive practice does not adds huge workload to the teacher	31 (16, 3%)	158 (83.3%)	189 (99.4%)
F02	The school environment and infrastructures are adequate to accommodate children with disabilities	33 (17.3)	156 (82.1%)	189 (99.4%)
F03	There is support from parents and other stakeholders to schools.	25 (13.1%)	164 (86.3%)	189 (99.4.0%)
F04	I am in full support of the inclusive education practice	131 (68.9%)	58 (30.5%)	189 (99.4%)
F05	Schools have adequate teaching resources to support children with special educational need and disabilities to learn	37 (19.4%)	152(80%)	189 (99.4.0%)
F06	Parents with children without disabilities does not withdraw their wards when admit children with disabilities	151 (79.4%)	38 (20. %)	189 (99.4.0%)
F07	Parents bring their wards with disabilities or special needs for admission in schools	68 (35.7%)	121 (63.6%)	189 (99.3%)

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Thirty-one respondents, representing 16.3%, agreed that inclusive practice does not add a huge workload to the teacher, while as much as 158 respondents, representing 83.1%, disagreed with the statement. Another statement: The school environment and infrastructure are adequate to accommodate children with disabilities was posted. Thirty three respondents, representing 17.3%, agreed, and 156 respondents, representing 82.1%, disagreed. Twenty five respondents, representing 13.1%, agreed with the statement: there is support from parents and other stakeholders for schools to help educate children with SEN, while 164 respondents, representing 86.3%, disagreed.

Furthermore, 131 respondents, representing 68.9%, agreed to a statement: I am in full support of inclusive education practice, and 58 respondents, representing 30.5%, disagreed to that. School have adequate teaching resources to help children with special educational needs and disabilities learn. Again, 151 respondents (representing 79.4%) agreed to a statement that parents with children without disabilities do not withdraw their wards when admitting children with disabilities, and 38 respondents (representing 20%) disagreed with that. Parents bring their wards with disabilities or special needs for admission into schools. Sixty eight respondents, representing 35.7% agreed, while 121 respondents, representing 63.6% disagreed.

4.2.3 What knowledge do Garu basic schools teachers have toward inclusive education?

The study also sought to learn about teachers' knowledge of inclusive education practice. Table five, has the expression of teachers' knowledge towards inclusive education practice in the Garu district.
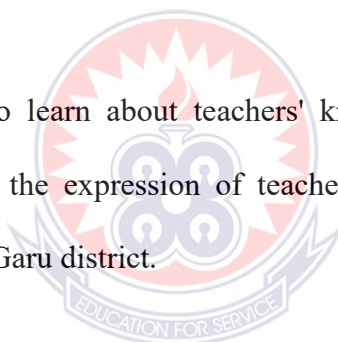
Table 5: Results on teachers' knowledge towards inclusive education

Code	Knowledge Have	Agreed %	Disagreed %	Total
KN01	I have sufficient knowledge to teach diverse learners especially those with mild to moderate disabilities.	91 (47.8%)	98 (51.5%)	189(100.0%)
KN02	I am aware of the inclusive education policy practice at the basic schools.	164 (86.8)	25 (13.2%)	189(99.3%)
KN03	I have received adequate training on how to teach children with disabilities and special needs	77 (40.5)	112 (58.9%)	189 (100.0%
KN04	I can manage children with severe behaviour problems in my class.	28 (14.8%)	161 (85.2%)	189(99.4%)
KN05	I records all information of all children in my class including the special need children	165 (86.8%)	24 (12.6%)	189(99.4%

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Ninety-one respondents, (91) representing 48.8%, agreed with the statement: I have sufficient knowledge to teach diverse learners, especially those with mild to moderate disabilities, and 98 respondents, representing 51.5%, disagreed with that. Another statement: I am aware of the inclusive education policy practiced at the basic schools. As many as 164 respondents, representing 86.3%, agreed, while 25 respondents, representing 13.1%, disagreed. Seventy-seven respondents, representing 40.5%, agreed with the statement: I have received adequate in-service training on how to teach children with disabilities and special needs, while 112 respondents, representing 58.9.3%, disagreed with the statement. Also on a statement: I can manage children with severe behavioural problems in my class, 28 respondents, representing 14.7%, agreed, and many as 161 respondents, representing 84.7%, disagreed with that. The last statement: I record all information of all children in my class, including those with special-needs. As much as 165 respondents represented 86.8% agreed, and 24 respondents represented 12.6% disagreed. The six interviewees representing 100% explained that all their teachers keep records of all learners.

4.2.4 What strategies do teachers use to teach learners with divers needs?

The study further sought to know what strategies teachers employ to teach learners with special needs. The table six has the expression of respondents on the strategies they employ to teach learners with diverse needs in their classes.

Table 6: Responses of teachers on the strategies they use to teach learners with

         diverse needs

Code	Strategies	Agreed %	Disagreed %	Total
ST01	I can modify teaching strategies and learning content to meet the individual learners in class	150 (78.9%)	39 (20.5%)	189 (99.4%)
ST02	I draw individualized educational plan for every special child in my class	28 (14.7%)	161 (84.7%)	189 (99.4%)
ST03	I use universal design for learning techniques to teach learners	90 (47.3%)	99 (52.1%)	189 (99.4.0%)
ST04	I teach individual pupil based on their learning needs and styles	70 (36.8%)	119 (62.6%)	189 (99.3%)
ST05	I use computer technology to facilitate teaching and learning for benefits of all learners in my class	91 (47.8%)	98 (51.5%)	189 (99.3%)

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The statement: I can modify teaching strategies and learning content to meet the individual learners in my class received 150 responses, representing 78.9%, agreed, and 39 respondents, representing 20.5%, disagreed with the statement. The 28 respondents, representing 14.7%, agreed with the statement: "I draw an individualized educational plan for every special child in my class," while 161, representing 84.7%, disagreed with that.

Also, on another statement, I use universal design for learning (UDL) techniques to teach learners: Ninety respondents, representing 47.3%, agreed; and 99 respondents, representing 52.1%, disagreed with the statement. I teach individual pupils based on their learning needs and styles. Seventy respondents, representing 36.8%, agreed, while 96 respondents, representing 50.5%, disagreed. Then on the last statement: I use computer technology to facilitate teaching and learning for the benefits of all learners in my class, Ninety one respondents representing 47.8% agreed and 98 respondents representing 51.5% disagreed with the statement.

4.3 Analysis of Qualitative Data

Presentation and analysis of qualitative data obtained from interview with selected basic school head teachers in the Garu district.

4.3.1 Perception of teachers toward inclusive education practice

Head of school A, is a male who holds a degree in social studies. He is below forty years old, and has held the position of head teacher for the past three years. He replied as follows:

I admit, special-needs children and those with disabilities.

I have a visually impaired child and a physically challenged child at my school.

I and my assistant visited the chief of this community based on the out-of-school children issue. The chief informed us to go back to work so that he could meet his community leaders and find out why some children are not attending school. To date, we have not gotten any feedback from the chief. But there are still children who do not attend school.

Children with learning disabilities actually slow down the teaching process. I have advised some of my staff to focus on mixed ability grouping in order to engage the fast learners.

My teachers accepted all children, including those with disabilities, into their classes.

Inclusive education is the best approach to educating all children, but if care is not taken, it could become the worst approach, which may not benefit all children. The reason is that the needed aids and teaching and learning resources are not available.

Discriminatory attitudes can be reduced through inclusive education.

I support inclusive practice because those disadvantaged children are human beings like us who deserve fair treatment.

No, the nature and severity of the disability will determine whether the child will be in special or regular school.

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Head teacher of the School B, is a male teacher who holds a 3-year certificate, A, and is above fifty years of age and has been a teacher for ten years now. He answered as follows

> *I admit all children because education is a right. There is one boy with a disability who is now in basic four, and I really don't know whether he is intellectually challenged or has behaviour problems. Because he cannot follow instructions, he does not sit in a class, but he comes to school every day. So we keep promoting him to pass through the system.*
>
> *I and my staff do not actually search for out-of-school children because the school enrolment is too high. Teachers accept children with disabilities into their classes.*
>
> *Inclusive education is not the best approach because many of the children with disabilities who are included now are likely not to benefit much during instruction. How can a severely hearing impaired child learn in a regular class without specialist support?*
>
> *An inclusive education approach may reduce the discriminatory attitude. Public education or sensitization may be more effective. I support inclusive practice because education is a right. It has been a long time since I taught, so I really do not know. The nature of the child's disability will determine where to place them.*

Head teacher of School C, is a female who is below fifty years of age and had obtained master degree in social studies. She had been a head teacher for six years mow. She answered as follows

> *I admit all children, including those with disabilities, and I have a profoundly hearing impaired child who cannot participate in learning and her parents are not also willing to send her to a special school. So I did engage her myself.*
>
> *I used to do follow up for dropout and out- of- school children, especially those with disabilities, in the community because education is a right and some of the parents do not support them in terms of daily feeding and provision of writing and reading materials. So we, the staff, make sacrifices to buy food, books, pencils, or pens for such children, but the economy is difficult right now, and we are unable to follow up on such children.*

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My teachers accept all children in their classes.

An inclusive approach could be the best for educating all children if special teachers are posted to the regular schools to support severe and profound children with disabilities to learn,

> *An inclusive approach may gradually minimise the discriminatory attitude, and public education through all social media may help to stop it. I support inclusive education.*

> *Children with learning disabilities slow down the teaching process. That problem may be solved if there were supporting staff for a class rather than just one teacher and that class had 70 or more pupils. It is feasible that no serious learning can take place. The child's nature of disability will tell us where to place them.*

The head teacher of School D, is a male, he is below forty years of age and has obtained a degree certificate in basic education. He has been in headship for three years now. He replied as follows:

> *I admitted two children with disabilities. One has speech impairment and other has low vision. So the district Special education coordinator supported the child to get spectacle from eye hospital and she is doing great in learning in her class. We are not able to search for out -of - school children because of the greater number of pupils' pupation which has couple with other challenges.*

> *My teachers do not discriminate on whom they are supposed to teach*

> *Inclusive education is not the best approach for teaching all children as all the necessary material and support are not given. The support could be the availability of special teachers, teaching resources for teachers and pupils' and also ensuring that pupil-teacher ratio is practicable.*

> *Inclusive approach will not stop the discriminatory attitude, I support inclusive practices. A lot of children with disabilities have learning challenges and therefore slows down teaching and learning process. No those with mild or moderate can be educated at the regular schools*

The head teacher of School E, is a male and teacher who is below fifty years of age. He holds a degree certificate in Environmental and sanitation and has been a head teacher for two years now. He answered as follows:

I admitted children with disabilities in my school.one with hearing impairment, a speech impaired child, and physically challenged and we are managing them well.

We cannot search out-of-school children because of high number of pupils' enrolment.

Teachers accept children with disabilities into their classes

Inclusive education is not the best approach based the prevailing challenges. Current curriculum materials are not available for teachers and pupils' use, how much more can a teacher do to those who may have problems participating in normal lessons. Well they are our children so we do our best to educate all including those with disabilities.

Inclusive education cannot stop the discriminatory attitude toward individuals with disability, it be slow it down. I do support inclusive practice.

Most individuals with disability slows down teaching and learning process. Our teachers are supposed to be given more training to help solve that particular problem. I think only those whose disability is severe are supposed to be educated at the special schools only.

The head teacher of School F, is a female teacher who is below forty years of age and has been in headship for three years now. She holds a degree in basic education.

She answered as follow:

I admitted children with disabilities. But the distance from the nearest community to my school does not favour those who have serious Teachers do not reject learners with disabilities in their classes.

Inclusive education is the best approach to educating children. An inclusive approach may stop the bad attitude towards kids or individuals with disabilities.

I and my staff do not search for out-of-school children because our school is overpopulated by pupils. I support inclusive practice. Children with disabilities slow down the teaching process. The nature of the disability will determine the school to attend.

All the six head teachers who were questioned admit all children including those with disabilities into their schools. Each of their schools had some sort of group of learners with SEN. Each of the six interviewees also stated that their teachers do equally accept learners with disabilities into their classes. This reflected 100% of the head teachers and teachers accepting children with special needs and with disabilities into their schools. Then in the area of searching of out- of- school children, four head teachers did not search for out -of -school children because of high pupils' enrolment in their schools. .One head teacher stop searching of out- of- school children because of economic hardship. And the last head teacher reached out to the community's stakeholder to support by bringing all their children to school and had not got any response from them, meanwhile the head teacher explained that, out –of- school children are likely to be more than those who were in school. This is also quite worrying.

The question of whether inclusive education is the best strategy for educating all children was put to head teachers. It is the best technique, according to four of the interviewees, but there are many obstacles that make it less relevant. This represented 66.7% while two head teachers, who represented 33.3%, also said that the inclusive approach cannot be viewed as the ideal type of education that will produce better results in the future since the problems outweigh the policy benefit.

The ability of inclusive practice to end the discriminatory attitude towards individuals with disabilities was also questioned. Four interviewees stated that, it might minimise it. This represent 66.7%, and two interviewee said, inclusive practice alone could not end the stigma against individuals with disabilities and suggested that, public education or sensitisation could be effective. This   reflected 33.3% who argued

reasonably with suggestions on how to end discriminations attitude against individuals with disabilities. Also the question whether heads were in support of the inclusive practice. Five interviewees representing 66.7% indicated they supported inclusive education, while two interviewees representing 33.3% also spoke out against it, arguing that because of the difficulties associated with big class sizes and other related issues, children with disabilities will not benefit much from inclusive education.

The effectiveness of slowing down the teaching and learning process for children with disabilities was additional questions posed to the heads. According to the five interviewees representing 83.3% explained that, a lot of kids with disabilities also have more learning problems, which actually slows down the teaching and learning process. One interviewee said, "It has been a long time since he taught and therefore has no experience to tell." Additionally, all the six heads representing 100% agreed that kids with mild to moderate disabilities should attend regular schools, while kids with severe and profound disabilities should attend special schools.

4.3.2 The factors that influence the perception of teachers toward inclusive education

Head teacher of the School. A. answered as follows:

> *Not all the classes are accessible. As you can see, not all our classroom blocks have ramps. The school has no light, furniture, or toilet facilities. So I can say no, the infrastructure arrangement does not support learning. '*

> *When it is available, I give the needed teaching and learning resources.*

> *Yes, we get support. An NGO called lively Minds gave us support in the area of teaching. They trained parents of kindergarten children to teach their wards at home and also visit their wards in schools and*

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teach them songs and games. Besides (GALOP), the Ghana Accountability for Learning Project also gave us school grants, which helps us a little. Parents do not help, and when you call for a PTA meeting, only a few actually attend the meetings.

The head teacher of School B. answered as follows:

My classrooms are accessible. Most classrooms have a few benches for pupils' use. There is also a toilet facility, but it's not accessible because it has stairs instead of ramps and our class sizes are large. These are some of the challenges which may not support learning for all children. I support in terms of giving teaching resources to my teachers when the need arises.

As the parent here says, education is free. So they do not support them at all. But the government supports the school through the GALOP Project. There is also a rehabilitation centre here whose staff visit the school once in a while to talk to teachers about how to manage children with disabilities in classrooms.

The head teacher of School C. answered as follows:

"As you can see, there are ramps leading to our classrooms." The infrastructural arrangement is not adequate enough. Our major problems are lack of light and inadequate furniture for pupils. When the need arises and it is available, I give my teachers' support. We get support from the government through the payment of a capitation grant. Periodically, parents do not support,

The head teacher of School D, answered as follows:

All the classes are accessible. We lack light at the school here, and it affects us a lot. I give teaching resources to my teachers when they are available. We had furniture from the community leaders and the government gave us capitation once in a while.

The head teacher of School E, responded.

All the classrooms are accessible. School infrastructure has no light and furniture is adequate for pupils' use. I gives my teachers the needed teaching and learning resource. School gets support from Lively Minds in the area of teaching and learning. And periodic payment of capitation grant from government

The head teacher of School F, answered as follows:

All classrooms are accessible. The school building has no light or furniture. Children sit on the floor and write. I give to teachers when

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the need arises and the resources are available. The school gets support from Lively Minds and a capitation grant from the government.

The seven interviewees were questioned about accessibility in the classroom and whether the infrastructure of the school buildings supports the learning of all children. The four interviewees representing 66.7% retorted that their classrooms were accessible to all children, in contrast to the two representing 33.3% claimed that, not all of their schools' classes were accessible. None of the six interviewees indicated their schools are equipped with the facilities required for optimal learning. It showed that no school has the required facilities to accommodate all learners, including those with disabilities, so that they can learn properly. That's kind is worrisome.

Additionally, interviewees were asked if they provide their teachers with the necessary teaching and learning materials and if the school receives outside assistance from other stakeholders. All the six interviewees said, they provide the necessary assistance when the materials are available or the school has the cash to buy them. Five interviewees also indicated that, their schools get support from the government through periodic payment of GALOP's grant (Ghana Accountability for Learning Project), and Lively Minds, who also trains parents on how to teach their wards games and other things. One head teacher also indicated that his school gets support from parents and the government through capitation. All the six head teachers said their schools got periodic minimal external support. This also represented 100%.

4.3.3 What knowledge do teachers have towards inclusive education

Head of School A, replied as follows as follows:

I and my teachers are aware that Ghana's education service has adopted inclusive policy practice. Inclusive education may not benefit all children because of the numerous challenges that has choked and likely to cripple such an important policy. Teachers keep records of all pupils including those with disability

Because special education formed part of teacher education curriculum, all teachers have had that training. I have not organised any workshop in the area of special education for my staff.

Head teacher of the School B, answered as follows:

We are aware of the inclusive education policy practice in Ghana. Inclusive education may not benefit those with the learning disability much.

My teachers keep records of all children in their class. Teachers here have had training in special education. I have being organising training for teacher but not in the area of special education

Head teacher of School C, answered as follows:

We are aware of inclusive education policy in Ghana. Inclusive education benefit all learners. Keeping records is part of my teachers' job

All teachers have had training in special education from their respective Universities and Colleges of education. I have not organised in-service training for my teachers in the area of special education. Our focus for training is concentrated on the core subjects

The head teacher of School D, replied as follows:

We are aware of the inclusive policy practice in Ghana. Inclusive education benefits all learners. Record keeping of pupils is our work. All teachers had general training in special education. I have not organised training in special education.

The head teacher of School E, answered as follows:

We are aware of the policy practice of inclusive education. Inclusive education benefit all learners no matter the challenges. All of us keep

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> *records of our pupils. All have had the general training of special education with the exception of me. If the Universities or colleges of education can revise their curriculum for teacher education to enable teachers to be able to teach the deaf and blind. This could make inclusive practice work. When it comes to special education we do not have resource personnel. So I never thought of organising training in that area for my teachers.*

The head teacher of School F**,** answered as follow:

> *We are aware of the inclusive practices in schools. Inclusive education can benefit all children. My teachers keep records of all their children. All teachers got general training in special education. I organised training on classroom management of children with disabilities*

The question: Are you aware of the inclusive practice policy in basic schools? All the six interviewees representing 100%indicated that they were much aware. Another question: Does the inclusive education benefit all children? Four interviewees representing 66.7% argued that, inclusive education will benefit all learner whiles two interviewees representing 33.7% also argued that, many children are likely not to benefit from learning due to the numerous challenges associated with the policy practice. The interviewees were questioned if teachers kept detailed records of all students, including those with disabilities. Each of the six interviewees representing 100% indicated that all their teachers keep records of all learners in their schools. In the area of whether all teachers received education in special education; six interviewees representing 100% pointed out that all their teachers, with the exception of a few pupils' teachers, had general education in special education at their respective Colleges of education. Or at the Universities they graduated from. The question if they had organised in-service training in the area of special education for their teachers. None had organised professional development for their teachers in the area of special education. They argued that the focus of training has rather been on the core subjects.

4.3.4 What strategies do your teachers use in teaching learners with divers

needs?

Head teacher of School A, answered as follows:

> *Yes, teachers do modify their teaching strategies and the curriculum when there is a need to do so. We teach ICT as subject but we do not use it as a tool to teach other subjects. We don't have children who need that plan individualized educational plan*

Head teacher of School B, answered as follows:

> *My teachers modify both content and strategies any time the situation of pupils demand so. We do not have light and computers in this school but teachers manage to tech ICT as a subject. We have not plan anything like that for our children with disabilities*

Head teacher of School C, answered as follows

> *Teachers modified their strategies when it is necessary. We have not no light in the school but my teachers teach ICT. We have not drawn any individualized plan for any child.*

Head teacher of School D, answered as follows:

> *Teachers do alter their methodology to suit pupils learning. My teachers teach ICT but they do not use its applications to tech other subjects. Teachers teach all the children in a class at same time, they do not use different plan for those with disabilities.*

Head teacher of School E, answered as follows:

> *Teachers modify their teaching methods for enable children understand their lessons. We do not have light so we manage to teach as a subject because we have no way to explore it as a tool. We have not drawn any individualized plan for any of our children with disabilities.*

Head teacher of School F, answered as follows;

> *Teachers change their strategies to appropriately meet the learning needs of their class children. Our school do not have light but teachers teach ICT. The king of children with disability we have here does not need an individualized educational plan,*

The interviewees were questioned whether teachers modify their teaching strategies and the curriculum content to enable pupils to understand lessons. Each of the six

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interviewees stated that their teachers do modify their teaching strategies and curriculum content when there is a need to do so for pupils to understand. This reflected 100% of teachers' willingness to modify strategies and the curriculum content to enable all learners to participate in and benefit from learning. Also, interviewees were further asked whether they drew individualized educational plans for children with disabilities at their various schools. The two head teachers explained that the calibre of children with disabilities in their schools doesn't need the individualized educational plan and that they can all follow lessons with the normal curriculum. Whiles four respondents representing 66.7% did not know what individualized educational plan is about and therefore have not drawn such plan for their children with special educational need. The head teachers were further enquired whether their teachers use computer applications in the delivery of their lessons to promote pupils' understanding, the six interviewees representing 100% stated that their teachers teach students ICT as a subject, but not as a tool for teaching other subjects.
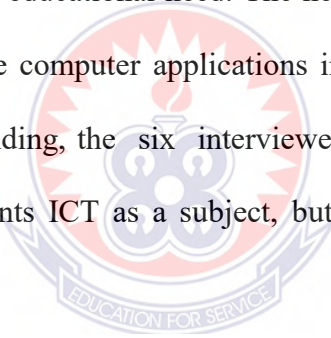
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

The findings and outcomes for the study are discussed in this chapter. The important themes raised in both the interview guide and the questionnaire items as well as the findings are discussed.

5.1 The Perceptions of Teachers towards Inclusive Education Practice

A statement: It is good that head teachers admit all children, including those with mild to moderate disabilities, from the community. One hundred and forty eight respondents, representing 77.8%, agreed that it was good that head teachers do so, while 41 respondents, representing 21.5%, disagreed with that. On the qualitative data, all the six head teachers who were interviewed admitted all children, including those with disabilities, into their schools. Each of their schools had some sort of group of learners with special-needs. The six interviewees also stated that their teachers do equally accept learners with disabilities into their classes. This reflected 100% of the head teachers and teachers accepting children with special needs and with disabilities into their schools.

Another statement: Children with disabilities or with special educational needs can follow instructions at ordinary schools. Seven five respondents, representing 39.7%, agreed, and 114 respondents, representing 60.0% disagreed with that. In the same vein, here's another statement: including children with special needs or disabilities does not slow down the teaching and learning process. Fifty two respondents,

representing 27.3%, agreed with that and 137 respondents, representing 72.1% disagreed.

According to the five interviewees representing 83.3%, a lot of kids with disabilities also have more learning problems, which actually slows down the teaching and learning process. One interviewee said, "It has been a long time since he taught and therefore has no experience to tell."

Ainscow (2004) defined inclusive education as a process that involves identifying and removing barriers; it is concerned with all learners' presence, involvement, and achievement, with a special focus on those who are on the margins of marginalization or underachievement. Inclusion is defined by Gyimah (2006, p722) as "the complete need of learners to participate in regular age-appropriate classrooms in their neighbourhood schools, as well as access to relevant help and support services and individualized programme. "Teachers need to understand the inclusive education concept well in order to employ their professionalism to remove learning barriers for all learners, including those with disabilities, to enable them to participate in and benefit from education.

Avramidis and Norwich (2002) and O'Brian and Ryhan, (2005) also pointed out that, without coherent plan for training of teachers on educational needs of children with special needs, attempt to include these children in regular schools may not yield good results. Also a statement: Head teachers and their staff should look for out-of-school children 85 respondents, representing 44.7% agreed while 104 respondents, representing 54.7%, disagreed with the statement. On the basis of the qualitative data collected, four interviewees representing 66.7% did not search for out-of-school children because of the high pupil enrolment in their schools. One interviewee

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represented 16.6% stopped searching of out-of-school children because of economic hardship. And the last head teacher reached out to the community's stakeholders to support by bringing all their children to school and had not gotten any response from them. Meanwhile, the head teacher complained that out-of-school children were likely to be more than those who were in school.

This is also quite worrying. The majority of the respondents who disagreed with the search for out-of-school children might be for the same reasons as indicated by the interviewees. As a high load of enrolment of learners and a lack of the necessary teaching and learning resources to support teaching and learning process, especially those with special educational needs, to benefit from education, Maikish et al. (2009) also pointed out that, getting children from the marginalised and disadvantaged communities to enrol and complete basic school education still remains a challenge. The national legislative framework, which includes the 1961 education legislation, the 1992 constitution, the FCUBE policy, and the disabilities act of 2006, are all designed to guarantee that all children in Ghana have access to basic education (MoE, 2015).

The implementation of these policies and the actual school attendance of all Ghanaian children of school age remain disconnected, nevertheless. For instance, the 1996 Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education policy aimed to increase access to basic education by requiring parents to enrol their children in school until they have finished their basic education. This shows a determination to exert pressure on parents to enrol their children in school. In the absence of any enforcement procedures, parents only have the possibility of warnings and fines. Some parents want to make sure that their children work for the household and the family business. Enforcement tactics will need to be devised to deal with difficult circumstances in order to ensure

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that parents send all of their children to school to at least complete basic school education.

The 137 respondents, representing 72.1%, agreed that inclusive education is the best approach for teaching all learners with diverse needs and 52, representing 27.3%, disagreed with the statement. The question of whether inclusive education is the best strategy for educating all children was put to head teachers. It is the best technique, according to four of the interviewees, but there are many obstacles that make it less relevant. This represented 66.7%, while two interviewees, who represented 33.3%, also said that the inclusive approach cannot be viewed as the ideal type of education that will produce better results in the future since the problems outweigh the policy benefit. Clough and Lindsay (1991) found that instructors have a more positive attitude when there are support services available in the classroom and at the school level, such as teaching and learning materials, assistants/aids, special teachers, and speech therapists.,

Also, 83 respondents representing 43.6%, agreed to a statement: Children with disabilities should be educated in special schools only, while 106 respondents, representing 55.7%, disagreed with the statement. The six interviewees representing 100% explained that not all children with disabilities are supposed to be educated only in special schools, but the mild or those with moderate disabilities could be educated at regular schools. Despite the fact that a majority of respondents earlier agreed that children with disabilities slowed down the teaching and learning process and could not follow lessons in ordinary schools, a majority of the respondents also disagreed with the statement that children with disabilities should be educated in special schools only. This could be a signal that teachers have accepted the inclusive

practice strategy, but how to put it into practice for learners to benefit as expected may be the problem. Additionally, these results support those of Avamidis and Norrwich (2002), who found that teachers' attitudes are influenced by the nature of learners' disabilities and educational needs. Most regular school teachers are willing to include students with mild to moderate disabilities, but they unanimously oppose the inclusion of students with severe to profound disabilities.

In reference to the last statement 137 respondents representing 72.1% agreed with the statement: Inclusive education is the solution to discriminatory attitudes toward children with special needs and those with disabilities, while 52 respondents representing 27.3% disagreed with the statement. The five interviewees stated that it might minimised it. This represents 83.3%, and one interviewee stated that inclusive practice alone will not end the stigmatization of people with disabilities, and that, public education or sensitization may be effective. This reflected 16.7% who argued reasonably with suggestions on how to end discrimination attitudes against individuals with disabilities.

5.2 Factors that Influence the Perception of Teachers toward Inclusive Education

According to the statement, inclusive practice did not increase the teacher's workload significantly. Thirty one respondents, representing 16.3%, agreed that inclusion does not add a huge workload to the teacher, while as many as 158 respondents, representing 83.1%, disagreed with that. Michel (2005), Clough and Lindsay (1991) identified support services as a pre-requisite for effective inclusive education practice. Support at class and school levels are highly important in reducing teachers' anxiety and stress with regard to workload instructional modifications.

Also, 33 respondents, representing 17.3%, agreed with the statement: The school environment and infrastructure are adequate to accommodate children with disabilities, while 156 respondents, representing 82.1%, disagreed with the statement. None of the six interviewees indicated their schools are equipped with the facilities required for optimal learning. It showed that no school has the required facilities to accommodate all learners, including those with disabilities, so that they could learn. Some basic schools needed immediate infrastructure restructuring and provision of new educational facilities to be able to offer access and quality education to all learners and for the increasing population of Ghanaian children.

Furthermore, 25 respondents, representing 13.1%, agreed that there is support from parents and other stakeholders to help schools educate children with special needs and 164 respondents, representing 86.3%, disagreed with that. Five interviewees also indicated that their schools get minimal support from the government through periodic payment of GALOP's (Ghana Accountability for Learning grant), and Lively Minds, who also trains parents on how to engage their wards to play games and other things. The last interviewee stated that his school gets support from parents and the government through capitation. The six interviewees, however, indicated that the periodic help from the government is not consistent and also woefully inadequate. That is why perhaps a majority of respondents disagreed that their schools get support from parents and other stakeholders.

Another statement: Schools have adequate teaching resources to support children with special educational needs and disabilities to learn. Thirty seven respondents, representing 19.2%, agreed, while 152 respondents, representing 80.0%, disagreed with that. Studies have shown that the perceptions of teachers towards inclusive

education are mostly influenced by, among other things, the availability or absence of teaching and learning resources. Similar findings were made by Ntuli and Traore (2013), who found that insufficient facilities for teaching and learning are detrimental to teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education practices in Ghana. Resources, funding, and staffing were also identified as some of the factors that influenced teachers' perceptions of inclusive education in South African Engelbrecht et al. (2016)

 The 151 respondents (79.4%) agreed to the statement that, parents with children without disabilities do not withdraw their wards when admit children with disabilities in school, while 38 respondents (20.0%) disagreed. The last statement: parents bring their wards with disabilities or with special needs for admission into schools, 68 respondents representing 35.7% agreed and 121 respondents representing 63.6% disagreed with the statement. This may imply that parents do not send their children with disabilities to school. Parents of children with disabilities are challenged in their efforts to raise and educate their children. One of the biggest obstacles to the education of children with disabilities is poverty, which is seen as both a cause and a result of impairment (Global Campaign for Education, 2015). Assistive technology, transportation, medical expenses, and the need for educational assessment, assistance, and care may all be more costly for children with disabilities. This burden on families with children with disabilities exacerbate the effects of financial difficulty. Additionally, parental perspectives on the potential benefits of education affect their choices towards enrolling their children in school (Mutua & Dimitrov, 2012).

Disability-affected people and their families have identified a significant obstacle to obtaining services as a lack of access to valuable and accessible information (Republic of Kenya, 2008). In some circumstances, parents of disabled children are

not even aware of the resources available to their children or where to turn for aid (Kiarie, 2007). The educational system may scare some parents with children with disabilities, and other parents may keep their children with disabilities at home out of concern about prejudice and stigma. Community-based programs must be able to recognize and comprehend these issues in order to serve families of children with disabilities.

5.3 What Knowledge do Garu Basic Schools Teachers have towards Inclusive Education

I have sufficient knowledge to teach diverse learners, especially those with mild to moderate disabilities, 91 respondents, representing 47.8%, agreed, while 98 respondents, representing 51.5%, disagreed with that. I have received adequate training on how to teach children with disabilities and special needs 77 respondents, or 40.5%, agreed, while 112 respondents, or 58.9%, disagreed that they had received adequate training on how to teach children with disabilities. The majority of respondents on the above two related statements have made their stand clear that they do not have sufficient knowledge to teach diverse learners, nor have they received adequate training on how to teach children with disabilities.

Mazzotti et al. (2018) observed that in order to provide students with the appropriate education and guidance, it is critical to continuously enhance teachers' knowledge and skills. According to He, et al. (2017), a teacher's competence and efficacy are determined by their knowledge and skills. An effective teacher completes the assignment willingly and systematically. Students could be guided and taught by teachers with experience and competence, especially those with exceptional educational needs (Leko et al., 2015; Mazzotti et al., 2018). This is consistent with the

findings of Klassen et al. (2010), who discovered that general education teachers are better prepared to teach a range of children in inclusive settings when they receive ongoing professional development in teaching approaches relating to learners with special-needs.

Another statement: I can manage children with severe behavioural problems in my class. Only 24 respondents representing 12.6% agreed, while 161 respondents representing 84.7% disagreed with that. Behaviour issues in the classroom make both the teacher and the students more stressed, impede learning, and clash with both learning goals and learning processes (Gadagbui, 2017). As the emphasis turns from the current academic tasks to the disruptions caused by disruptive peers, they also alter the atmosphere in the classroom. Talking out of turn and other persistent low-level disruptive behaviours were cited by British teachers as the most frequent and stressful because of their ongoing interruption of both classroom activities and the teaching-learning process. The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills 2005, section 65, p.15, quoted the Elton Report (1989), which said that "poor classroom organization, planning, and teaching" was thought to be the cause of 80% of disruptive behaviour in the UK.

Also, on a statement: I am aware of the inclusive education policy practice at the basic schools. As much as 164 respondents, representing 86.3%, agreed, while 25 respondents, representing 13.1%, disagreed with that. The six interviewees were asked a similar question and all the respondents representing 100% stated that, they were aware of the inclusive practice Ghana's education service has adopted. The study's interest was to find out the participants' awareness of the inclusive education practice, and almost all participants indicated that they were aware of it.

In reference to the last statement: I record details of all children in my class, including those with special-needs children: One hundred and six five respondents, representing 86.8%, agreed, while 24 respondents, representing 12.6%, disagreed that they keep records of all learners in their classrooms. The six interviewees representing 100% also stated that all their teachers keep records of their learners. Record keeping helps keep track of a child's educational progress and changing educational needs. Developing an organizational system for your child's records is an effective way to prepare for Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meetings (Gadagbui, 2917).

5.4 Strategies use to Teach Learners with Diverse Need

The statement: I can modify teaching strategies and learning content to meet the individual learners in my class: One hundred and fifty respondents, representing 78.9%, agreed, and 39 respondents, representing 20.5%, disagreed with that. The interviewees were questioned based on the same thing. Six of them, representing 100 %, explained that their teachers do modify their strategies when there is a need to do so to enhance pupils' understanding.

The twenty eight respondents, representing 14.7%, agreed with the statement: "I draw an individualized educational plan for every special child in my class," while 161, representing 84.7%, disagreed with the statement. The four interviewees representing 66.7% stated that, they have no idea about IEP. And two indicated that, learners with special educational needs in their schools can benefit from the normal curriculum and therefore does not need the IEP. This procedure aims to promote effective communication for the sharing of responsibility for the crucial IEP design components, such as planning, reaching consensus on goals, and sharing accountability for outcomes (Gadagbui, 2017). The specific plan for each student is

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meant to serve as a roadmap for teachers as they modify the overall educational curriculum to accommodate the unique demands each student's with disability needs present. Accordingly, the student with SEN participates in the mainstream curriculum whenever possible and is subsequently supplemented as necessary with targeted, adapted elements (Queensland Department of Education, 2003a).

Furthermore, a statement, I use universal design for learning (UDL) techniques to teach learners; Ninety respondents, representing 47.3%, agreed, and 99 respondents, representing 52.1%, disagreed with the statement. I teach individual pupils based on their learning needs and styles. Seventy respondents, representing 36.4%, agreed, while 96 respondents, representing 50.5%, disagreed. UDL is an approach to designing a curriculum that includes instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessment that are flexible enough to accommodate learner differences. According to Meyer & Rose (2005), it emphasizes the need for a curriculum that can be adapted to student needs rather than requiring learners to adapt to an inflexible curriculum.

Then the last statement was; I use computer technology to facilitate teaching and learning for the benefits of all learners in my class. Ninety one respondents, representing 47.8%, agreed and 98 respondents, representing 51.5%, disagreed with that. The interviewees were also asked whether their teachers use computer applications in the delivery of their lessons to promote pupils' understanding. Each of the six interviewees stated that their teachers teach ICT as a subject to their students rather than as a tool for teaching other subjects. Many students in the United States are unable to completely benefit from a standard educational program because of a condition that limits their capacity to interact with others in a typical classroom

setting. The assistive technology is recognised to have supported learning for all learner with diverse needs.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter included a summary of the study's findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The specific objectives of this study were to: Investigate the perception of teachers toward inclusive education; investigate factors that influence their perception toward inclusive education practice in basic schools; Examine the knowledge of teachers toward inclusive education: And find out, the strategies teachers employ to teach children with diverse need

6.1 Summary of Findings

The summary of findings was based on the theme raised by the research questions.

6.1.1 Perceptions of teachers towards inclusive education

The perception of teachers toward inclusive education is generally positive. A majority of the respondents accepted that an inclusive education practice strategy have paved the way for all learners, especially those with disabilities, who otherwise could not have the free access to attend their community schools to now do so.

6.1.2 Factors that influence the perceptions of teachers towards inclusive education

The collected data showed the following characteristics that influence teachers' perceptions of inclusive education practice: (1) high load of enrolment of pupils in schools; (2) lack of required teaching and learning resources; (3) lack of facilities like light, water, furniture, toilets and urinals; and others (4) inadequate support at both

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school and class level; and (5) parents' failure to enrol their wards, especially those with disabilities, in school.

6.1.3 Teachers' knowledge of the inclusive education policy practice

The knowledge of teachers toward inclusive education practice could be considered as average. From the data gathered, majority of the respondents indicated that, they did not have sufficient knowledge to teach diverse learners, and they have not received adequate training on how to teach children with disabilities.

6.1.4 Teaching strategies for learners with special educational need

The data showed that the majority of the respondents indicated that they can modify their teaching strategies and contend of the curriculum to enable learners with special need to participate in and benefit from education. But when it came to the drawing of IEPs for children with disabilities in their schools, the use of computer applications and UDL teaching strategies to facilitate teaching and learning process remained unused by the teachers. From the head teachers who were interviewed, teachers employ the normal traditional teaching methods to teach diverse learners. This might compromise the participation of learners, especially those with special educational needs, to benefit from lessons. Besides, inclusive practice cannot be successful without a coordinated IEP for learners who have difficulty benefiting from the normal curriculum. From the interview data, some of the heads did not know what an IEP was all about, let alone how to plan one for their special educational needs children.

6.2 Conclusion

The perceptions of teachers towards inclusive education practice in Garu education district schools are generally positive. The head teachers and teachers accept all learners, including those with mild to moderate disabilities, into their schools.

However the majority's problem is how to educate them in the regular school settings. The data showed that the majority do not have sufficient knowledge nor have there been professional development to equip them in the area of inclusive practices. Hayford (2011) raised concern that, inclusive education is not just the placement of children with disabilities in regular schools without conscious support and strategies in place to enable them benefit from learning. This could lead to grade repetition, failure, and drop-outs of learners from schools.

Though teachers consider inclusive education practice as a good strategy however, there were numerous identified challenges at the various schools level. And if some of those problems do not receive immediate intervention, children with special need who are included currently and those who in the future would also be included, are likely to suffer the end results or the consequences as indicated by Hayford in the regular school system. Based on the identified problems that, the recommendations are stated

6.3 Recommendations

1. Ghana's education service should assist the district education office to organise training for the head teachers and teachers in the area of the inclusive practices and strategies related to teaching learners with special educational needs in an inclusive setting.

2. Besides that, special education should be made to be part of the weekly professional development training at the school level.

3. All schools should be supplied with light, running water. Furniture, toilet and urinal facilities, and the necessary teaching and learning resources to help for the optimum teaching and learning.

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4. Government should employ teachers especially special education teachers to augment the work of regular school teachers

5. Teachers need to stand as advocates for special-needs children as well as out-of-school children.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research

The study could not cover Junior high schools and the secondary schools in the district. Similar studies could be carried out to cover those areas. Besides, there is a need to research on the Perceptions of parents and local stakeholders towards inclusive education.

The experience of children with special needs and their non-disabled peers in the inclusive school settings is another area. Also a research could be carried out at the Colleges of Education and some of the Universities that prepare and shape the knowledge and skills of teachers.
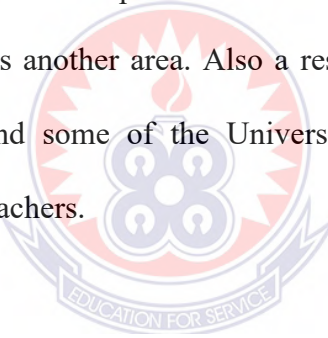
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire for Teachers

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

NOTE. *Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study. This questionnaire aims to collect perceptions of teachers towards inclusive education in basic schools in the Garu District. Please keep in mind that any information provided by a respondent will be kept strictly confidential.*

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Tick the level you teach: KG   [ ]   Primary [ ]

2. Tick your sex: Male   [ ]   Female [ ]

3. Age of respondent;
    20-29 [ ]   30-39 [ ]   40-49 [ ]   50+ [ ]

4. Tick your highest qualification;
    Master's [ ]   Degree [ ]   Diploma [ ] Cert 'A' [ ] SSCE/WASSCE [ ]

5. Tick the number of years you have taught
    0-4 [ ]   5-10 [ ]   10-15 [ ]   15+ [ ]

6. SECTION B: What are the perceptions of teachers towards inclusive education in practice in Gau schools?

Tick your level of agreement to the following statements (F01 – F07).

Code	Perceptions	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
P01	It is good that head teachers admit all children, including those with mild to moderate disabilities from the community.				
P02	Children with disabilities or with special educational needs can follow instructions in ordinary schools.				
P03	Head teachers and staff should look for out-of-school children with special needs and enrol them in their schools.				
P04	Including children with special needs or disabilities in regular schools does not				

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Code					
	slow down the teaching and learning process.				
P05	Inclusive education is the best approach for teaching all diverse learners.				
P06	Children with disabilities should be educated in special schools only.				
P07	Inclusive education is the solution to the discriminatory attitude towards special needs children or those with disabilities				

**7. SECTION C: What are the possible factors that influence teachers' perceptions?**

Tick your level of agreement to the following statements (F01 – F07).

Code	Factors	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
F01	Inclusive practice does not add a huge workload to the teacher				
F02	School environment and infrastructural arrangement are adequate to accommodate children with disabilities.				
F03	There is support from parents and other stakeholders for schools to help educate needs children				
F04	I am in support of inclusive education practice.				
F05	Schools have adequate teaching and learning resources to support children with special educational needs and disabilities to learn.				
F06	Parents with children without disabilities do not withdraw their wards when admit children with disabilities.				
F07	Parent bring their wards with disabilities admissions at the regular school.				

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8. SECTION D: What is Garu basic school teachers' knowledge of inclusive education?

Tick your level of agreement to the following statements (KN01 – KN05)

	Knowledge of Inclusion	**Strongly agree**	**Agree**	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**
KN01	I have sufficient knowledge to teach diverse learners especially those with mild to moderate disabilities				
KN02	I am aware of any inclusive education practice in schools.				
KN03	I have received adequate in-service training on how to teach children with disabilities or special needs.				
KN04	I can manage children with severe behavioural problems in my class.				
KN05	I record and keep all information about all the children in my class, including the special-needs children.				

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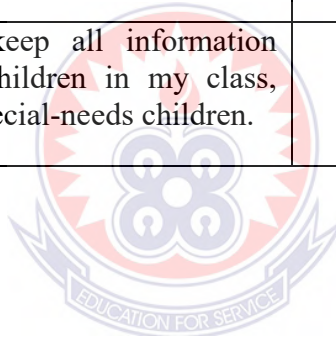
APPENDIX B

Interview Guide

SECTION A: Demographic Information

    i.   How long have you been a head teacher in this school?

    ii.   What is your highest a qualification?

I.   **SECTION B: What are the perceptions of Garu Basic School teachers towards inclusive education?**

II.   Do you admit special needs children and/or children with disabilities at your school?

III.   If yes, what category of disabled or special-needs children do you have in your school?

IV.   Do you and your staff search for out-of-school children from the community?

V.   Is inclusive education the best approach to educating all children?

VI.   Can an inclusive approach stop discriminatory attitudes by teachers and non-disabled pupils towards children with disabilities?

VII.   Do you support inclusive educational practices?

VIII.   Do children with disabilities slow down the teaching and learning process?

IX.   Are children with disabilities supposed to be educated only in special schools?

SECTION C: What are the possible factors that influence the perceptions of Garu Basic School Teachers towards Inclusive Education?

    i.   Are the classrooms accessible to all children, including special-needs children?

X.   Does the school's infrastructural arrangement support pupils' learning? e.g., the availability of urinals and toilet facilities.

XI. Do you support your teachers' ability to teach in terms of giving them the needed teaching resources and involving special educators?

XII. Does the school also get support from parents and other stakeholders to carry out its

SECTION D: What is Garu basic school teachers' knowledge of inclusive education?

j. Are you aware that Ghana's education service has adopted inclusive education practice?

k. Does inclusive education benefit all children?

l. Do teachers keep detailed records of special-needs learners?

m. Do all teachers have training in inclusive and special education?

SECTION E: What strategies do your teachers use in teaching diverse learning?

n. Do your teachers modify teaching strategies and content to enable pupils' learning?

o. Do teachers use ICT applications to facilitate teaching and learning in their classes?

p. Do teachers draw individualized educational plans for children with disabilities in their classroom? Do you organize professional development training for teachers in your school?

APPENDIX C

Letter of Introduction

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
P.O. Box 25, Winneba, Ghana | sped@uew.edu.gh
+233 (020) 2041069

30th November, 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: MS. VICTORIA ALONI

I write to introduce to you, **Victoria Aloni** an M.Phil. Student of the Department of Special Education with index number **202147565.**

She is currently working on her thesis on the topic: **"Perception of Teachers Towards Inclusive Education in some selected Basic Schools in Garu district in the Upper-East Region, Ghana".** She needs to administer questionnaire and conduct interview in your school

I would be grateful if you could give him the needed assistance to enable him collect the data.

Thank you for the consideration and assistance

Yours faithfully,

....
MRS. JOYCE O. M. TSATSU
for: (Ag. Head of Department)

www.uew.edu.gh

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APPENDIX D

Introductory Letter from GES

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

In case of reply, the number and date
of this letter should be quoted

Our Ref: GES/GD/LI.53/VOL.2/200
Your Ref: ....

REPUBLIC OF GHANA

District Education Office
Post Office Box 2
Garu
Email: *garu.ded@ges.gov.gh*
GH.POSTGPS CODE: UG-0075-820

20ᵗʰ June, 2022.

ALL PRIMARY SCHOOL HEADTEACHERS, **GARU**
ALL SISOs, DEO, **GARU**
ALL FRONTLINE DDs/ADs, DEO, **GARU**

INTRODUCTORY LETTER
NAME: VICTORIA ALONI

INDEX NO: 202147566 (M.PHIL STUDENT; UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA)

I write to introduce the graduate student whose particulars appear above to all Primary School Headteachers in the Garu District.

As part of the requirements of her course, she is to conduct interviews with some headteacher as well as classroom teachers for the purpose of data collection for that academic exercise.

I therefore urge you to accord her the necessary cooperation and assistance when she calls on you in your schools for that purpose.

Thank you.

PHILIP FREDERICK ALALE
DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
GARU

Cc:
MS. VICTORIA ALONI
SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
WINNEBA

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