

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN
WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN
GHANA: A CASE STUDY OF DZORWULU SPECIAL SCHOOL IN ACCRA
IN THE GREATER ACCRA REGION GHANA**

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, **Amanda Tabitha Djirackor**, do hereby declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have been duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and that it has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

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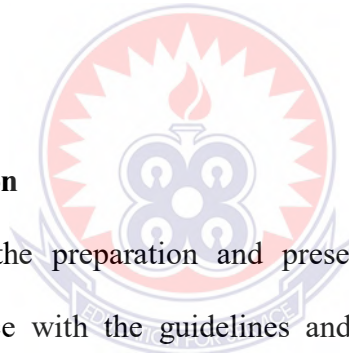
Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation was supervised in accordance with the guidelines and supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

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DEDICATION

To Mary Smile Djirackor



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ABSTRACT

The study was a case study, which focused on finding out the extent to which parents involved themselves in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School in Accra, in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Samples of 22 participants were selected using purposive and convenient sampling techniques. Structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide were the tools for data collection. The data collected were analysed descriptively and also with content analysis. The results of the study revealed that parents who have children with intellectual disabilities perform four principal roles in the education of their children. These include monitoring their children's progress, communicating children's conditions with school authorities, payment of school fees and provision of learning materials for their children with intellectual disabilities. The result of the study further revealed that parental involvement influences the academic performance and practical skills of children with intellectual disabilities. However, school constraints and attitudinal barriers are more likely to inhibit parents from getting involved in their children's education. The result of the study also revealed that effective parent-teacher collaboration and parental education are most needed in parental involvement. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the school authorities should consider parents' views, in all important management decisions concerning the school and the well-being of children with intellectual disabilities.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Parents play a vital role in the training and development of their children with intellectual disabilities. In training of functional skills among children with intellectual disabilities, parents help a lot in achieving target goals. They are considered as leading mentors for children in their early life as well as later life. Parents can be involved in any part of the education and training of their children. There is no boundary for parents' involvement in the upbringing of their children and that also applies to children with intellectual disabilities.

Lemmer (2007), has identified the need and importance of parental active involvement in the education of their children. There are many research outcomes that indicate not only the better outcome of parents' involvement in early intervention programmes and home learning, but also in outreach programs for children (Jeynes, 2011; Smit & Liebenberg, 2003). There are many processes in which parents can be involved, such as, identification, assessment, educational programming, training, teaching, and evaluation.

The well-informed parent can identify early signs of a disability. Parents can provide different information about the developmental characteristics of their children. The well-informed parents can identify early signs of a disability. Parents can provide different information about the developmental characteristics of their children. Parents can also provide useful information in assessment of functional skills often otherwise inaccessible to the professional (Lemmer, 2007). The parent is the primary helper, monitor, co-coordinator, observer and decision maker for the child (Hobbs &

Westling, 1998). The provision of special education must give strong consideration to the parents in education of their children with intellectual disabilities. Parents can serve as advocate for the rights of their children, promote social interactions among the peers in children's friends, take their children for excursion to improve on their self-esteem among many others.

The lack of parental involvement in their children's education neutralizes active co-operation among the school, teachers and other staff of the school. (Fan & William, 2010). Most parents seem to be more interested in getting social grants for their children with intellectual disabilities, than getting good education for them. The manifestation of high learner failure rates, teenage pregnancy, learner dropouts, alcohol and drug abuse show that the parents are not prioritizing the education of their children (Alwin & Thornton, 2004). According to Birch and Ladd (2007), most parents are not just unaware but also illiterate and cannot participate intellectually in their children's educational process, while at the same time capable parents are often indifferent.

It is also unclear whether or not parents' attitude to active involvement in their children's education results from the effects of socio-cultural stigma of people with intellectual disability. This perception seems to have inherited the exclusionary and deficit-based assumption that abandoning these children to the hands of the teachers brings periods of relief to parents. The perception may also have created the impression of complacency and despair in parents that no matter how much input or effort they commit, the outcome would be the same. Improvement of parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities is an anticipated outcome of this study.

There are a number of reasons for involving parents in assessment and education of their children with intellectual disability. Parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disability causes improvement in child's outcome (Fan & William, 2010). According to Brody (2004), parents are the key teachers, socializing agents and caregivers for their children during early years. Lemmer (2007), highlighted on the roles parents play as they are well aware of many aspects of their children's background and existing current conditions about which trainers and professionals know very little of. Becker and Epstein (2002) advocated that parents can assist by gathering data about the learner's performance both before and after the treatment and provisions of special services. If parents are alerted to the critical areas being assessed, they can be more supportive and cooperative in instructional program. Home is the ideal setting to gather information about family concerns and priorities. Parental involvement is very necessary in each stage of intervention.

To encourage parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities, many models have developed. For instance, Van Noort (2011) recommends that some learning activities, especially science activities should be sent home so that parents and their children can sit and work together. However, this model has been criticized by Rajani (2011) that, many parents are illiterate and also most of them do not know even the language of instruction used in the school. Van Noort further advocates for building strong capacity among parents to understand the need to get involved in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities. However, in getting full participation of parents, Van Noort recommends that school authorities should offer food, incentives and other motivations to entice parents to be more proactive in the education of their children with disabilities.

Parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities is more critical because these children have delayed developmental milestones. Indeed, parents have increasingly been recognised as playing substantial roles in the education and social welfare of children with disabilities. In Ghana, children with intellectual disabilities are placed in special schools. One of such schools is the Dzorwulu Special School. Dzorwulu Special School is a state funded boarding institution with both teaching and non-teaching staffs. At this school, children with intellectual disabilities are usually taken through academic, cognitive and vocational skill training in order to help them function properly. The school dates back to 1970, and with three sub-streams (pre-school, primary and junior high school).

It is envisaged that children with intellectual disabilities need committed and all-involving parents in their education. Parental involvement would have significant impact on these children's cognitive development, literacy and number skills. It is against this background that this study, "Parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in special schools in Ghana: A case study of Dzorwulu Special School" is conducted.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Parental involvement in the education of children cannot be underestimated. However, it appears there is lack of parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities. In addition, it seems some parents are not aware of how their involvement influences the education of their children. Furthermore, it seems there are some inherent factors that influence effective participation of parents in their children's education. Finally, it appears there are not effective mechanisms put in place to ensure effective participations of parents in their children's education.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out the extent to which parents involve themselves in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School in Accra in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were developed to guide the study:

- To find out the extent to which parents involved themselves in the education of children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School in Accra.
- To find out how parental involvement influences the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in the school.
- To find out what inherent factors influence parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities in the school.
- To explore what mechanisms that are put in place to ensure effective parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities

1.5 Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. To what extent do parents involve themselves in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in the school?
2. How does parental involvement really influence the education of children with intellectual disabilities in the school?
3. What inherent factors influenced parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities?
4. What mechanisms can be put in place to enhance on parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disability in the school?

1.6. Significance of the Study

The results of this study would help in finding out the extent to which parents involve themselves in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in the school. This would enable the school authorities to find means of ensuring effective participation of parents in their children's education. In addition, the results of the study would help in finding out how parental involvement really influences the education of children with intellectual disabilities. This would also enable the school authorities to find means of educating parents on the need to be involved in their children's education.

Furthermore, the results of the study would help in revealing what inherent factors that influence the effective participation of parents in their children's education. This would also enable the school authorities and the school management board to find ways of addressing any inherent factors influencing parental involvement.

In addition, the results of the study would help in revealing what mechanisms are put in place to enhance effective parental involvement in the education of their children. This would enable the school authorities and the school management board to find ways of ensuring that effective mechanisms are put in place to enhance parental involvement in their children's education. Finally, the results of the study would add to the existing literature for any researcher interested in similar studies.

1.7. Delimitations of the Study

The study should have covered all stakeholders in the education of children with intellectual disabilities, but due to time frame, it was delimited to parents and their involvement in the education of their children's with intellectual disabilities. The study was also delimited to parental roles, parental involvement and impact; inherent

factors, and mechanism to improve parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disability.

1.8. Definition of Operational Terms

Children with intellectual disabilities: This refers to children who have developed intellectual problems and are educated only in special schools in Ghana.

Parental Involvement: This refers to efforts parents made by involving themselves in the education of their children in the school

1.9. Organization of the Study

This study was organized into five chapters. The first chapter covered the introductory part of the study, which consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, the research questions, and significance of the study, delimitation, and definition of key terms and organization of the study. The second chapter dealt with the review of literature pertinent to the research. The third chapter also dealt with methodology that consists of research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentations, validity and reliability, data collection and analysis procedures and ethical issues. The collected data from the subject of the study were carefully analysed and interpreted under the fourth chapter. The fifth chapter presented the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendation of the study.

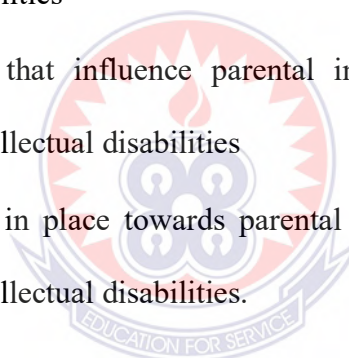
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the literature reviewed for the study. The literature reviewed first covered the theoretical framework followed by the review on the key themes raised in the research questions such as follows:

- Theoretical Framework
- Parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities
- The influence of parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities
- Inherent factors that influence parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities
- Mechanisms put in place towards parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities.



2.1. Theoretical Framework

In education, there are many theories on parental involvement. In this study, Epstein's (1991) theory of six types of parental involvement and that of cultural capital theory by Bourdieu (1986) were adopted.

2.1.1. Epstein's theoretical framework

This theory explained that parental involvement is based on how parent-child interactions influence children's schooling and motivation. The theory refers to parental actions that represent their interests in their children's education, such as attending an open house or volunteering at school. It further explained that parental

involvement includes parent-child interactions that communicate positive attitudes about school and the importance of education of their children (Epstein, 1991).

Parental involvement, according to this theory, reflects on how children's achievement portray parental interactions with the school system, their sense of competences, and the belief that they have control over their success in school (Epstein, 1991). Parental involvement broadly, includes activities such as helping with homework, discussing school events or courses, volunteering at school and coming to participate in schools' events. Parental involvement is a function of parental beliefs about their roles and responsibilities. A parent can help his or her children to succeed in school and the school or the teacher should provide the opportunities for involvement. In this theory, when parents get involved, children's schooling is affected through their acquisition of knowledge, skills, and an increased sense of confidence that they can succeed in school (Eldridge, 2001).

School, family, and community are important elements that can have influence on children's development and that a children's educational development is enhanced when these three environments work collaboratively toward shared goals. The encouragement in schools to create greater "overlap" between the school, home, and community through the implementation of activities across six types of involvement: parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaboration with the community by implementing activities across all six types of involvement, educators can help improve student achievement and experiences in school (Epstein, 1991).

Epstein's parental involvement theory is by far the most referenced, tested, and widely accepted theory on parental involvement (Fishel & Susan, 2005). The six sub-

constructs (hereafter simply referred to as constructs) are: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaborating with school towards the improvement on their children's learning. She holds that supportive learning activities in the home that reinforce school curricula might enhance the academic performance of children with intellectual disability. In doing so, some of the control that the school has arrogated to itself would have to be released and parents would need to be regarded as people with important contributions to make as collaborating educational partners.

Parents are truly the first teachers of their children. Parents have been thought of as partners in the educational process of their children with intellectual disability by helping children with homework, supporting in school activities, and working in partnership with teachers to enhance the learning experiences. When parents are decision makers, they are actually involved in the running of school through site-based decision-making committees. In fact, parents' personal contacts with teachers would be the most enhancing factor in the academic achievement of their children with intellectual disabilities.

2.1.2. Cultural capital theory

The cultural capital theory by Bourdieu (1986) provided evidence on how educational returns of parents make them get involved in children's education. According to Bourdieu, in this theory, there are social assets of a person (e.g. education, intellect, style of speech and dress, etc.) that promote social mobility and provide advantage in achieving a higher social status among people in society. In explaining his ideal cultural capital, Bourdieu defined cultural capital as those transmissible parental cultural codes and practices capable of securing a return to their holders in this case

children. Cultural capital embodies the sum total of investments in aesthetic codes, practices and dispositions transmitted to children through the process of family socialisation, or in Bourdieu's term, habitus. The habitus of a person is composed of the intellectual dispositions inculcated to him or her by family and familial environment.

The parental habitus may include low socio-economic status, low level of education, lessening involvement in school due to low levels of confidence, lack of familiarity, and past negative experiences. Yet, while variations in habitus may result in lower cultural capital, in terms of school involvement, the same parents may be active at home in a way that is consistent with the values of the school his/her child attends.

The variation in parental habitus, to some large extent determines the degree to which a parent could get involve or not to get in the education his/her child with intellectual disability. For instance, a parent from middle to upper class would do everything possible to educate his/her child with intellectual disability unlike those from low socioeconomic strata. Secondly, parent's past negative experiences from child's school is more likely to influence the degree to which he/she gets involve in wards education.

Cultural capital theory was applied to elementary schools by Lee and Bowens (2006) to find means of predicting how parental involvement in children's elementary education influenced their children's education. Specifically, it predicts that parents with greater cultural capital will be more involved, and that involvement will be more effective in helping their children succeed.

2.2. Parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities

Parental involvement is critical in the education of children. According to Myeko (2000), parental involvement is a process through which parents meaningfully participate in the various educational activities of their children. The activities ranged from occasional attendance to school functions to intense efforts aimed at helping parents become better educators of their own children. Fishel and Ramirez (2005) on the other hand viewed parental involvement as the effective engagement of parents with their child outside of the school day in an activity, which centers on enhancing academic performance. Here emphasis is on out-of-school activities such as a trip to the zoo where the child is meant to go and learn something, or playing such games with the child at home as would improve the child's reading or mathematics. Sayed (2002) also regarded parental involvement as typically definable as the initiation of home-based behaviours like monitoring homework as well as school-based activities such as attending school events and communicating with teachers. The same authors also gave prominence to the general degree of cognitive stimulation, among other things, provided in the home setting.

According to Denessen, Bakker, and Giervald (2007), a great deal of research outcomes supports the notion that parental involvement generally has a positive effect on children's achievements in school. Parents who are more involved with their children's education, according to Denessen et al., become knowledgeable about schooling systems, communicate the importance of education to children, help children learn strategies to enhance their learning and competence, control over-achievement outcomes and structure learning experiences that result in the development of skills.

The mode of operation of schools and teachers has been criticized or blamed as being a root cause of the impediments concerning parents' lack of involvement in the schooling of their children (Bakker & Denessen, 2007). In other words, parents desire to be actively involved in schooling but they may experience the schooling system as intimidating and inaccessible. Parents' frustrations include limited access to school decisions. They often lack the platform and structure to contribute meaningfully to their children's education (Denessen et al., 2007), which was also reiterated by Clark (1993).

According to Bakker and Denessen (2007), educational outcomes, which are influenced by parental involvement, include cognitive skills (especially through direct instruction, but also through modelling and reinforcement) and non-cognitive skills like self-discipline, staying focus, confidence, teamwork and much more. These non-cognitive skills are also sometimes known as soft skills. Children whose parents are involved in their education are more likely to develop a strong, positive sense of efficacy for successful achievement in school-related tasks than the children whose parents are not involved (Chan & Koo, 2011).

Eldridge (2001) has opined that, there are higher learners academic achievement rates when parents are tutored on how to assist their children in academic assignments, thereby extending the learning environment for their children outside the formal school environment. Eldridge further observed that learners with mild intellectual disabilities are able to improve on their mathematical ability when parents are assisted through collaborative consultation. There are various roles that parents can play in supporting and promoting positive attitudes to learners with intellectual disabilities. Parents can provide important contextual information to teachers about the developmental characteristics of their children with intellectual disabilities

(Christenson & Nicholas, 2005). According to Epstein (1991), parental involvement is the most powerful influence in a child's education, because it can have various effects on students both academically and behaviourally.

Barwegen and Joyce (2004) have noted that the frustration that parents who has children with intellectual disabilities experienced could make them distance themselves from educational decisions when their children enter school. They further emphasized that raising children with intellectual disabilities requires strength and flexibility because such children have special needs in addition to the regular needs of all children. Parents can find themselves overwhelmed by various care giving and educational responsibilities of their children with intellectual disability (Emerson & Einfeld, 2010). According to Gray (2002), most parents somewhat exhibited negative attitudes towards their involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities and hardly recognize the education of the intellectually disabled child. Hastings (2002) added that it is not only parents; teachers also hardly involve themselves in the education of children with intellectual disabilities.

Hastings and Taunt (2002) also stated that, most of the parents who have children with intellectual disabilities are affected emotionally; often struggle with guilt and they feel as though they somehow caused the child to have the intellectual disability. They further noted that such negative thoughts harm the parent's emotional health that made them exhibit less parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities.

According to Gray (2006), parents who have children with intellectual disabilities suffer from exhaustion and stress due to the degree of the amount of care needed. Feeding, clothing, bathing and diapering an infant is not much easier physically and

concluded that having a child with an intellectual disability dig deeper into the pocket of the parent. Kanner (1943) added that raising a child with intellectual disability is more expensive than raising a typical child.

Parents who have children with intellectual disability experience challenges which may lead them to make mistakes in getting involved in their children's education, which can give rise to learning difficulties and other problems. Parents need to be motivated to become involved in the education of their children of intellectual disabilities. Parents play a greater role in the education of their children because they know their children better and are able to inform the teachers about their learning problems. They can help teachers to understand their children better, they can give advice about individual behaviour, and they can also contribute to the design and implementation of joint learning support strategies (Kanner, 1943).

Weiner (2009) revealed that, parents possessed more negative attitudes towards being involved in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities than towards children without intellectual disabilities. Weiner explained that, the former were perceived to have a more negative impact on the school and the children

2.3. Influence of parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities

Lemmer (2007) asserted that even though, parents may be aware that their involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disability education is vital, how this involvement may occur is not clear to many parents. Educators around the world have been trying for years to provide guidance on how parents can actively get involved in the education of their children in order to influence their children

learning. The following parental involvement activities were suggested by Hastings (2002) to aid parents in their children's education.

Parents should spend time talking with the child and sharing the child's activities. This is parents should make time each day to be with their children, to talk to them, provide guidance on day to day activities, play games with their children and general spend time bonding with their children. This will enable parents to influence their children's in areas of play, interacting with other children and adults, how to talk to others, and promote general good co- existence with others.

Parents who can read are encouraged to read with the child in a pleasant atmosphere and emphasis should be on reading for enjoyment. Reading as an activity stimulates the mind and helps children to gain knowledge, a parent that reads with his or her children gives the idea that reading is good and the children should practice it. This leads the children to appreciate reading because the parents promote it.

Parents should allow their children with intellectual disabilities to contribute meaningfully in the home (e.g. running errands, washing, cooking, etc.). However, since these children are more likely to experience significant developmental delays, parents should set reasonable work responsibilities to do. Children who have household work general tend to develop a sense of responsibility.

In order for parents to influence the education of their children, parents will have to influence the attitude of their children. Attitude formation leads to the ability to influence a child. Smith (2004) explained that, an attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive and dynamic influence up on the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related. Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2005) also described an attitude as a

predisposition to react favorably or unfavorably toward ideas, objects, persons, events or situations. An individual develops a certain kind of attitude from his previous experiences in favour of or against, a particular idea, person, object, and other situations. An attitude is not innate, but is learned. It persists relatively for a long period of time. It also motivates an individual to act, helping to shape, and direct behavior. Smith identified four ways in which attitudes are developed. These are:

The integration of numerous specific responses of a similar type in to a generalized response pattern.

Through differentiations. As in one's feelings and actions toward a group, favorable to some and unfavorable to others.

Through a traumatic experience and

Through imitation or identification.

The comments of one person towards somebody or something may influence another person to develop favorable or unfavorable attitudes towards that object. Smith (2004) categorized attitude into three component parts. These are:

Cognitive, which includes perceptions of objects and events or reports or beliefs about them.

Affective, which includes feelings about and emotional response to objects and events.

Behavior or conative refers intentions and predicts the way in which an individual may behave in relation to an object or events.

According to Bandura (1989), the learning of attitudes is an integral part of the socialization process, which may occur through direct experience and interactions with others or as a product of cognitive process. Most of the attitude people hold is the product of direct experience with the attitude object. The attitude formed eventually influences an individuals' behavior. The extent of the influence is generally believed to be moderated by personal characteristics. Attitudes do not necessarily correlate with behavior but under certain conditions they may.

Attitudes are regarded as a learned association between a given object and a given evaluation. People are assumed to behave the way they do because of meanings they assign to their environment and events and objects within it. Increased exposure to an object results in greater liking for previously neutral objects. Ajzen (1988), conducted experiments to prove that mere exposure affect attitudes. As human beings, we seem to naturally develop a liking for those things that are repeatedly presented to us. For example, exposing parents to disability educational environment is likely to influence the kind of attitude one develops towards special education and also the education of children with intellectual disabilities.

Undoubtedly, parental attitude towards the education of their children with intellectual disabilities has positive effects on children, teachers and school performance. Positive parental attitude towards the education of their children with intellectual disabilities improves the educational aspiration for the child and also enable the school to initiated contact with parents. It also improve the parents on their benign the child school issues that in turn had strong positive effects on all the outcome of their wards both academically and socially. In accordance, there should be increased parent-school contact concerning students' school problems as well as an

increased parental advising which will result in a positive students' academic self-efficacy (Al-Khateeb & Hadidi, 2009).

Lau and Cheung (1999) suggested that parental attitudes towards the schooling of their children with intellectual disabilities are related to their children's academic achievement. Heward (2006) also stated that parent's attitude towards the schooling of their children with intellectual disabilities encourages the development of children's cognitive skills and fosters their achievements. This is because parents who are involved in their children's schooling set the example for their children and encourage them to participate actively in school activities. Heward also observed that positive parental attitude towards their children with intellectual disabilities' education provides a means for parents and teachers to work together to enhance the children's social functioning and address behavioral problems.

Over a number of years, researchers have found out some substantial evidence showing positive parental attitude towards the education of their children with intellectual disabilities, child development, and positive academic outcomes (Buchmann, 2000). Specifically, parental attitude towards the education of their children with intellectual disabilities has been associated with higher-grade attainment and engagement in school (Emerson, Graham, & Hatton, 2007). Research has also shown that positive parental attitude towards the education of their children with intellectual disabilities results in increased interest by schools to get parents more involved in their children's education as early as possible (Gray, 2003).

Researchers have long considered parental positive attitudes towards the education of their children with intellectual disabilities as a significant factor in positively impacting children's school success (Henderson & Berla, 1994). Gray (2003) also

confirmed that positive attitude towards the education of their children with intellectual disabilities is a strong predictor of learner achievement. Characteristically, the more involved the parent, the more the child achieves. Emerson et al. (2007) concurred that parents' positive attitude towards their children with intellectual disabilities is an important factor in pupil achievement. For example, if a parent sets apart a time to help a child with homework, that child will most likely develop interest in schoolwork and will apply himself or herself to schoolwork more diligently. Henderson and Berla also noted that, positive attitudes of parents towards their children's education are a prerequisite for improving the culture of teaching and learning in schools. Henderson and Berla further confirmed that a positive attitude towards their children's education is associated with higher pupil achievement outcomes. For example, when parents buy their children books to augment those provided by the school, or provide a favorable learning atmosphere at home and give them time to positively discuss with the child issues relating to school, the child is likely to learn more effectively. Consequently, such a child will produce good results. If parents secured for their children a quiet place to study and do homework, review children's homework and talk about what happened at school, children will appreciate the importance of education and in consequence will be good learners.

Epstein (2001), affirmed that parents' positive attitude towards their children's education has a positive effect on children's achievement, because parents who exhibit positive attitude towards their children's education become more knowledgeable about school goals and procedures, how to communicate the importance of education to children, and assist children to learn. This helps to enhance their perceptions of issues involved in education and school, control over achievement outcomes, and structure learning experiences that result in skill

development (Henderson, 2008). In other words, such parents make an effort to know what the school aims to achieve in relation to the education of their children and how it seeks to achieve its goals. They then engage their children in discussions aimed at making the children appreciate the value of education. They go on to help children to develop strategies to take charge of achievement outcomes and organize learning experiences in a manner that facilitates the development of various skills.

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003), affirmed that when a good relationship between parents and teachers exists, both parties aim to achieve the same goals relating to the child's education, and effective learning could occur. For example, if parents and teachers want to develop in children such attributes as resourcefulness, dependability, honesty or orderliness, they will work collaboratively to achieve their goal. The significance of positive parental attitude towards the children with intellectual disability is further elucidated by Desforges and Abouchaar, who concluded that such attitude of parents enhances the interest the parents have in the child and manifest in the home as parent-child discussions can have a significant positive effect on children's behaviour and achievement, even when the influence of background factors such as family size or social class are factored out.

It is important to appreciate the fact that positive parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities is universally considered as critical and significant. . According to Bailey, Golden, Roberts, and Ford (2007), the impact of positive parents' attitude towards their children with intellectual disability education is significance to children's academic performance as it significantly motivation the children to learn, attention, task persistence, receptive vocabulary skills, and low conduct problems.

Avvisati, Besbas, and Guyon (2010), emphasized that parent's attitude towards their children's education made them more involved in their children's education. That is identified as a beneficial factor in their children's learning. It is, therefore, a key component of enhancing children who have intellectual disability's education. Much of the research on positive attitude towards children education relates to children's outcomes, it also emphasized the relationship between specific parent involvement behaviors and children's achievement. Such parental involvement includes direct communication with teachers and administrators, which is associated with greater achievement. Moreover, higher levels of parental involvement in their children's educational experiences at home (e.g., supervision and monitoring, daily conversations about school) have been associated with children's higher achievement scores (Epstein, 2001).

Other research has shown that parental attitude towards children education enhances the parents' expectations about their children's learning and is strongly related to children's beliefs about their own competencies, as well as their achievement (Grolnick & Maria, 1994). Moreover, parents who evidenced high levels of school contact had children who demonstrated greater social competency than children of parents with lower levels of school contact (Cheung, 2000). It was hypothesized that home-based involvement would be most strongly associated with positive classroom learning outcomes and that direct school-based involvement would predict lower levels of conduct problems. Home-based involvement activities, such as reading to a child at home, providing a place for educational activities, and asking a child about school, evidenced the strongest relationships to later preschool classroom competencies. These activities were related to children's approaches to learning,

especially motivation and attention/persistence, and were found to relate positively to receptive vocabulary.

The attitude of the parents signifies that the supporting nature of family in their children's education. Parental attitudes can be negative or positive. The negative attitude of the parents regarding education and schooling can prevent their children from getting education. With less parental support in schoolwork, low level of motivation and poor self-esteem of children can result. Positive attitude of the parents can be beneficial to their children in many cases and can be reflected in improvement in class performance, creating interest among children to learn, and higher achievement scores in reading and writing.

2.4. Inherent factors that influence parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities

Given the significance of parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities being confirmed by research across continents, Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004) wonder why there is so little parent involvement in schools. It is apparently because there are powerful, mostly context-bound, barriers to parent involvement. Barriers can originate from beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes of teachers, administrators, parents and even pupils. It is thus noteworthy that such barriers resulting from the attributions parents, school heads and teachers make about low level parent involvement in their schools may be valid or invalid.

In the context of this research, barriers to parent involvement will be located in four broad categories, namely attitudinal, resources-based/logistical, institutional, and expectations. The categories are, however, not truly discreet since they are liable to overlapping.

2.4.1. Attitudinal barriers

Attitudinal barriers may be shaped by various factors. Limited parental educational experience resulting in the lack of relevant skills to get involved in their children's education constitutes a serious barrier. As Jeynes (2005) reveals, parents with limited educational experience do not know why and how they can be involved in school activities. They are unsure of their responsibility as parents. They also hardly appreciate how education at home serves as the basis for education at school. In most cases they are unaware of practices essential to helping their children develop academic skills.

In consequence, they are uncertain about how to help their children. This was corroborated by Singh and Mbokodi (2004). They found that disadvantaged black parents did not seem to understand their roles as parents in the education of their children. Kaperu (2004) also confirmed that parents were not quite sure of their role while Zoppi (2006) stated that some parents think their own lack of education precluded them from participating in their children's education. Zoppi asserted that language also constitutes a barrier with parents feeling that no one will listen to them if they cannot speak English. Their feelings of self-worth are diminished because they do not understand forms that were sent home to be completed and cannot help their children with homework. Feeling poorly equipped, uncomfortable, or lacking confidence in their ability to help their children with school assignments, they are intimidated and believe that they have no right to interfere with a school's practices. Zoppi concluded that they avoid contact with the school and its teachers.

This was also replicated in a Parhar (2006) study, which revealed that their own uncomfortable feelings and apprehensions alienated parents from the school. Such parents, end up with an indifferent or fatalistic, if not antagonistic, attitude to parental involvement. They are unlike parents who have a “can do” attitude and believe they have an active role to play in their children’s education.

There are also parents who simply believe that the responsibility of education belongs to the school (Feuerstein, 2000). This finding was replicated by Zoppi (2006) who found that parents had a high level of respect for teachers and treated them as professionals who should be left alone to do their job. Such parents often felt interference with school activities would be counter-productive. Viewing teachers as experts, these parents felt uncomfortable questioning educators. Writing on experiences, Phendla (2004), confirmed that some parents think educators know all. They do not realize that education is a team effort.

It is not only parental attitudes that impact on parental involvement; children’s attitudes also matter a great deal. In other words, children have a significant influence on the degree to which their parents get involved (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). They have the potential to nurture or to inhibit parental involvement. That is, they can make or break connections between teachers and parents.

Deslandes and Cloutier (2002) affirmed that some children might not be too keen on parental involvement in the school. For instance, they would not want parents in their classroom or on a class trip. Edwards and Alldred (2000) confirmed that children could just be as active in discouraging, evading and obstructing their parents’ involvement as in its promotion. There could be pupils who perceive themselves as autonomous and with a right to some privacy. They might thus perceive parental

involvement as constituting an intrusion into their affairs. Edwards and Alldred suggested that, on some occasions, such pupils actively could evade or block home-school connections by dumping notes or newsletters or censoring discussions of “bad days” at school. The same authors revealed that girls are more likely to initiate involvement and boys more likely to block it. The mediating roles of the child are often overlooked, important though they might be.

The attitudes of teachers also impact both positively and negatively on parental involvement. Lemmer and Van Wyk (2004) affirmed that the attitudes of schools towards active parental involvement were frequently ambiguous. While the official rhetoric claims that the home-school relationship should be collaborative, equal and reflects an even distribution of power, this is often absent in the schools.

According to Parhar (2006), teacher ideology plays a fundamental role in excluding parental involvement in schools. Parhar argued that deficit ideologies that are still held by teachers today continue to have harmful effects on teacher-parent relations. The deficit theory holds that minority parents fail to be involved in schools because they are “deprived of cultural and social advantages” necessary for involvement (Mbokodi & Msila, 2003). In other words, minority parents are not cultured enough into the system for them to be able to competently participate in their children’s education.

Teachers may reinforce practices of exclusion in relation to uneducated and socio-economically disadvantaged parents. Seeing parents as deficient in terms of school experience or education results in teachers initiating inequitable relations where they exercise power over parents. Parhar (2006), citing a number of sources, asserts that negative attitudes and behaviours of teachers in relation to disadvantaged parent’s

impact negatively on efforts to involve such parents thereby further marginalizing them. Zoppi (2006) also decries school personnel's negative or condescending attitudes towards parents. Such attitudes cripple efforts aimed at increasing parental involvement. Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) confirmed that many parents feel put off in regard to involvement by the way some teachers treat them. Teachers' attitudes may be a result of inadequate training in respect of parental involvement.

There are teachers who genuinely fear that parents in the school or classroom may undermine their professionalism. These teachers fear that parents' view may clash with theirs (Parhar, 2006). Whether these fears are misguided or not is immaterial. What is important is that they are real and that they severely compromise parental involvement. Teachers who hold a "protective perspective" fail to encourage disadvantaged parents' participation because they (teachers) regard themselves and schools as having the primary responsibility for educating children.

2.4.2. Expectation Barriers

The expectations of teachers, parents, and children in relation to parental involvement may be contrasting. As a result, the three parties may work at cross-purposes. According to Parhar (2006), there are teachers who have expectations that are beyond the capabilities of parents. To aggravate the situation, such teachers may do nothing to enhance the capacity of the concerned parents to be involved. The said teachers may demand that parents help children with homework while doing nothing in terms of how they can do it. This inevitably frustrates the parents, the teachers themselves and ultimately the pupils.

Owing to poor communication between teachers and parents, the two parties end up blaming each other for the lack of support parents should receive from the teachers in order for them to participate meaningfully in their children's education (Parhar, 2006). Some teachers strongly believe that there are parents who neglect doing their share of the work but scarcely communicate what they want the parents to do. Pahar was not surprised that some parents only visit the school only when they are called in or if there is a problem with their children. The author concluded that parents who only come to school to confront teachers do so most likely because of frustration regarding what role they ought to play in their children's education. In attempt to address such situations, Zoppi (2006) suggested that parents need to know what the school means by parental involvement and what the school expects from parents.

Negative teacher expectations, according to Parhar (2006), also influence teachers' efforts to involve disadvantaged parents. Such parents are perceived as being uneducated and poor, thereby presuming that they will not be involved in their children's education. This deprives the parents of the opportunity to learn, or to be helped to learn, how best they can help their children with their education.

The multiple perspectives of teachers, administrators, and parents easily yield a multiplicity of expectations, some of which may be conflicting. Peña (2000), talks of every school having to deal with different types of parents who have different desires and interests and are by no means equally capable of making them known. What each party expects of the other must be clearly articulated to facilitate effective parental involvement.

2.4.3. Institutional Barriers

The communication gap between the school and parents is the chief culprit when it comes to parental involvement barriers associated with the school as an institution. Schools and their teachers have the potential to nurture or inhibit fruitful connections between parents and teachers. Some parents are wary of overstepping some unwritten mark in terms of their relations with teachers (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). This causes frustration and confusion on the part of parents.

Desforges and Abouchaar found that schools and teachers put down some parents.. For instance, there are teachers who might feel that their work must be protected against unwarranted intrusions from parents. Such teachers might invite parents only when there is a problem. Zoppi (2006) noted that parents are precluded from participating if the only contact they receive from the school is over something negative or if they are unaware of their right to ask about their children's education. As a consequence, Desforges and Abouchaar concluded that it is little wonder that many low socio-economic status parents find home-school contacts empty, contrived, unsubstantial and awkward.

The degree to which parents see a role for themselves in their children's education and the extent to which they feel self-assured in being able to participate may constitute a barrier. Since parents need to know what the school means by parental involvement and what it expects of them (Zoppi, 2006). Schools that do not communicate their perception of parental involvement and their expectations regarding the role of parents are culpable in relation to the creation of barriers to parental involvement.

According to Desforges and Abouchaar (2003), schools accept parental involvement only on their own terms, which are non-negotiable. Those parents not conforming to these values are quickly “put in their places.” This does not encourage parents to be proactive in partnership. Rather, it encourages parental despondency regarding their children’s education. Such schools clearly have perspectives that are inimical to parental involvement. According to Desforges & Abouchaar, it is necessary for schools to adopt perspectives that promote parental involvement since the realization of a willingness to be involved is dependent on the invitations, demands and opportunities generated by the school. Having activities that have been institutionalized to involve parents in limited ways that tend to relegate all the power to the institution and neglecting the needs and interests of parents gravely compromises parental involvement (Parhar, 2006). It emerges from the above that schools that behave in a manner that imposes restrictions on parental involvement do a great disservice to schoolchildren.

2.5 Mechanisms put in place to enhance parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities

Walberg (1984) noted that there are lots of ways to enhance parental involvement in their children’s education. According to Walberg, such mechanisms include the following:

2.5.1. Educating Parents

Van Noort (2011) argues that increasing parental involvement begins with having capacity to educate parents on the ins and outs of parental participation. The reality is that, many parents do not know how to be truly involved with their children’s education. Epstein (2001) suggested that, there should be educational programmes for

parents that give them skills and suggestions explaining how they can get involved in their children's education. These programmes must also focus on the increased involvement. Van Noort observed that getting the parents to attend training can be challenging, but many parents will attend if there is an offer of food, incentives and other motivations.

2.5.2. Parent-Teacher Association

Epstein (2001) concluded that structures between the school and parents, including parent associations and parent-teacher associations have great impact on the home-school relation for educational activities. These may be formed around individual classes, grades, and/or the entire management committee or a school board. Keyes (2002) went further by suggesting that parents' groups could also form alumni organizations or private foundations in support of the school.

These organizations may do little more than provide a chance for a few parents to listen to news about school activities and appeals for additional resources or serve as rubber-stamp to plans and budgets developed by school personnel. Parents may be considerably more actively helping to establish some kind of forum for dialogue between the school and parents and the means to build and strengthen parental involvement in school life (Keyes, 2002). Therefore, it is truly suggested that parents and teachers should have their structure or school-governing body where they can meet and make sensitive decisions about school related matters. In Tanzania for example, it is a must for every school to have a school board. In Ghana, all schools have a parent-teacher organization with a chairman, who is usually a parent as part of the school's decision-making body.

2.5.3. Communication

Communication facilitates regular two-way and meaningful communication between the home and school. According to Hall (2008), it is important to bridge the information gap by providing professional development on effective communication skills including skills for effective verbal engagement, active listening, and empathetic responding, to encourage and promote a sense of care and concern for physical and emotional safety, and the health and wellbeing of students, staff and parents.

Harrison (2000) adds that, to achieve parental involvement there must be established system of communications that will ensure that all information about policies, procedures and expectations are available to all parents. Harrison continues by saying that, to conduct surveys for students, parents and communities to provide responses to school programmes, policies, practices, and share information and concerns about students on an annual or bi-annual basis. Therefore, there is need to provide additional opportunities for parents to provide responses to class teachers about the academic progress and behaviour of their children at home. Hence communication between parents and school should not be taken for granted, as it is the main channel to spread school and home information. Effective communication between teachers and parents will bring changes to education.

Parents who feel more comfortable speaking with a child's teacher may have a greater willingness to help out in the classroom. Parents who actively try to communicate with the teacher are often more 'in the know' about ways to get involved. This does not mean that teachers and parents must have constant daily phone calls with each

other. Instead, brief conversations during drop off or pick up, chats during events such as a school open day or even emails can work as effective communication tools.

2.5.4. Learning at Home

Home activities can have some effect in increasing parental involvement. The idea is to send home activities throughout the year that require the parents and the children to sit down and work together (Van Noort, 2011). The activities should be short, engaging and dynamic. Science activities are traditionally the best and easiest activities to send home. Unfortunately one cannot expect all parents to complete all the activities but a teacher should know that the majority would. Therefore, not all parents are literate and able to understand what their children are learning.

Rajani (2011) expressed their views that many parents are illiterate and most of them do not know even the language as a medium of instruction in schools. Therefore, there should be a way to help make parents aware so as to know what their children are learning and in what ways they can get involved in the learning of their children at home regardless of the poor learning condition like absence of electricity.

2.6. Summary of literature review

The literature reviewed in this chapter offers some insights into parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities. The literature indicates that many parents get involved in the education of children with intellectual disabilities. Different roles of parents were espoused in the literature to indicate their involvement in their children education. It has also been elucidated in the literature that parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities enhances school achievements and home-based skills training. The literature indicated that many parents would like to support their children's learning, but require guidance on how to

do so. The school structure, parental level of education and social psychology and perception of disability are identified as impediments when it comes to supporting children's learning. Finally, some workable mechanisms were reviewed which include educating parents, parent-teacher association and effective communication channels.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology for the study. The following areas were covered: research design, population, sample size, sampling technique, instrumentation, validity and reliability, procedures for data collection, ethical considerations and data analysis.

3.1. Research Design

This research design adopted for the study was a case study and was focused on finding out the extent to which parents involve themselves in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School in Accra in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. According to Merriam (2009), a case study is a unit of human activity embedded in the real world, which can only be studied or understood in the context, which exists in the here and now. In a case study, the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon (the case) bound by time and activity (a programme, event, practice, socialization process, institution) and collects detailed information by using a variety of data collection procedures during a sustained period of time (Creswell 2009). The case study design was employed to allow for in-depth exploration of parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities. (Babbie, 2001; Creswell, 2007).

3.2. Population

The targeted population for this study consisted of all parents who had children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School in Accra in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The population also involved all professionally-trained teachers

teaching children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School. The estimated population was 95. Table 1 shows the population distribution of the participants.

Table 1: Population for the study

Description	Number
Parents who have children with intellectual disabilities	70
Trained Teachers in the school	25
Total	95

3.3. Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size was 22, comprising parents of children with intellectual disabilities and teachers of children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School.

Table 2: Sample size of Parents and Teachers involved in the study

Description	Number
Parents who have children with intellectual disabilities	7
Trained Teachers in the school	15
Total	22

Seven parents of children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School were selected. According to Morgan (cited in Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007), for an effective phenomenological study, a sample of 4 to 12 participants is recommended. This is an optimal size that promotes effect interview and enables the researcher to keep the group on task. However, in selecting the participants, purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used.

Purposely, parents who had children with intellectual disabilities were included in the study. In getting the number of parents for the study, all the parents were first contacted for participation using the parents' data from the school administration. However, factors such as proximity, availability and willingness limited the number of parents to only 7 parents. In the selection of teachers, convenient sampling technique was used. Teachers who were at post at the time of data collection and willing to participate in the study were included in the study.

3.4. Instrumentation

The instruments used in the data collection were interview and questionnaire in the form of close-ended items.

3.4.1 Interview

The purpose of the interview was to obtain data from the parents. The interview items probed into the four key themes raised in the research questions on parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities. For example the interview focused on (a) the extent to which parents involved themselves in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities, and (b) how parental involvement influences the education of their children with intellectual disabilities. The interview also sought to find out factors that influence parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities and strategies that enhance parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities.

The interview allowed for cross-examining parents views they expressed. According to Marshall and Rossman (1999), interviews are more like conversations than formal predetermined response categories, where the researcher explores a few general topics to aid the participants in expressing their views but respects the participant's response.

The interview method was chosen because it afforded the researcher the opportunity to moderate the proceedings and the participants amongst themselves. This gave the researcher better insight into the thoughts of the parents as it could reveal respondents' body language and how they answered certain questions. This allowed for merging the views from the participants with the researcher being less predominant (Cohen et al, 2007).

3.4.2 Questionnaire

The Likert scale type of questionnaire was used in data collection from teachers. The questionnaire contained statements, which were built on the four major themes raised in the research questions. These were: the extent to which parents involve themselves in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities, how parental involvement influences the education of their children with intellectual disabilities, inherent factors influence parental involvement, and the mechanisms put in place to enhance effective parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities. The response levels were realized on a five – point consecutive integers ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) = 1, Agree (A) = 2, Neutral (N) = 3, Disagree (D) = 4, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 5.

3.5. Validity and Reliability of instruments

To ensure the validity of the instruments, the content validity was employed. Ensuring that items on the instruments covered adequately on each of the research questions raised did this. The items were given out for peer and expert judgments. The items that were considered inappropriate were deleted.

To ensure the reliability of the interview items, participants' validation was employed. Here, participants were given the opportunity to read their various responses to the questions posed. However, to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire items, a pilot study was conducted with teachers in a private special school for children with disabilities in Accra. A total reliability co-efficient of .83 was achieved using the Cronbach's Alpha. Table 3 shows the results of the Cronbach's Alpha values.

Table 3: Results of Cronbach's Alpha values on the pilot study

Reliability Coefficient	No. of pilot study items	Cronbach's Alpha
Extent to which parents involve themselves in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities	5	.87
How parental involvement influences the education of their children with intellectual disabilities	5	.78
Inherent factors that influence parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities	5	.84
Mechanisms that can be put in place to enhance parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities	9	.81
Total	24	.83

Table 3 shows internal consistencies of the various sub-scales comprising the questionnaire items. All the reported values are above .70 suggesting high satisfaction in collecting reliable data. A value generally accepted in social science research to mean the coefficient value was higher for the instrument (Tavakol & Dennie. 2011).

3.6. Procedure for data collection

Various procedures were used to collect reliable data to answer the research questions.

3.6.1 Interview data analysis

Before interview data were collected, records on parents in the school were taken from the headmaster. Parents who confirmed their participation were reached on phone to arrange for time and venue for the interview. The interviews were conducted within five working days in the school premises and it lasted for 15 minutes for each participant and answers recorded by the researcher.

3.6.2 Questionnaire data analysis

To collect questionnaire data, the researcher made visits to the school and explained the purpose of the study to the head of the school. Upon the granting of permission, the researcher met with teachers in their various classrooms and explained the purpose of the study and then, personally gave them copies of the questionnaires. The researcher and the teachers agreed on the dates when the researcher would collect back the completed questionnaire. The researcher went back on the said dates and collected the completed questions.

3.7. Ethical considerations

Ethical issues arise from the kinds of problems that social scientists investigate and the methods used to obtain valid and reliable data. Ethical considerations were pertinent to this study because of the nature of the problem, the methods of data collection and the kind of persons serving as research participants. While carrying out this study, cognizance was taken of the fact that this study would be investigating very sensitive issues and, as such, followed ethical procedures suggested by Bryman (2012).

Bryman (2012) advised that, researchers should ensure that participants are protected from any physical or psychological harm that may arise from research procedures. In line with international best practices in education, the researcher revealed the intentions of the study to the participants and sought informed consent for their participation. The researcher verbally assured the participants of anonymity of their identities and confidentiality of the data that would be obtained from them. The researcher also promised to assign them pseudonyms during the writing of the report. All the participants to be interviewed agreed before the commencement of the study. In addition, with regard to the ethical issue of confidentiality, the researcher stored all information from the study safely. Hard copies were locked in a cabinet and soft copies stored in files protected with a password, which was only accessible to just the researcher.

3.8. Data analysis

Both the interview and questionnaire data were analysed concurrently, with the interview data providing more insight into the problem under investigations.

3.8.1 Interview data analysis

To analyse the interview data collected, the data were organized into manageable units, categorizing, comparing, synthesizing data, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned (Mertens, 2010). It is a rigorous task because qualitative research usually generates voluminous data as the researcher is found with numerous transcripts of verbatim accounts of what transpired in the interview sessions.

In this study, the analysis of the interview data began with the transcription and typing of audiotapes from the interviews. Views expressed in the interview were categorized under each major theme. This was done for all the participants after whom the various views gathered were compared according to the themes in order to reveal the concept map for connections, common aspects and relationships among the data. Codes were assigned to the responses by using the key words in each theme. The various words, phrases and opinions that reflected on the research questions were finally categorized in relation to the themes. The data were then analysed qualitatively and where necessary, verbatim expressions were used to support findings. Below is the sequence the researcher used to analyzing both of the interview questions:

1. Get a sense of the whole research by reading through all transcripts. Jot down ideas as they come to mind.

2. Select one interview and go through it by asking: “What is this about?” thinking about the underlying meaning. Write thoughts about the meaning of each piece of information in the margin.
3. Do this with all the interviews questions. Make a list of all the topics and cluster similar topics together. Major topics, unique topics and leftovers are identified.
4. Take the list and return to the data. Abbreviate topics by means of codes and write these codes next to each segment of data in the transcribed interview. The researcher looks for new categories and codes.
5. Form categories by grouping topics together in an attempt to determine relationships between categories.
6. Make a final decision on the abbreviation of categories and codes. The codes are alphabetized.
7. Assemble all the data material of each category in one place.
8. Recode existing data if necessary.

After the categorization and coding of data into themes, the researcher analysed and interpreted the themes to find answers to the research questions.

3.8.2 Questionnaire data analysis

To analyse the questionnaire data, the researcher tallied each set of questionnaire that was answered. The frequency and percentage of the total sample that responded to each statement were also tallied.

3.9. Summary

This chapter described the methodology and design of this study, and explained how various instruments were used to collect and analyse that data for this study. The data collection techniques adopted indicated that data that were gathered were sufficient enough to answer the research questions.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussion of findings on the parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School in Accra in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. Demographic data of the participants are first presented and followed by the analyses of the research questions. In the course of analyzing the teacher's data, responses involving "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" were merged as "Agreed" while "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" were combined as "Disagreed". The parents' interview data were used to triangulate the teachers' perspectives.

4.2.1 Demographic Distribution of Teachers

The demographic data of the teachers such as sex, age and academic qualification were analysed. These information were used to enable the researcher know the type of participants involved in the study. The first part of the analysis deals with gender of teachers for the study. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Gender Distribution of Teachers

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	9	60
Female	6	40
Total	15	100

Field survey (2017)

Table 4 shows the demographic information of teachers by gender. From the Table, 9 teachers representing (60%) were males while 6 representing (40%) were females. This indicates that there were more male teachers handling children with intellectual disabilities than female teachers. The ages of the teachers were also sought and presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Age Distribution of Teachers

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
21-30 years	3	20.0
31-40 years	8	53.3
41 years and above	4	26.7
Total	15	100

Field survey (2017)

Table 5 shows that 3(20%) of the participants were between the ages of 21-39 years, 8 (53.3%) were between 31-40 years and 4(26.7%) were 41 years old and above. It can be construed from the results that majority of the teachers in the Dzorwulu Special School appeared quite youthful to effectively facilitate learning among children with intellectual disabilities. The academic qualifications of the participants are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Distribution of Academic Qualifications of Teachers

Certificate	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Diploma	4	26.7
First Degree	8	53.3
Master's Degree	3	20.0
Total	15	100

Field survey (2017)

As shown in Table 6, 4(26.7%) of the teachers were diploma holders, 8(53.3%) were first-degree holders, and 3(20%) were master's degree holders. It can be deduced from the results that majority teachers in the Dzorwulu Special School had degrees, which is in the right direction for teachers who teach children with intellectual disabilities. These children are in hands of professionally-trained teachers, and that could help with their cognitive, social and psychomotor development. The teaching experience of the teachers was also investigated and the results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Teaching Experiences of Teachers

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 years	2	13.3
5 - 10 years	7	46.7
11 – 15 years	3	20.0
More than 15 years	3	20.0
Total	15	100

Field survey (2017)

Table 7 shows that, 2(13.3%) teachers had spent less than 5 years teaching children with intellectual disabilities, 7(46.7%) had spent 5-10 years teaching children with intellectual disabilities, 3(20%) had spent 11-15 years teaching children with intellectual disabilities and 3(30%) had spent more than 15 years teaching children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School.

4.2.2 Demographic distribution of parents with children with intellectual disabilities

The demographic data of parents such as sex and age were sought and analysed in Table 8 and Table 9 respectively. The first part of the analysis deals with gender of parents used in the study and the result is presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Gender Distribution of Parents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	1	16.7
Female	5	83.3
Total	6	100

Field survey (2017)

Table 8 shows the demographic information of parents by gender. From the Table, 1 (16.7%) were males while 5 representing (83.3%) were females. The ages of the parents were also sought and presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Age Distribution of Parents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
31-40 years	2	33.3
41 years and above	4	66.7
Total	6	100

Field survey (2017)

Table 9 reveals that, 2 (33.3%) of the parents were between the ages of 31-40 years and 4 (66.7%) were 41 years and above. The age variation suggests that the more one ages the greater he/she attaches great importance in the education of children with intellectual disabilities.

4.3. Results

Results of the analysis are presented under four research questions. On each research question, tables were used to present the results, followed by interpretations and discussions.

4.3.1 Research Question 1:

To what extent do parents involve themselves in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities?

The research question sought to find out the extent to which parents involved themselves in the education of children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School in Accra. The analysis is in frequency counts and percentages, and this is presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities as reported by teachers

Statements	Agreed		Disagreed	
	F	%	F	%
Parents regularly communicate children's conditions to the school authorities.	9	60	6	40
Parents monitor children's academic progress in school and at home.	10	66.7	5	33.7
Parents attend PTA meetings and other school functions.	6	40	9	60
Parents provide children with learning materials.	8	53.3	7	46.7
Parents fulfill all financial obligations to the school.	9	60	4	40
<i>Field survey (2017)</i>	<i>Frequency = F</i>		<i>Percentage = %</i>	

With regard to item 1, that was to find out from teachers whether parents regularly communicate children's conditions to the school authorities, a total of 9(60%) of the participants agreed with the statement while 6(40%) disagreed with the statement. As regards item 2 that was to find out whether parents monitor children's academic progress in school and at home, 10(66.7%) of the teachers agreed and 5(33.3%) disagreed. Regarding Item 3, which was to find out whether parents attend PTA meetings and other school functions, a total of 6(40%) of the teachers agreed and 9(60%) of them disagreed to the statement. The fourth item was to find out whether parents provide children with learning materials, 8(53.3%) agreed and 7(46.7%) disagreed. Finally, the teachers were asked to indicate whether parents fulfilled all their financial obligations to the school, and that 9 (60%) agreed and 6 (40%) disagreed.

The parents' perspectives were also solicited on the extent to which they get involved in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities. Narrative accounts of some parents are presented below;

“Well, I teach my child how to dress, eat, toilet, bathing...so that she can be able to live an independent life. I know the school is trying but I think enhancing these skills at home would go a long way in increasing the mastery of the skills learnt at school” (A verbatim response from a female parent).

“I communicate with my child's teachers to know the progress of my child and also provide them with information on my child's behaviour and needs” (Verbatim response from a female parent)

“I want my child to be either a doctor or lawyer. But due to her current conditions, I do not think that could be possible. So I am not much involved in her education. I just pay her fees and nothing more...Besides, the school is well endowed with competent and professionally trained teachers who know how to care for children with intellectual disabilities” (A verbatim response from a male parent).

“I make sure I buy all the recommended learning materials and those I found *to be useful for my child’s education.*” (A verbatim response of male parent).

Findings on Research Question 1

For Research Question 1, the results suggest that parents of children with intellectual disabilities perform four principal roles in the education of their children. These include monitoring children’s progress, communicating children’s conditions with school authorities, payment of school fees and provision of learning materials for their children with intellectual disabilities.

Apparently, some parents felt that children with intellectual disabilities experience some kind of mal-adaptive behaviours, which make them extremely amiable to social support. However, they believe that these children can be trained and monitored at home to live independent lives by performing basic activities of daily living. When children learn these skills at home, it creates some teaching space for teachers to concentrate more on other academic functionality of children with intellectual disability. The perception held by these parents is supported by Lemmer (2007), who asserts that parents should complement the efforts of teachers by teaching their children with intellectual disabilities some basic activities of daily living skills. It can

be reasoned that the acquisition of these skills has proportional effects on further academic engagements of these children. Smith (2004) further collaborated the finding by accentuating on the importance of skills training at home. When children with intellectual disabilities are deservedly trained at home using organised experiences, it builds their mental and neural state of readiness to further academic functionalities.

The results further suggest that parents provide useful data such as behavioural and emotional development, level of practical competency, social skills, medical records, etc. to the school authorities with respect to the children's with intellectual disabilities. The position of these participants is supported by Sayed (2002) who obviously regarded parental involvement as communicating with teachers. It is the responsibility of parents to provide important contextual information to teachers about the developmental characteristics of their children with intellectual disabilities (Christenson & Nicholas, 2005). Lemmer (2007) also supported this findings by indicating that much of what parents tell the school authorities are useful information in assessment of functional skills which are often inaccessible to the professional (Lemmer, 2007). It is also worthwhile for parents to have adequate data about the children's academic achievements and be actively involved in the treatment plans and provisions of special services. All these activities go in a long way in providing some appreciable sense of bondage between the school and parents of children with intellectual disabilities.

Another role reported was payment of fees. Parents could develop negative attitude towards the education of children with intellectual disabilities due to the misconception about cases of disabilities. Emerson and Einfeld (2010) agreed that some parents find themselves overwhelmed by various care giving and educational

responsibilities of their children with intellectual disabilities. Such parents are more likely to honour all financial obligations to the school to keep such children out of public ridicules. Surprisingly, this position appears to be associated with male parents. This explains why some fathers relatively do not involve themselves in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities beyond the payment of school fees. Probably, they are overwhelmed by their children's limiting conditions.

Finally, the study revealed that most parents understand the importance of learning materials in the education of children with intellectual disabilities. Probably, they are much aware of the cost involved in the education of these children, as supported by Kanner (1943), that raising a child with intellectual disability is more expensive than raising a typical child. The provision of these learning materials would facilitate the child's academic progress and the absence of them would impede their functionality in academics.

4.3.2 Research Question 2:

How does parental involvement really influence the education of children with intellectual disabilities in the school?

The research question sought to find out how parental involvement influences the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School in Accra. The analysis is in frequency counts and percentages, and this is presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Ways by which parental involvement influence the education of children with intellectual disabilities.

Statements	Agreed		Disagreed	
	F	%	F	%
There is improvement in academic performance of pupils.	12	80	3	20
There is strong development of social etiquette.	6	40	9	60
There is improvement in pupils' health needs.	5	33.3	10	66.7
There is the development of sound practical skills.	12	80	3	20
Independent daily living in school.	11	73.3	4	26.7
<i>Field survey (2017)</i>	<i>Frequency = F</i>		<i>Percentage = %</i>	

Table 11 depicts ways by which parental involvement really influences the education of their children with intellectual disabilities. On whether parental involvement influences children's academic performance, 12(80%) agreed while 3(20%) of the sampled population disagreed. The second item, regarding the development of social etiquette, saw about 6(40%) of the teachers agreeing while 9(60%) of the sampled population disagreeing. With regard to improvement in pupils' health needs, 5(33.3%) of the teachers agreed while 10(66.7%) of the participants disagreed. On the development of sound practical skills, a total of 12(80%) agreed while 3(20%) disagreed. Finally, regarding daily independent living in school, 11(73.4%) agreed while 4(26.7%) disagreed.

Narrative accounts of parents themselves equally lend credence to the results from the teachers' responses. Majority of the parents believed by involving themselves in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities, the children's academic performance has seen tremendous improvement and also in their daily practical skills.

“I can see that my child has improved significantly from my involvement in her education...In fact, I have to increase the amount of care for her and still pray to God that something good would come out of her in the future” (Verbatim response from a female participant).

“After I was encouraged to invest more in my child’s education, I can testify that I have not regretted committing my efforts and resources in the education of my child...My son can do most of the things normal children do...Sometimes I felt his a normal child” (Verbatim response from a female participant).

“For some time now, I have observed that my daughter can rehearse some of the poems and rhymes learnt at school unguided due to the fact that I complement the school’s efforts by reading to her always” (Verbatim response from a male participant).

“I have never imagined that my child could now visit the washroom unaided” (Verbatim response from a male participant).

“My child is now well organized...Any time she is back from she makes sure she hangs her uniform at a place where she can easily locate it the next day” (Verbatim response from a female participant).

Findings on Research Question 2

From the narratives, it can be deduced that parental involvement influences the academic performance of children with intellectual disabilities. The findings are supported by the assertion that parental involvement is positively related to academic outcomes (Buchmann, 2000; Emerson et al., 2007; Gandhe, 2009). The voluntary involvement of parents suggests that there is the presence of positive attitude which

influences intellectual disabilities children to attain a higher-grade and engage actively in school's activities. The more involved the parent, the more the child achieves. For example, if a parent sets apart a time to help a child with homework, that child will most likely develop interest in schoolwork and will apply himself/herself to schoolwork more diligently.

Again, the interaction between parents and the school would offer significant data in assisting the children with intellectual disabilities to learn. Parents would understand the characteristics of these children and be assisted to devise meaningful strategies to help them learn. Teachers would also understand the socio-cultural background of these categories of children and providing learning experiences to take of various individual differences that are more likely to surface in the education of children with intellectual disabilities.

It was revealed that the involvement of parents improves practical and social competencies of children with intellectual disabilities. This finding is supported by Grolnick and Maria (1994) who assert that parental involvement is strongly related to children's beliefs about their own competencies, as well as their achievement. The reinforcement of practical skills at home would significantly improve the practical competencies of children with intellectual disabilities. This is because the parents assist and encourage them to practice these skills (e.g. toileting, dressing, brushing, eating, bathing, etc.) at home. When these skills are perfected, it will give the child some inner sense of self-competency.

4.3.3 Research Question 3:

What inherent factors influence parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities?

The research question sought to find out the inherent factors influencing parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School in Accra. The analysis is in frequency counts and percentages, and this is presented in Table 12.

Table 12: Inherent factors influencing parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities

Statements	Agreed		Disagreed	
	F	%	F	%
Parents have limited access to school decisions.	6	40	9	60
Negative perception about children with intellectual disabilities.	10	66.7	5	33.3
Parents complaint that they are unable to get reliable data on children from the school	9	60	6	40
Parents regret having children with intellectual disabilities.	9	60	6	40
Parents are not financially sound to involve effectively in the education of their children.	7	46.7	8	53.3
<i>Field survey (2017)</i>	<i>Frequency = F</i>		<i>Percentage = %</i>	

Participants were asked to agree or disagree to the statements measuring the inherent factors influencing parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities. On whether parents have limited access to school decisions, 6(40%) agreed while 9(60%) disagreed. On whether negative perception about children with intellectual disabilities influences parental involvement in their education, 10(66.7%) agreed while 6(40%) disagreed. On whether parents complain about the difficulties in

getting reliable data on children from the school, 9(60%) agreed while 6(40%) disagreed. Regarding whether parental regrets in having children with intellectual disabilities influence their involvement, 9 (60%) agreed while 6(40%) disagreed. Finally, on whether parental poverty influences the education of children with intellectual disabilities, 8(53.3%) agreed while 7(46.7%) disagreed.

The parents' perspectives on this theme were also elicited to answer the research question. Significant among them are reported below:

“There are many decisions taken by the school which parents were not consulted. If we are indeed stakeholders of the school, then things must change for the better “(A verbatim response from a female parent)

“My biggest challenge is that anytime I am walking with my child, people see us with very strange eyes...I am not comfortable with that so I stop sending my child to school and other social gatherings by myself” (Verbatim response from a female parent).

“My child's conditions is very frustrating me. I am not sure whether she can be independent on her own... I sometimes feel that I am wasting resources on her “ (Verbatim response for a male parent).

Findings on Research Question 3

The results suggest that some identifiable school constraints and attitudinal barriers are major influencers of parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities. A cursory survey of the data suggests that certain policies and procedures within the school establishment is influencing the extent to which parents get involved in the education of children with intellectual disabilities. The parents felt that the school and teachers are not giving them the needed chance to fully participate

in the education of their children beyond the home. Probably, some teachers may feel that their work must be protected against unwarranted intrusions from parents. This may lead to the creation of difficult conditions for parental involvement. Such teachers may only invite parents only when there is a problem concerning the child (Desforges & Abouchar, 2003).

From the responses, it was evident that parents hold negative attitude towards the education of their children with intellectual disabilities. The finding is consistent with the work of Jeynes (2005) who found similar negative attitude of parents toward the education of the intellectually disabled children. The result further lends its support from the work of Parhar (2006) who posits that often parents have a negative attitude towards their children with disabilities. It can be argued that some parents are plagued with feelings of pessimism, hostility, and shame. Denial, projection of blame, guilt, grief, withdrawal, rejection, and acceptance are the usual parental reactions. Some parents also experience helplessness, feelings of inadequacy, anger, shock and guilt whereas others go through periods of disbelief, depression, and self-blame for having children with a disability. These frustrations often result in the gradual withdrawal of parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities.

4.3.4 Research Question 4:

What mechanisms can be put in place to enhance effective parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities?

This research question explored the mechanisms that could enhance effective parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School in Accra. The analysis is described as frequency counts and percentages, and this is presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Mechanisms to enhance effective parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities

Mechanisms	Agreed		Disagreed	
	F	%	F	%
Getting parents to attend training programme on how to get involve in their children education.	12	80	3	20
There should be parent-teacher collaboration.	15	100		
Frequent school durbars and special events should be encouraged in the school.	12	80	3	20
Parents should be educated to dispel traditional and cultural beliefs about children with intellectual disabilities.	15	100		
Regular updates on the progress made by children with intellectual disabilities.	10	66.7	5	33.3
There must be system of communication where all information about policies, procedures and expectations are available to all parents.	9	60	6	40
Giving students practical home activities that would require parental involvement.	4	26.7	11	73.3
Benefits of educating children with intellectual disabilities should be made known to parents in the language they understand.	15	100		
Time for PTA's, open days and durbars should be made flexible to enable parents' active involvement.	10	66.7	5	33.3
<i>Field survey (2017)</i>	<i>Frequency = F</i>		<i>Percentage = %</i>	

From Table 13, a total of 12(80%) of the teachers agreed that parents be made to attend training programmes on how to get involve in their children education while 3(20%) disagreed. Regarding whether there should be parent-teacher collaboration, 15(100%) overwhelmingly agreed to the mechanism. Concerning the organization of frequent school durbars and special events, 12(80%) agreed that it would enhance parental involvement while 3(20%) disagreed. On whether education of parents would dispel traditional and cultural misconceptions, 15(100%) agreed that parents should be educated to dispel traditional and cultural beliefs about children with intellectual disabilities. Regarding regularly updating parents on the progress made by children with intellectual disabilities, 10(66.7%) agreed that this strategy would enhance parental involvement while 5(33.3%).

Table 13 further revealed that 9(60%) agreed that there must be system of communication where all information about policies, procedures and expectations are available to all parents while 6(40%) disagreed. Furthermore, a total of 11(73.3%) do not think that by giving students practical home activities, there is going to be effective parental involvement while 4(26.7%). Again, a total of 15(100%) overwhelmingly agreed that by highlighting on the benefits of educating children with intellectual disabilities, parents would develop the interest in educating children with intellectual disabilities and would be more involved in their education. Finally, 10(66.7%) participants agreed that the time for PTA's, open days and durbars should be flexible to enable parents' active involvement while 5 (33.3%) disagreed.

The parents' views were also used to answer the research question. The narrative accounts from of the parents are presented below;

“ The school should involve parents in the day-to-day affairs of the school since any decision from the school significantly affects my children” (Verbatim response from a female parent).

“ PTA meetings, durbar and open days should be organized on holidays to enable us attend fully” (Verbatim response from a female parent).

Findings on Research Question 4

From the results, it could be seen that the participants agreed to parent-teacher collaboration. However, the teachers appeared to suggest that parents' lack of knowledge on children with intellectual disabilities should be addressed through effective sensitization programmes to dispel all misconceptions about children with intellectual disabilities. Epstein (2001) agreed that there should be educational programmes for parents that give them knowledge, skills and suggestions explaining how they can get involved in their children's education. However, in getting such parents, Van Noort (2001) recommends that there should be an offer of food, incentives and other motivations. The misconception about disabilities in general increases parental neglects and lack of parental involvement. Effective educational programmes would erase this misconception.

On the part of parents, they want some modifications in the existing structures of the school to enable them to be part of the decision making process and in the organization of special events in the school. This finding supports the assertion by Epstein (2001) who believed that structures between the school and parents including parent associations and parent-teacher associations have great impact on the home-

school relation for educational activities. Schools should be more open to parents, providing detailed progress report on their children with intellectual disabilities.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The main findings of the study are:

1. Parents who have children with intellectual disabilities perform four principal roles in the education of their children. These include: monitoring of children's progress, communicating children's conditions with school authorities, payment of school fees and provision of learning materials for their children with intellectual disabilities.
2. Parental involvement influences the academic performance and practical skills of children with intellectual disabilities.
3. Identifiable school constraints and attitudinal barriers are major influencers of parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities.
4. The study revealed that effective parent-teacher collaboration and parental education on misconception of intellectual disability would enhance parental involvement.

5.2 Conclusions

The present study revealed that parents of children with intellectual disabilities showed good level of involvement. Only a negligible percentage of parents showed parental involvement below the good level. It was concluded that children with intellectual disabilities' academic performance and practical skills would improve significantly when parents are much involved in their education. It was also included that the inherent factors to parental involvement are multi-faceted. This means that any attempt to improve upon parental involvement should emanate from different angles. Finally, on mechanism to enhancing parental participation, it can be concluded that both the parents and the school authorities is inevitable.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

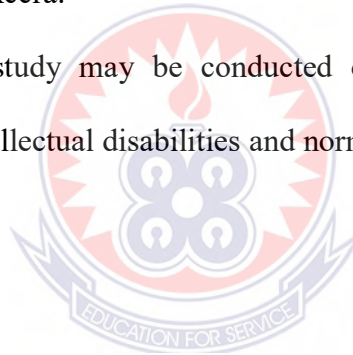
1. Parents should continue to play their roles effectively, such as visiting the school to find out the progress of their children, including challenges and prospects.
2. Parental involvement has proved to promote the functional academic skills in children with intellectual disabilities and practical skills competency. This reason, parents should understand that they are partners of the school and that their involvement is needed and valued.
3. The school authorities should consider parents' view in all important management decisions concerning the school and the wellbeing of the children with intellectual disabilities. This would make them more involving in the activities of the school and in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities.

4. Meetings, seminars and workshops should be conducted for parents to facilitate parental involvement. Follow-up programs should also be conducted to ensure effective involvement of parents in their children with intellectual disabilities' education.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

It is recommended for future researchers interested in assessing strategies basic teachers use in managing inappropriate behaviours to consider the following;

1. A similar study can be conducted to find the effect of parental involvement on academic achievement of children with intellectual disabilities in Dzorwulu Special School, Accra.
2. A comparative study may be conducted on the parental involvement of children with intellectual disabilities and normal children.



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APPENDIX "A"

INTRODUCTORY LETTER



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August 18, 2017

The Headmistress
Dworwulu Special School
P.O. Box AH 67,
Achumota, Accra.

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I write to introduce to you, Amanda T. Djirackor an M.ED student of the Department of Special Education, University of Education, Winneba with the registration number 7150150011.

She is currently working on her thesis on the topic: *"Parental Involvement in the Education of their children with Intellectual Disabilities: A case study of the Dworwulu Special School in Accra in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana."*

I should be grateful if you could give her the needed assistance to enable her to carry out her research work in your school. This forms part of the requirements to complete her programme.

Counting on your cooperation.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

ESAU YAO YEOPLE (PHD)
AG. HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION
WINNEBA



APPENDIX “B”

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

The researcher is undertaking a research on: *Parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in special schools in Ghana: A case study of Dzorwulu Special School in Accra in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana*. Grateful shall she be if you accept to be part of this study by responding to the questions on the instrument. Please be assured that all information and disclosures provided by you will be kept confidential.

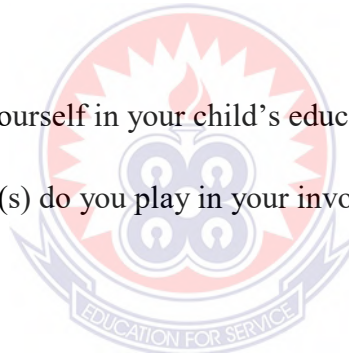
Section A: Demographics of Participants

1. Your Sex.....
2. Age.....

Research Question 1:

1. Do you involve yourself in your child’s education?

Prompt: What role(s) do you play in your involvement?



Research Question 2:

2. How does your involvement really influence your child’s education?

Prompt: Can you explain what specific things that you have achieved?

Prompt: Can you state that parental involvement is important in children’s education?

Prompt: How?

Research Question 3:

3. In your involvement, what specific challenges do you face normally?

Prompt: How do they affect you?

Research Question 4:

4. Does the school put some mechanisms in place to ensure effective parental involvement?

Prompt: If yes, what are they?

If no, why?

Prompt: How does the mechanism ensure your effective involvement?



APPENDIX “C”

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Dear Sir/Madam,

The researcher is undertaking a research on: *Parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in special schools in Ghana: A case study of Dzorwulu Special School in Accra in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana*. Grateful shall she be if you accept to be part of this study by responding to the questions on the instrument. Please be assured that all information and disclosures provided by you will be kept confidential.

Thanks for accepting to part of this academic exercise.

SECTION A: Background Information

1. What is your sex?

[a] Male ()

[b] Female ()

2. What age range would you say *you* best fall in?

[a] 21-30 years ()

[b] 31-40 years ()

[c] More than 40 years ()

3. What is your Level of Education?

[a] Diploma ()

[b] First Degree ()

[c] Masters' Degree () Any other qualification(s):.....

4. For how long have you been teaching children with intellectual disabilities?

[a] Less than 5 years ()

[b] 5 - 10 years ()

[c] 11 - 15 years ()

[d] More than 15 years ()

SECTION B:

Respond to each question in Part I, II, III, & IV by ticking a box that best describes your view.

PART I: Parental involvement in the education of their children

To what extent do you agree or disagree to the following roles played by parents in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities in the school?

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Parents regularly communicate children's condition to the school authorities.				
Parents monitor children's academic progress in school and at home.				
Parents attend PTA meetings and other school functions.				
Parents provide children with learning materials.				
Parents fulfill all financial obligations to the school.				

Any other, please specify:.....

PART II: Influence of parental involvement in the education of their children

To what extent do parental involvement influence the education of their children with children with intellectual disabilities?

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There is improvement in academic performance of pupils.				
There is strong development of social etiquette.				
There is improvement in pupil's health needs.				
There is the development of sound practical skills.				
Independent daily living in school.				

Any other, please specify:.....

PART III: Inherent factors influencing parental involvement in their children education

The statements below relate to challenges parents experience in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities. To what extent do you agree or disagree to the following statements?

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Parents have limited access to school decisions.				
Negative perception about children with intellectual disabilities				
Parents complaint that they are unable to get reliable data on children from the school				
Parents regret having children with intellectual disabilities.				
Parents are not financially sound to involve effectively in the education of their children.				

Others, please specify.....

PART IV: Mechanisms that can be put in place to ensure effective parental involvement in the education of children with intellectual disabilities.

The following contains list of mechanisms that can be put in place to ensure effective parental involvement in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities.

Indicate your agreement or disagreement to the following mechanisms.

Mechanisms	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Getting parents to attend training programme on how to get involve in their children education.				
There should be parent-teacher collaboration.				
Frequent school durbars and special events should be encouraged in the school.				
Parents should be educated to dispel traditional and cultural beliefs about children with intellectual disabilities.				
Regular updates on the progress made by the child with intellectual disabilities.				
There must be system of communication where all information about policies, procedures and expectations are available to all parents.				
Giving students practical home activities that would require parental involvement.				
Benefits of educating children with intellectual disabilities should be made known to parents in the language they understand.				
Time for PTA's, open days and durbars should be made flexible to enable parents' active involvement.				