

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**EXPERIENCES OF DEAF STUDENTS AS THEY TRANSITION TO THE
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**



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**EXPERIENCES OF DEAF STUDENTS AS THEY TRANSITION TO THE
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**



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**A thesis in the Department of Special Education,
Faculty of Educational Studies, submitted to the School of
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of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
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DECLARATION

Students' Declaration

I, Daniel Yaja Bitaba, declare that this Thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:

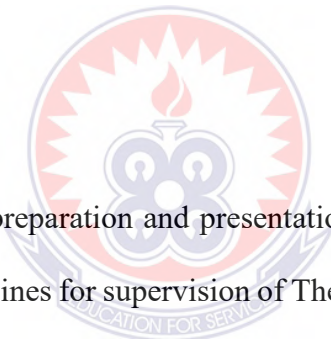
Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor: Dr. Daniel Fobi

Signature: 

Date: 25/11/2023



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my mother, Esther Okonengye Yaja, and my sister Obi Grace Yaja for their unflinching love and care for my welfare.



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I thank the Lord Almighty for granting me the strength and good health which has brought me this far. To Him be the glory. I am again indebted to my research advisor and supervisor, Dr. Daniel Fobi for his support, encouragement and patience throughout the period of this study. I cannot forget the great contribution of Mr. Obed Appau for the brotherly counsel and support. I acknowledge the contribution of Mr. James Ntemor German, a wonderful brother, for his support and counsel. I also acknowledge Mr. Nyojah Bitaba (the chief of Bitaba-Kpassa), and my uncle, Superintendent Andrews Kofi Okonengye and his wife and family. Big thanks to Mr. Edward Yajayi (CEO of Victory Assured Senior High School), staff of Victory Assured, Mr. Emmanuel Nasangma (Coordinator for Kpassa Study Center, IDCL, UDS). Also, thanks Mr. Alex Kojo Bijobu, Mr. Diah Eric, Shafawu Yakubu, Abdul-Waris Mohammed Sualihu, Menu Yaw Binob, Shadrach Ndibagen, Vida Dawan, Cynthia Babanyi, Daniel Gmafufu, Timothy Opel, Moses Grundow Malen, Jeremiah Kyapuo, and Chikpa Kwame Enoch. Now to my Pastor, Richard Kwame Dzube and wife Gladys Dzube, the entire leaders, the youth and all members of Deeper Life Bible Church, Kpassa, I say a big thank you for your prayers you offer daily on my behalf. Emmanuel Adugyamfi, Ebenezer Amoah, Gilbert Yeboah, Sandra Siripi, and many others who have been very wonderful to me in the period of this program, I say God bless you. I cannot forget my colleagues in M'phil Special Education 2021/2022-year group, they mean a lot to me. To all members of my two families, thus Bitaba family and Okonengye Family, I say thank you all. To crown it all, my siblings – Grace Obi Yaja, Adam kimobaan Yaja, Hellen Okonengye Yaja, Comfort Yaja, Paulina Yaja, and Stephen Tinyorbi Bitaba, I cannot forget the labour we made together throughout this program. God bless you all.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------|
| University of Education, Winneba | UEW |
| Mampong Senior High Technical School | MSHTS |
| West African Senior School Certificate Examination | WASSCE |
| Research Assistant | R A |



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore experiences of deaf students as they make transition from the Senior High School to the University of Education, Winneba. Data were gathered from two locations; Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf and the University of Education, Winneba. A total of 16 participants, comprising six teachers and 10 deaf students were purposively sampled from a population of 22. Semi- structured interview guide was used for the study on both the teachers and deaf students. Data was analysed using thematic analysis while demographic data was also analysed using tables. Findings of the study revealed that there are no transition programs to prepare deaf students for postsecondary education. Again, the study revealed that deaf students face diverse challenges in adjusting in the University after transition. The study recommended that, Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf, should develop transition programs for deaf students in order to prepare them for Post-secondary studies. The study again recommended that the University should put measures in place in order to make the environment welcoming to deaf students.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Educational transition of deaf students has become an issue of concern since access to quality education is a basic right for every child globally. There are various declarations at both international and national levels that take into consideration educational rights of students with disability. Such declarations include UNESCO Salamanca statement and framework for action (1994), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, 2016), the Education Strategic Plan (2010-2020), Persons with Disability Law, 2006 Act 715, and the Inclusive Education policy of Ghana (2015). The right to education to every Ghanaian child of school-going age is also enshrined in the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (Baafi 2020). The statement of the educational right of all children in both international and national commitments have made deaf students to have equal opportunity to education as their hearing peers. Access to equal educational right does not end at the basic level neither at the second cycle institutions, but extends to all levels of education including the universities. For instance, in the United States of America, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act protects individuals with disability against discrimination to get access to Post-Secondary Education. Similarly, the Inclusive Education Policy of Ghana (2015) provides opportunity for individuals with disability to get access to all levels of education. Despite the enshrinement of laws in various declarations to make deaf students have access to education, many deaf students still find it difficult to their ways into the University. According to Pirone (2015), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires colleges and universities to provide access and support services such as American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters to ensure that deaf students have full and equal

participation in college academic and social systems (National Association of the Deaf, 2000). However, Pirone (2015) added that, despite the increase and the availability of access and support services in higher education, deaf students continue to struggle to attain the goal of completing a degree and eventually withdraw from college.

A successful transition program for deaf students helps in achieving the aim of equal access to quality education. When there is equal access to quality education, it helps in addressing socioeconomic problems of poverty, unemployment and inequality that exist between deaf and hearing people (Browne & Barrett, 1991; Reynolds, Sammons, De Fraine, Dame, Townsend, Charles, & Stringfield, 2014; UNESCO, 2017). Thus, considering the experiences of deaf students as they progress through the educational ladder from the secondary school into the University is necessary. Transition is understood as the internal process in the mind which takes place when students undergo change and pass from the familiar to the unknown, responding to cultural, social and cognitive challenges (Cheng, Barnes, Edwards 2015; Perry & Allard 2003, Prescott & Hellstén 2005). Transition involves the establishment of a relationship between the school and the home while the key goal is the development of the student (Dockett & Perry, 2001). During transition from one level to another, there is a change from a familiar atmosphere to one that is unfamiliar. Cheng, et. al., (2015) stated that, although students experience the transition into higher education in different ways, for almost all of them, the change from a familiar environment into an unfamiliar one represents a period of disequilibrium. Cheng, et. al., (2015) indicated that, the transition to university life involves changes and potential challenges that students may experience. Transition from one level of education to another takes into consideration issues such as social and academic adjustment (Rice, Frederickson, Shelton, McManus, Riglin, & Ng-Knight, 2015). Both the academic and social adjustments must be given

equal attention in the pursuit of making transition successful. Most of the times, attention is focused on one than the other, leading to a decline in that particular area. For instance, Harris and Nowland (2020) opined that, academic attainment notably declines during the first year of the school transition. According to them, the decline in academic performance is considered to be due to several reasons relating to the child, such as children not enjoying the new school, or believing that the first few years are not as important, and also the result of adjustment to differences in pedagogy from primary to secondary school. This is not different from what happens to deaf students that transition to the University of Education, Winneba. They often times have significant decline in academics due to so many factors.

Liu (2013) reviewed a study by Toscano, McKee, and Lepoutre (2002) on deaf college students with higher literacy skills. The study identified several factors contributing to their academic success: (a) greater parent involvement in education, (b) differing communication modes, (c) early and intensive experience with literacy skills, (d) pleasure in reading, (e) good social life (actually more interested in this factor in high school than in middle school), (f) the importance of TV and assistive technology, and (g) positive self-esteem. Also, Convertino, Marschark, Sapere, Sarchet, and Zupan (2009) in Liu (2013) reviewed 10 previous studies and reported that academic preparation was the only one reliable predictor of college academic success rather than any audiological or communication characteristics (i.e., level of hearing loss or type of communication used). Liu's study also revealed that Deaf and Hard of Hearing college students in Taiwan reported that too much pressure and expectations from parents may result in lower academic performance as well. According to McMillan (2013), transition to university is experienced as a 'culture shock' – brought on by the anxiety of not knowing what is expected. He added that, this anxiety directly impacts on the

learning process. The challenge for a student on entering university is therefore to come to know the reality of the new learning environment. McMillan (2013) added that, understanding the extent to which emotion is implicated in transition to university has the potential to inform student support that goes beyond traditional interventions of academic development and curriculum innovation.

In Tito's Model of institutional departure (1993), he indicated that, for students to persist, there is need for integration into formal (academic performance) and informal (faculty/staff interaction) academic systems and formal (extracurricular activities) and informal (peer-group interactions) social systems. Guiffrida (2006) cited in Ahmed, Chrysikos, and Ward (2017) stated that Tinto's theory requires students to move beyond their past traditions and affiliations in order to accept the associations and traditions of the higher education environment. Students who manage to affiliate with the higher education environment eventually complete their studies and graduate from university. However, not all students are able to affiliate. Those who do not reach an adequate level of affiliation tend to drop out of university and so integration with the institution is the key. In this context, initial goal and institutional commitments influence student integration within the academic and social system of their university (Tinto, 1993). Emphasis must therefore, be laid on these two variables (academic and social) if deaf students are to have successful transition from the secondary school level into the University level.

Successful transition for deaf students requires the collaborative effort of parents, the university and other stakeholders (Dockett & Perry, 2001). Rice et al., (2015) stated that, the school environment and the connection of parents and children to their school are implicated in a range of positive health outcomes for young people. According to Cheng et. al., (2015), higher education can be viewed as consisting of

multiple, concurrent transitions both in context (such as a move to a new city, to a new educational system) as well as in interpersonal relationships (such as forming new relationships with students, peers, university support and academic staff as well as changes to existing relationships with family and school friends). Thus, transition is viewed as an ongoing process where levels of support should be adjusted accordingly.

1.1 Study settings

This study was conducted in two different settings, Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf in Mampong in the Eastern Region of Ghana, and the University of Education, Winneba in the Central Region of Ghana. Two settings were chosen for the study in order to enable the study to make thorough analysis by having data from different sources to confirm analysis of findings and to avoid biases.

1.1.1 Brief history of Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf

Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf is the only second cycle institution for the Deaf in Ghana, and is located at Mampong Akwapim in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The school started as a basic school in January, 1959 by Adrew Foster who is the father of Deaf Education in Ghana. The school passed through series of transformations and relocations until it was finally agreed on to situate the school at Mampong. After many years of reforms, the school was renamed Secondary Technical because there were advocacies that the deaf also need Secondary or Technical Education. The school obtained autonomous status in 1982 and has since been operating as an independent body, and presently, the school admits students from 13 basic Junior High Schools for the deaf in Ghana who have qualification after they have sat for the Basic Education Certificate Examinations. Admission to the school is however not limited to deaf students from the schools for the deaf only, but open to all deaf students who have qualification to be admitted. (Source. Ghanaschoolsonline.org).

1.1.2 Brief History of the University of Education, Winneba

The University of Education, Winneba (UEW) was established in September, 1992 as a University College under the PNDC Law 322. On 14th May, 2004 the University of Education Act, Act 672 was enacted to upgrade the status of the University College of Education, Winneba to the status of a full University. The University currently operates from two campuses – the College of Languages Education, located at Ajumako and the Winneba campus where the main administration is located, and has the aim of training competent professional teachers as well as conduct research, disseminate knowledge and contribute to educational policy and development. Also, the University is open to all categories of persons including those who have any form of disability. Admission to the University is through either direct application, or through mature entrance examination. Presently, deaf students in the University are about 65 who came from different Senior High Schools across the nation. Moreover, there are resource centers for individuals with disability with other support services in the University. (source. www.uew.edu.gh)

1.2 Statement of the problem

Report from the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) shows that, about 470,737 people out of a population of about 31 million are deaf (GSS 2020). The Ghana National Association for the Deaf also reports that, approximately 528,240 people of the Ghana's population of about 31 million are deaf. Despite the number of deaf people stated, the number of deaf students in the tertiary institutions are less in comparison with the hearing individuals in the University. For instance, the University of Education, Winneba, which has the highest population of deaf students in Ghana, has only 65 deaf students out of a student population of about 20,000, and Takoradi Technical University also has only 25 deaf students out of a student population of about 10,000. The fewer

number of deaf students found in the institutions may be due to inadequate preparation and guidance for the deaf students at the Senior High School level.

Again, Prior to entering postsecondary educational settings, students with disabilities are protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Trunk, Russo & Trammell 2016; IDEA, 2004). However, deaf students face diverse challenges during the time of transition to the University. The challenges include personal, institutional, financial, adjustment problem, and environmental. The challenges are due to the fact that they are changing environment from a deaf community where all the students were using sign language as the mode of communication among themselves to the University, where majority of the people are not able to communicate in sign language, hence making their adjustment very difficult. Also, in the secondary school, deaf students do not need an interpreter as in the case of the University. Thus, Longwell-Grice and Longwell-Grice (2008) noted that students go through trauma, pains, anxieties, dislocations and challenges during transition. The many uncertainties result from change in culture, and social and academic environment. Trunk, Russo & Trammell (2016) also opined that unlike in K-12 setting, officials in higher educational institutions are not obligated to identify and evaluate students who may have or demonstrate symptoms of disability (Trunk, Russo & Trammell 2016). They added that, many individuals with disability often do not get the support and services they may need in order to be successful, a reality which may contribute to lower retention rates (Trunk, Russo and Trammell 2016). The numerous challenges that deaf students face lead to significant limitation both at the time of making transition and the time of making adjustment. However, despite the less attendance of deaf students to the tertiary institutions and the challenges they face during transition, there has been no proper documentation in Ghana on challenges that deaf students face during transition to the

University (Fobi, 2021). Though Gyasi and Hayford (2017) conducted a study in the University of Education, Winneba on how to minimise frustration, the study was focused on all disabilities and did not also consider transition experiences. Also, Adu (2016), Amoah (2022), Appau (2021), and Fobi (2021), conducted studies on social interactions between deaf students and their hearing peers in tertiary institutions in Ghana. However, the studies did not look at transitional experiences and adjustment problems of deaf students. Hence, this present study is necessary since it considers the preparation of deaf students for transition and looks at both social and academic adjustments in the University.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to explore the experiences of deaf students as they transition from the Senior High School into the University of Education, Winneba.

1.4 Objective of the study

The following objectives guided the study:

- To find out how Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf prepare students for transition into the University
- To explore challenges that deaf students encounter as they make transition from the Senior High School into the University of Education, Winneba.
- To investigate how the challenges deaf that students encounter during transition affect their social and academic adjustment.
- To find out strategies deaf students adopt to mitigate challenges of transition into the University of Education, Winneba.

1.4 Research questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. In what ways does Mampong Senior High Technical School prepare deaf students for transition into the University?
2. What challenges do deaf students face when they are making transition from the Senior High school into the university?
3. How do the challenges deaf students face during transition affect their social and academic adjustment in the University of Education, Winneba?
4. What strategies do deaf students adopt to mitigate the challenges of transition in the University of Education, Winneba?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Results from this study would help the Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf know how to prepare their students to meet academic demands of postsecondary education. Both teachers, administrators and policy makers of Mampong Senior High Technical School will become aware of necessary transition programs that will help to ensure that deaf students from the school will be able to go for postsecondary studies and also be able to adjust to the academic demands of the postsecondary institutions.

Also, students who are deaf and are making transition into the University will be conscious of certain possible challenges that they may encounter. This will take away unprecedented cultural shocks and other unexpected stress that they might be going through if they were not aware of what is happening in the University. This knowledge that students will have will enable the students to make good decisions concerning post-secondary life.

In addition, Lecturers and other stakeholders in the University will understand that the University community is an inclusive community. Knowledge on this will help to provide necessary support for deaf students. Moreover, deaf students in the University would learn how to develop strategies to quickly adjust socially and academically to the University environment. They will learn how to make friends easily with the hearing peers and other members in the University community. Again, the results of the study would add vital information to the body of literature available in Ghana concerning transition experiences of deaf students. Lastly, it will generate a new understanding about the issues raised that will be useful for future researchers.

1.7 Delimitation

This study was delimited to transition experiences of deaf students in the University of Education, Winneba. This is because, though many studies have been conducted concerning transition of deaf students, no such study has been conducted in the University of Education, Winneba. Moreover, there are other public and private tertiary institutions in Ghana but the University of Education Winneba was chosen because it is one of the main institutions that admit many deaf students in the country.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

There was difficulty scheduling appointments with the participants in the university of Education, Winneba for the interview since lecture times for the participants were different and many of them not available at the time the interview started. I was able to manage this challenge by making sure that I waited for them and when they were done with their lectures I quickly reminded them of the interview schedule. This made the interviews for the deaf students to last for three days.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Transition: A coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post school activities, including postsecondary education.

Deaf students: Students whose hearing loss prevent them from perceiving sound and understanding speech and whose mode of communication is sign language.

Experience: the process of living through an event or events.

Deafness: Hearing loss that precludes a person from understanding spoken language

1.10 Organization of the Study

In line with the in – house style of the University of Education, Winneba, this thesis was presented in six chapters. Chapter one comprised the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, limitations, operational definition of terms and general layout of the study. Chapter two focused on the literature review taking into account the research objectives and the theoretical framework of the study. Chapter three dealt with the methodology including research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling technique, instrument used in data collection and analysis, description and distribution of instruments. Chapter four covered the presentation and analysis of data collected and chapter five focused on interpretation and discussion of results. Chapter six dealt with the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents reviews of a related literature on deaf students' experiences as they transition from the Senior High School into the University of Education, Winneba. The chapter is divided into three sections, which are 1. Theoretical Framework, 2. Conceptual Framework and 3. Empirical Review.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

In this study, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) was used as the framework to guide data collection, analysis and discussion of how deaf students make transition from the Senior High School into the University of Education, Winneba.

The Ecological System Theory was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917 – 2005) a Russian-born American psychologist. The theory initially had four nested systems which are the Microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macro system. The concept of chronosystem was later developed by Bronfenbrenner in 1986 (Gadagbui 2012). According to Bronfenbrenner this theory looks at a child's development within the context of the system of relationships that form his or her environment. Bronfenbrenner's theory defines complex "layers" of environment, each having an effect on a child's development. The theory deals with the interaction between an individual and the external environment. It recognises that, environmental events and conditions outside any immediate setting containing a person can have a profound influence on behaviour and development within that setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Nortey, 2009). The ecological framework also takes into consideration the complex interactions involved as deaf students, their hearing peers and others

stakeholders will understand the gap between the deaf and hearing assist in making meaningful adjustment. For example, when the environment of an individual is not suitable for the individual, it may lead to greater functional limitations of the individual. Bronfrenbrenner considered that, the interaction of humans with the external environment happens in stages and that, the environment has effect on the development of the individual. The macrosystem which is considered as the outermost layer of the individual's environment deals with cultural values, customs and laws (Gadagbui, 2012).

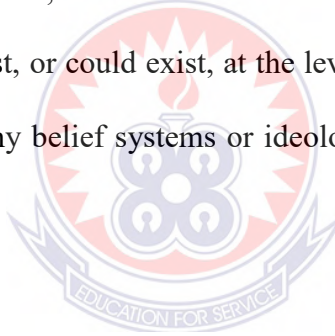
2.1.1 The various levels of the ecological system theory

The Microsystem: This is the most proximal level of the ecological system, which includes the settings in which individuals directly interact. It is the closest layer with which the individual has a direct contact. Relating this to the study, it talks about the first people that the deaf students have contact with whether in their old environment or new environment.

The mesosystem: This deals with the relationship between the microsystems contexts. Here the home and the school has interactions to make sure that the environment that is created for the individual is conducive and welcoming. Also, the Senior high school of the student which is the initial microsystem and the University where the student is moving to which is the second microsystem need to have collaboration to make sure that the conditions necessary for transition are put in place. The mesosystem explains well the work that exists between the school and the University if a student must have a successful adjustment during transition. Thus, when there is a good correlation between the Secondary School components and the University components, there will be a good transition and adjustment consequently.

The exosystem: This is the level that Bronfenbrenner considered as the larger social system. It also talks about the indirect effect that the individual has if the home is not okay. The structures in this layer impact the child's development by interacting with some structure in her microsystem. Parents situation affect the child psychological wellbeing, but indirectly. The child may not be directly involved at this level, but he does feel the positive or negative force involved with the interaction with his own system.

The Macrosystem: Bronfenbrenner (1979) stated that, at the stage of the macrosystem, the individual is able to make choices based on their preferences. This means that the individual will experience a change (Gadagbui, 2012; Santrock, 1995). The macro system refers to consistencies, in the form and content of lower-order systems (micro-, meso-, and exo-) that exist, or could exist, at the level of the subculture or the culture as a whole, along with any belief systems or ideology underlying such consistencies (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).



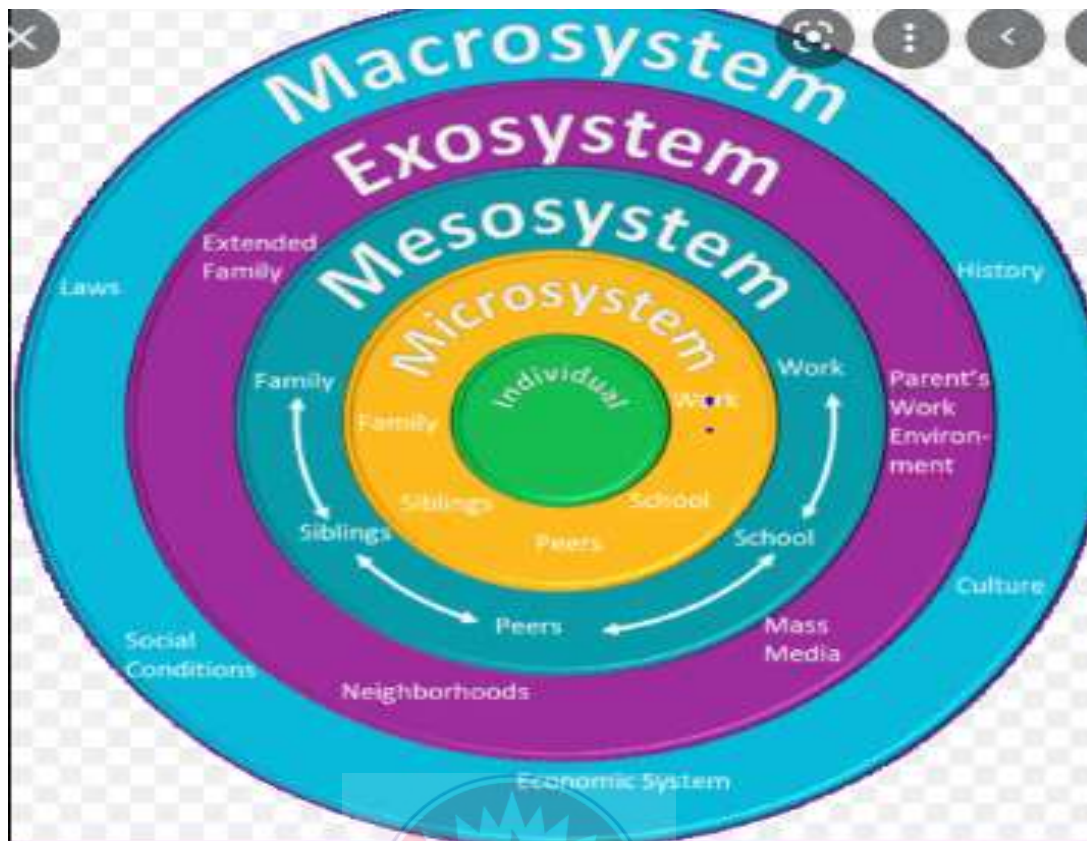


Figure 2.1 The Ecological System. Adopted from Bronfenbrenner's Ecological system theory

2.1.2 Implications to the Study

The Ecological Systems theory puts the individual at the center of the activity making it possible for deaf students to interact freely with the environment as they make transition from one environment to the other. The theory provides a framework by which the findings can be discussed because the study at the different school environment and the effects that movement from one environment to the other has on the student. The theory takes into consideration how deaf students are made ready in their initial environment before they make a move to the new environment. In the explanations for each of the levels of interaction between the individual and the environment, it is realised that each level has a rippling effect on the other (Gadagbui, 2012). Here, the micro systems of the deaf student are two, thus the Senior High School

and the University. There has been transition of the deaf student from the initial micro system to the current micro system. At the level of the mesosystem, there is now comparison between the two micro systems where the deaf student now begins to feel the reality of the transition from the initial micro system to the recent micro system. Moreover, the exosystem reveals that, the soundness of mind the student needs to be able to adjust to social and academic environment is also in part the responsibility of the home. However, in this study, the Senior High school of the student which is the initial microsystem plays the role as the student's home. Therefore, if the Senior High school has not been able to prepare the child very well, it will have a consequential effect on the student after transition into the University. The original home of the student however, still has a role to play in this case to augment the effort of the Senior High School to ensure proper preparation of the student. At the stage of the macrosystem, the deaf student is faced with new cultural values, customs and laws which they must make decision to follow or to ignore. Following or ignoring these values, customs and laws will determine how best they make transition and adjust.

2.2.0 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework was constructed in a way that it reflects the objectives of the study by presenting the relationship between the study variables. The study was based on experiences of deaf students as the transition from Mampong Senior High School for the Deaf to the University of Education, Winneba. The conceptual framework indicates the environment in which the students were living in the Senior High school. in the Senior High School, there were only deaf students and their teachers where deaf culture had a full place to operate. On the contrary, when they move to the University of Education, Winneba, there has been a change of environment. At the University, though, the deaf students still want to keep their deaf culture, but the

environment has a greater stake to decide. Here, the system operates on an inclusive base where the deaf cannot have their own community. Hence they are made to adjust to the new University environment. Also, at the University, there are people like lecturers, hearing students, and sign language interpreters. Here, there is need for a sign language interpreter to interpret what the lecturer is teaching to the deaf student which is contrary to what was happening at the Senior High School.

The main variables under study are reflected in Figure 2.2.

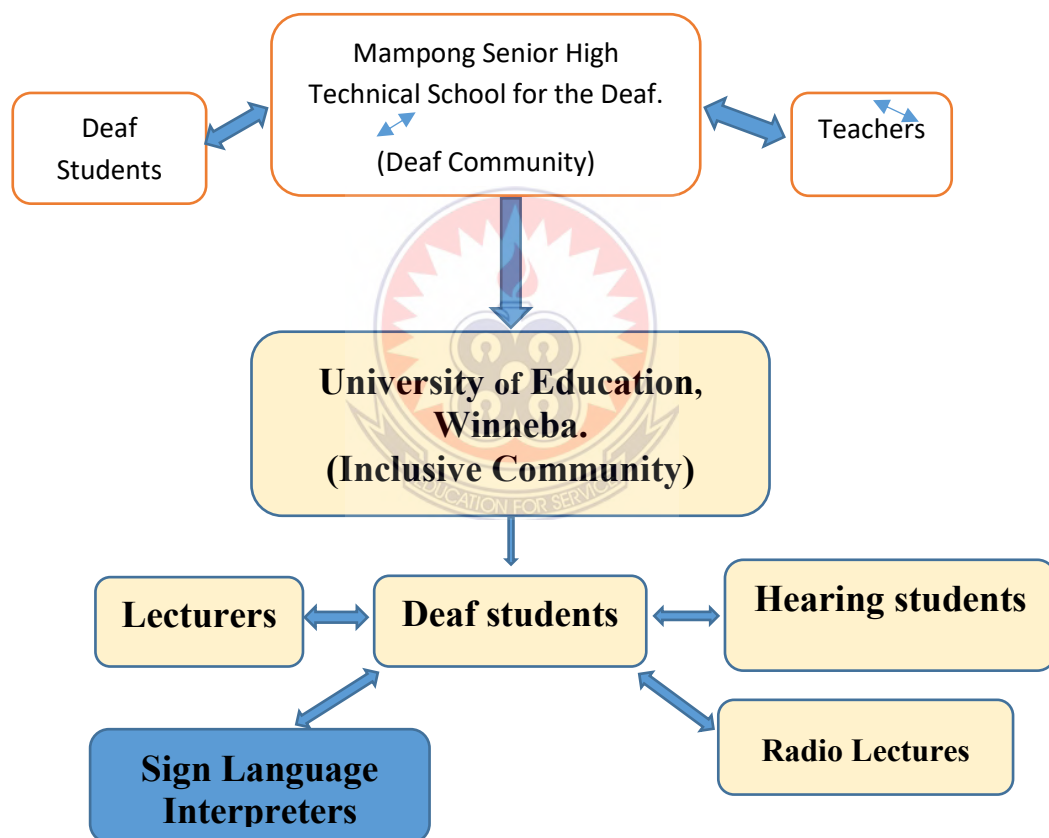


Figure 2.2

2.3.0 Empirical Review

The empirical literature reviewed included research articles, journals and books. The areas that were discussed are:

- Preparation for transition

- Challenges during transition
- How transition affect academic adjustment.
- How transition affect social adjustment
- Mitigating the challenges of transition

2. 3. 1 Preparation of Deaf Students for Transition

Students preparation is very paramount when it comes to transition from one stage of education to the other. Preparation for transition starts at the micro system level of the ecological system. That is the initial environment that the students interact with and is being made ready to move to another level of the ecological system, that is the new environment the student is going to (Bronfenbrenner 1979). Since the initial environment of the students is different from the new environment in which they are going to, there is need for them to be prepared thoroughly before they move to the new environment. Adjusting to new and unusual settings can be a very anxious time for children, so preparation and planning are key factors in making the transition as smooth as possible Bousquet, Bielawska & O'connell (2021). A strong transition plan is one that starts as early as middle school and is articulated in an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) that works in tandem with the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) (Nicole 2015). Bangser (2008) stated that, when students are taking through transition early enough, it is possible to engage students when they should be developing initial postsecondary education and career aspirations accompanied by an appropriate academic plan (McDonough, 2004). Phatudi (2007) stated that, since the child's transition does not happen in a vacuum; a number of variables such as the home, preschool and school and the wider community affect the way in which these transitions are traversed.

2.3.2 The Role of the School in Transition Planning

When it comes to preparation for postsecondary transition, the first responsibility is laid on the school. Danek & Busby said that schools must position students to live personally meaningful lives, through a K-12 developmental progression of experiences that enhances decision-making skills and life options and provides opportunities to enrich and expand life experiences and challenges. Schools must recognize that successful students are those who are equipped to guide their own destinies (Cashman, 1995). This philosophy also called person-centered planning, puts the person at the center of transition planning (Perlroth, Pumpian, Hesche, & Campbell, 1993)

Moreover, in preparing students for transition, the school should educate the students on their new environment they are going to. Their minds should be prepared to meet things different from what are around them. Bousquet, Bielawska and O'connell (2021) opined that students making transition must be talked to about the school and what they will be doing there, what they need to bring with them, who else will be there, activities, rules etc. Students' high school experiences should gradually be adjusted to fit what they will encounter in postsecondary activities. A study by Ressa (2016) mentioned "postsecondary readiness framework" as a variable to help have effective transition. According to the study, post-secondary readiness framework is built around methods, programs, and best practices high schools use to help students prepare for postsecondary success. The framework is comprehensive in nature and centers on three key elements: (a) structural elements, (b) academic elements, and (c) social elements" Schools must therefore develop deaf students to be ready for postsecondary transition.

Again, the school must ensure that students who are being prepared for transition must also be taken through rigorous academic work in order to make them fit for academics in the new postsecondary environment. Study by Bangser (2008) found out that, students, including those with previously low achievement levels who take more rigorous, academically intense programs in high school enroll and persist in postsecondary education at higher rates than similar students who pursue less challenging courses of study (Adelman, 2006; Oakes & Saunders, 2007). Bangser added that, many students who enter the workforce immediately upon high school graduation now need the same level of skills and knowledge as students entering college.

Similarly, a study by Brezovsky & Silvernail (2000) showed that inadequate academic preparation has been shown to be a significant barrier for post-secondary participation. The study conducted in Vermont (as cited in Brezovsky & Silvernail 2000) examined the differences between those who were and those were not aspiring to higher education in Vermont, aspirers were more likely, than those who did not plan to attend college, to agree that academics stimulated them to higher learning. Also, aspirers were more likely than non-aspirers to have taken the necessary coursework for college, to have a higher grade point average (GPA), and to be in a college preparatory track in high school (Bangser 2008).

Garray (2002) outlined what teachers (school) should do to help deaf students in transition planning process. It includes:

- Define “transition planning.” Teachers should help deaf students explain the purpose of transition planning in their own words and discuss expectations and/or activities that will occur during these conferences.

- Teach the student how to participate. Deaf students must know how to influence decisions being made about them. They need to have strategies for what to say and how to act during conferences, and they also need to be prepared to advocate for themselves. Students must have a clear understanding of their own strengths and areas of challenge
- Create opportunities to practice. Without any prior systematic practices, deaf students often are not able to internalize the skills needed for asking the right questions at the appropriate time.
- Allow time to respond. Deaf students need a longer “wait time” to think about what needs to be said, remembering how to communicate their responses, and what type of questions to ask.
- Teach how to make eye contact. Since deaf students often rely on interpreters for effective communication when parents and other adults are in the meeting, they tend to look more at the interpreter than at the other members. If eye contact with the student is infrequent, the student may assume that his or her participation is not valued or important
- Teach how to share opinions. A good way to encourage deaf students to participate is to ask them to share their own opinions. Teaching them the importance of eye contact, self-cueing strategies, and making comments on their opinions will likely increase the student’s motivation to participate in the transition process.
- Teach how to pay attention. Deaf students need to know how to pay attention to what is being said and how to think about the information being used for planning. Most importantly, they need to know how to respond positively about

the information being discussed and how to ask for clarification to help them better advocate for themselves.

- Teach how to use interpreters. Deaf students need to know how to effectively use interpreters. They need to know how to let the interpreters know when they do not understand, or how to interrupt the conversations appropriately so that they can participate and answer questions correctly. These strategies by Garray are not limited to the time of planning transition only, but it is important for deaf students throughout their education.

2.3.3 Role of the Student in Transition Planning

A good transition planning for a student should allow the student to take part in the planning process. This is because the student is the main stakeholder and the first beneficiary of the program. Garray (2002) opined that the student with a disability should be at the core of transition planning. Nicole (2015) also opined that, when a person is involved in the identification and decision making of an activity, goal, or plan, the person has a greater stake in the outcome. This belief is no different for deaf students who are making transition to the University. When deaf students are allowed to participate in transition planning, it makes them to become responsible and more rigorous towards the success of the program. Nicole added that, students need to learn what their strengths and needs are, understand their hearing loss and/or other disabilities and how it affects them in different settings, and explore what they want to do after they complete their high school education. Their opinions, wants, and desires need to be taken into consideration if transition goals are to be on target. Danek and Busby (1999) stated that student self-determination and self-advocacy should be the primary focus of transition services and the career development curriculum. They added that

these skills must be taught and supported by the school and parents from the earliest years.

The student that is being taken through transition must be ready and have a prepared mind before the other members of the transition team will come in. Research by McDonough, (2004), showed that most students have some post high school educational or job plans by the ninth grade (Stage & Hossler, 1989). This gives an indication that deaf students must begin to develop postsecondary awareness and aspirations in the early school years in order to take algebra and other courses, which then position students for high school coursework that aligns well with postsecondary enrolment requirements (McDonough, 2004). Cheng et. al., (2015) opined that before entering the university environment, the most important psychological factors are an individual's self-efficacy assessments (level of confidence that they can perform well in the university environment), normative beliefs (opinions and advices of important people on enrolling in to a university course) and past behaviour (appropriate academic and social experiences to succeed in the university). Docket and Perry (2001) also noted that effective transition programs recognize the growth, development, and learning that has occurred before the child starts school as well as the impact of the child's environment on these. A study by Ressa (2016) however showed that many parents overprotect and have low expectations for their children who have disability which limits their access and continuation to college (Stodden & Dowrick, 1999).

2.3.4 The Role of Parents/Family in Transition Planning

The involvement of parents in the transition planning process of their children who are deaf cannot be overemphasized. Phatudi (2017) conducted a study on transition from preschool to grade 1. Result of the study revealed that parental support is

imperative if children are to adjust well in the classroom. Bangser (2008) indicated that in addition to student participation, the transition planning process should also include parents and other family members, educators representing multiple disciplines (for instance, special and general education teachers, and school counselor), a transition specialist (Eces & Ochoa, 2005), and community stakeholders such as employers with an interest in the transition planning (Kohler & Field, 2003; National Council on Disability, 2007). He added that, family involvement can increase higher education attendance and assessment scores, improve students' self-esteem and confidence, and reduce dropout rates (Blackorby & Wagner, 1996). Additionally, Phelps and Hanley-Maxwell (1997) noted that families' skills in coping with students' support needs will influence both progress towards educational outcomes and overall success in the adult community, (Bangser 2008). Also, Docket and Perry (2001) opined that effective transition programs recognize the role of the family and other educators and seek to collaborate in ways that build upon the child's experiences. They added that children are recognized as capable learners who bring with them a vast array of learning experiences and expectations, which may, or may not, reflect the knowledge, skills, and understandings reflected in the school environment. McCartin (2016) noted that, understanding that gender intersects with other social, family and cultural factors may help to determine the amount and type of support needed for each child in the transition process. This suggests that individuals going through transition have needs that differ from others of their age and gender.

Brezovsky, and Silvernail (2000) conducted a study on barriers to Post-Secondary Education. The study was a review of literature taking into consideration 11 other studies conducted in other parts of the state. Five of the studies are presented below:

The Georgia HOPE (Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally 1993), Scholarship Program which was created in 1993 by the Governor of Georgia and General Assembly in order to provide “incentive for high school and college students to perform well in school.” The HOPE Scholarship Studies were designed to examine the effects of the scholarship program on Georgia’s high school students’ Post-Secondary Education aspirations and college attendance rates. Researchers obtained complete sets of data on 517 students and 555 parents, and analysis of the data revealed that finances, personal preparation, and familial factors all impacted students’ pursuit of higher education.

Pennsylvania Study (1980). The researchers were concerned about low participation rates in higher education in the south central section of the state. The researchers used a series of ethnographic interviews conducted over the course of six months in the late 1980’s. They interviewed families with children in elementary school, recent high school graduates who had not gone on to college, school and community leaders, and local people who were currently attending college. Analysis of the data revealed three general factors, family, school, and community, that influenced an individual’s decision to attend college or not (Caldwell, & Trainer, (1989).

Appalachian Study (1991). The Appalachian Access and Success project, (1991), was developed to examine the factors that contribute to the low level of participation in higher education in the Appalachian region of Ohio. The end goal of the project was to identify and remove barriers to accessing higher education. The study developed and administered four surveys in order to discover the barriers in Ohio Appalachia. The four surveys were administered to high school seniors, the parents of these students, high school personnel, and non-traditional students from Ohio Appalachian schools. The survey found that there are individual, familial, educational,

and regional factors that influence a student's post-secondary aspirations (Crowther, Lykins, & Spohn, 1992).

Detroit Study (1989). The study determined occupational status of students sixteen months after graduation from high school, the Detroit public school system sent out 7,395 surveys to 1989 graduates of the public school system. Twenty-three percent of the sample responded with useable surveys. In addition to a demographic profile of 1989 graduates and data regarding current employment or educational status, the survey found that finances were a key factor in the pursuit of Post-Secondary Education attainment (Stavros, 1991).

Vermont study. This study investigated the factors that were likely to influence rural Vermont high school seniors to aspire or not aspire to four-year colleges. A total of 772 Vermont high school seniors completed the survey. The students were drawn from eighteen of Vermont's poorest rural high schools. The survey attempted to explore factors related to how community and school influences, and locus of control impact a student's post-secondary aspirations (Kinsley, 1993).

Four main variables emerged from the findings of all the studies. The variables are; Financial factors, Familial Factors, Academic Preparation, and Education and Community systems. These findings show that if transition must be successful, these variables mentioned must not be taken for granted, rather, serious attention should focus on making the variables to work in order to enhance progress. To the extent possible, the transition planning process should reflect an assessment of the specific postsecondary education or workplace environments that the students will encounter (Bangser 2008).

2.3.5 The Role of the University in Transition Planning

The University also has the responsibility of providing enabling environment that is least restrictive to elicit the interest of deaf students to attend the University. McDonough (2004), said that creating an environment in which students are expected to achieve academically, and are encouraged and supported to do so, is an essential precondition for college attendance. McDonough (2004), added that, four key high school features have a tremendous impact on college attendance: a college preparatory curriculum; a college culture that establishes high academic standards and includes formal and informal communication networks that promote and support college expectations; a school staff that is collectively committed to students' college goals; and resources devoted to counselling and advising college-bound students. If students who are deaf get to know that the University environment is very conducive and welcoming to them, they will not hesitate to make move to the University. On the other hand, when students realise that the University community does not provide an accommodative place for them, they will not be encouraged to attend the University.

2.3.6 The Role of Counsellors in Transition Planning

Counsellors also have roles to play in ensuring successful transition of deaf students to the University. McDonough (2004) researched and found out that, counsellors influence students' aspirations, plans, enrolments, and financial aid knowledge. The study again showed that, meeting frequently with a counsellor increases a student's chance of enrolling in a four-year college and if students, parents, and counsellors work together and communicate clearly, students' chances of enrolling in college significantly increase. Moreover, the effect of socioeconomic status on the

college enrollment of low- income students is largely explained by the lack of counseling (Plank and Jordan, 2001).

In a study by Aidoo (2011) on the administration of guidance and counselling in the various educational institutions in Ghana, it proved beneficial to the needs of students. The study found out that counselling service enables students to make good and informed choice while in school, help them correct their maladjusted behaviours, help improve their coping strategies, and further improve their learning styles and equipped them with life planning skills.

Also, Gyasi and Hayford (2017) conducted their study on the disability general in general in the University of Education, Winneba. It revealed that, students with visual impairment were not able to access counselling services because the environment was not well structured to favour movement of individuals with visual impairment. On the contrary, individuals with deafness could physically access the counselling place, but they were as well hindered by communication differences.

2.4.1 Challenges of Transition

Deaf students face diverse challenges during the time of transition to the University. Some of the challenges they encounter persist even after they have entered the University. Bangers (2008) noted that in colleges, students find higher expectations for independence and fewer opportunities for direct contact with faculty (Eckes & Ochoa, 2005). Gyasi and Hayford, (2017) opined that, students with disabilities in Universities are reportedly exposed to numerous institutional stressors that affect their daily life. These institutional based stressors include inaccessible lecture halls, reading rooms and libraries; inadequate resources to perform academic work; negative attitudes of students without disability, lecturers and school administrators (Awino & Agolla,

2008; Erkutlu & Chafra, 2006; Gyasi & Hayford, 2017; Ramakuela & Maluleke, 2011). Studies have shown that significant amount of stress can adversely affect academic (Gyasi & Hayford 2017 citing Lupien, Maheu, Tu, Fiocco & Schramek, 2007), which may lead to adverse health effects.

Numerous studies conducted to investigate the impact of school transitions found out that students transitioning to another school experience a significant drop in achievement related outcomes (Gdula, Gordon, Klingbeil & Peterson, 2011). For instance, Gutman and Midgely (2000) found out that when African American students transitioned to a new school from 5th to 6th grade, their G.P.A. significantly declined. Gordon, Peterson, Gdula, & Klingbeil (2011) found that transitions at any age had an impact on student G.P.A., whether it was middle or junior high school or whatever level. Cheng et. al., (2015), also noted that the change in the environment such as the social changes and the demands of the new academic environment can make students feel lost, disappointed, anxious, depressed, isolated and stressed. Moreover, Mueller Wismer (2015) conducted a research on barriers to Post-Secondary Education (PSE). The study focused first on who accesses Post-Secondary Education in terms of family characteristics, then on the specific barriers faced by those youths who do not access Post-Secondary Education, and finally on how different barriers are related to family background. The first part of their study investigated the various financial and non-financial factors related to Post-Secondary Education access, including family income, parental education, family type, visible minority and immigrant status, language, and place of residence (province and urban/ rural status). The study used both descriptive and modelling approaches, and investigated the various barriers students report for not attending post-secondary education, including those relating to their financial situation, academic preparation and performance, and motivation. The results show that family

income and parental education (especially the latter) are important determinants of accessing Post-Secondary Education and are also negatively related to having no Post-Secondary Education aspirations. Studies however showed that parental education is found to be an even stronger predictor of access to Post-Secondary Education compared to family income (Drolet, 2005; Finnie & Mueller, 2008a, 2008b; Knighton & Mirza, 2002; Rahman, Situ, & Jimmo, 2005; Turcotte, 2011; Wismer & Mueller 2015;) The above studies are relevant to the current study because it reveals the trauma and pain that deaf students who come from families where there is lack of parental education coupled with low income, but are able to make their ways into the University go through. Their study made suggestions that people should be educated about the true costs and benefits of a postsecondary education and the details of the student loan system which would yield better results in terms of increased and more equal access rates compared to tinkering with tuition and/or the parameters of student aid programs.

Brezovsky and Silvernail (2000) also found out that income is a strong predictor of students' post-secondary plans. Students whose families were in the highest income bracket were nearly one-third more likely to be planning on attending a four-year college than those students in the lowest family income bracket. This factor affects many deaf students when they are making transition into the University. Most of them do not get finances to make payment of their school fees, paying for rent and buy other things that are necessities. they are therefore filled with frustrations and anxieties which in turn affect their academic performances and social wellbeing.

Gdula, et. al., (2011) identified two main schools of thought regarding why transition leads to poor outcomes: the first school of thought considers development of the transitioning child. They stated that 9th grade is just a difficult time in adolescents' lives – changing parental involvement in school, autonomy. Deaf students have similar

challenge of development since they have a different mode of communication from the other members in the University community. The second school of thought also looks at changing schools which involves breaking up teacher and peer relationships, changes in organization and instruction – tougher discipline, less engagement, less trust, consequences of performance – effects of larger classes, grades, and schools – school climate (Gdula et. al., 2011). This second school of thought is also similar to that of deaf students' transition to the University, they face the challenge of changing their school for the University environment, and also meeting a different learning situation which seem somewhat complex than that of the Secondary School system. Ria (2013) opined that during transition, there are significant changes in the peer group with concerns about social acceptance often causing a loss of self-esteem, falls in academic performance and rising anxiety and depression levels (Akos, 2006; Frey, Ruchkin, Martin & Schwab-Stone, 2009; Marsten, 2008). Also, Ressa (2016) argued that while transition involves change of statuses, students with disabilities' unpreparedness in high school limits their essential knowledge and skills to cope in a new environment (i.e., manage existing and emerging demands). Akos and Galassi, (2004) also stated that “The transition to high school has been accompanied by negative consequences for some students including achievement loss and dropping out shortly after they enter high school or falling behind and failing to graduate on time (Morales 2014)

Also, social factors affect students' ability to cope with the transition to university (McMillan 2013; Rowlin, Scalon, & Weber 2007). Results of a study conducted by Ressa (2016) who cited certain authorities revealed that transition of students with disability into college is influenced by certain variables such as: Culture (Cole, 1996; Pollock, 2008), institutions (Apple, 2004; Hetherington et al., 2010), ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), systems (Masten, 2003), personalities (Butler, 2011;

McGrew, 2008), learning theories and education practices (Gabel, 2005; Vygotsky(1978), economics, disability legislations (e.g., ADA, IDEIA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973).

Challenges that deaf students encounter hinder them enormously and may even cause many of them to drop out of school. Pirone (2015) opine that, despite the increase and the availability of access and support services in higher education, deaf students continue to struggle to attain the goal of completing a degree and eventually withdraw from college. It may be that the services and supports given to deaf students are not much helpful to meet their social and academic needs (Pirone 2015; Lang, 2002; Stinson & Walter, 1997). However, the severity of challenges students encounters during transition differ significantly. Docket & Perry (2001) are of the view that, children who experience similar environments and expectations at home and school are likely to find the transition to school, as well as school in general, easier (Nelson, 1995). This indicates that, the mesosystem, that is the two microsystems of the child have a correlation which gives the student comfort. They also noted that, children who find school unfamiliar and unrelated to their home contexts tend to experience difficulty, confusion, and anxiety during the transition—particularly when the cultures in the home and school differ. This also mean that, there is no correlation between the two microsystems of the child. Thus, the child’s mesosystem is not favourable to ease transition.

A study by Pirone (2015) showed that the deaf students experience barriers as a result of their sign language interpreters’ language and cultural competencies and professionalism, the office of interpreting services’ approaches and practices, and linguistic/cultural conflicts. The problem of poor interpreting by some interpreters result from failure to make separation between interpreters who interpret in other

societal functions and those who interpret in the University. Conversational fluency in oral language and Sign Language alone does not automatically qualify a person as an interpreter (Andriakopoulou, Bouras, Giannaka, 2007). Gyasi & Hayford, (2017) citing Hayford (2010) argue that Although, the University of Education, Winneba employs personnel to work as Sign Language Interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing, these personnel could not adequately meet the needs of students. Gyasi & Hayford, (2017) added that in some cases, the interpreters were also not punctual or did not attend lectures with the students. Hadziabdic (2011) conducted a study on the use of interpreters in healthcare services. The study shows that misunderstandings due to different cultural behaviour or barriers to communication have been described as difficulties in the exchange of information between healthcare staff and patients (Hultsjö & Hjelm 2005) and increase the risk of misdiagnosis which can lead to inappropriate treatment (Rhodes & Nocon 2003). Though the study by Hadziabdic was on interpreting in the health sector, what it revealed is not different from Pirone (2015) whose work shows that lack of professionalism on the part of interpreters leads to distortion of the message they send to deaf students.

According to Powell (2013), post-secondary interpreting is very different from community interpreting. The nature of lecture styles means that the interpreter really needs to be familiar with the discourse environment and preferably have subject-specific knowledge. Unfortunately, most interpreters in the University of education, Winneba do not have what it takes to interpret in lectures. Similarly, to the situation in the University of Education, Winneba, the study of Hadziabdic revealed that an underuse of professional interpreters has been found in the US (Baker et al. 1996), Australia (Kazzi & Cooper 2003) and Switzerland (Bischoff et al. 2003). The use of interpreters who are not professionals is related to the limited availability of

professional interpreters and financial considerations (Hadziabdic 2011, Gerrish 2004, Kuo et al. 2007). Interpreters constitute the “voice” of deaf people or hearing impaired (Andriakopoulou, Bouras, Giannaka, 2007). This suggests that, if interpreters cannot relay the message completely to individuals who are deaf, it means that individuals who are deaf have lost their voices.

Most lecturers in the University also add up to a large extent to the challenges deaf students encounter in the University. The lecturers do not really know how to meet the learning needs of deaf students, and they tend to become insensitive. A study by Fuller et al. (2004) cited in Gyasi & Hayford, (2017) reported that university students with disabilities experienced a lack of cooperation from some lecturers. Gyasi & Hayford also indicated that, many regular school teachers have often demonstrated considerable lack of knowledge about students with disabilities and inclusion (Schumm & Vaughn, 1995; Tomlinson, Callahan, Romchin, Eiss, Imbeau & Landrum, 1997), and teachers have often used more undifferentiated large group instruction with few adaptations to meet the needs of included students (Schumm, Vaughn, Haager, McDowell, Rothlein & Samuel, (1995). McGee, Ward, Gibbons, & Harlow (2004) outlined changes in teaching approaches for pre-adolescents in Australia that were a response to concerns about the inappropriateness of some traditional teaching and learning practices such as a perceived over-reliance on textbooks, lack of student collaboration and active learning, little reflection on the learning process, and the assumption that all students will benefit from doing the same thing in the same way at the same time. The above description best fits for lecturers in the University of Education, Winneba. They assume that all students in the lecture halls understand what they teach using their own preferred method. Also, a study by World Bank Group (2016) found out that, teachers often assume that their teaching is very effective. They

explain the content and proceed further, assuming that all the students understood the content. The study continued to say that, too often teachers do not adapt instructions for diverse learners and do not check comprehension. For most lecturers in the University, they fail to realise that the University community is an inclusive one. Thus, they teach lessons as if they deal with people of the same ability.

A study by Deneke (2017) assessed views of students on non-signing lecturers. The results showed that when students were asked whether they are able to communicate with their non-signing lecturers in the absence of Sign Language Interpreters, majority of respondents said no. When students were asked further what method was used to communicate with non-signing lecturers in the absence of SLIs, majority of respondents said through writing, phone texting and paper-ink. The findings indicated that lecturers did not communicate via sign language and a few of students were able to communicate through writing. The study suggest that non-signing lecturers were a challenge to sign language service accessibility. The types of maladjustment problems were multi-fold and they ranged from problems related to socio-economic matters to lack of basic academic skills and lack of transition strategies by schools, resulting in the school's inability to prepare children for learning. Vickerman and Blundell (2010) cited in Gyasi and Hayford, (2017) explained that students with disabilities experience challenges such as non-availability of appropriate learning materials and specialised equipment for practical courses, hand-outs and textbooks in inappropriate formats.

Discrimination and constant rejection of deaf students by their hearing peers is also a big challenge to deaf students. Research has shown that students with disabilities are ignored by their peers when they are given group assignments (Gyasi & Hayford, 2017). The study by Amoah (2022) revealed that, compared to hearing students, deaf

students in an inclusive institution appear to be neglected by hearing peers (Nunes, Pretzlik and Olsson 2001) and experience more isolation and loneliness in school (Most, 2007) which is, in fact, harmful to their self-image and academic performance. Researches on interaction, consistently show that deaf students educated in inclusive institutions are less accepted than their classmates without special educational needs, and are more socially isolated (Freeman & Alkin, 2000). Hankins (2015) conducted a study on social interactions with 706 undergraduates at the University of Mississippi. Findings of the study revealed that hearing peers lacked knowledge about Deaf culture and how to interact with individuals with deafness.

In discussing challenges of transition, Cheng et. al., (2015) adopted Bridges (2011) Transition Model to support their study. Bridges (2011) Transition Model takes a general view of the change process and distinguishes three overlapping phases. People enter the first phase, 'Ending, Losing and Letting Go' when change is first presented to them and they experience emotions of fear, denial, anger, sadness, disorientation, frustration, uncertainty and a sense of loss. This phase could represent the first weeks of students in university when they go through external changes that are related to the new environment (different location and culture) as well as the experience of sharing a flat or living in a university accommodation with other students along with the shock of the new academic environment. These changes can make students experience feelings of homesickness, isolation, depression, anxiety, unhappiness and confusion (Denovan and Macaskill 2013; Ramachandran 2011; Thurber and Walton 2012).

The second phase, of Bridges (2011) Transition Model is 'The Neutral (Transition) Zone'. According to Cheng, Barnes, Edwards, and Valyrakis (2015) this is where people are still attached to the old situation while they are trying to adapt to their new one. During this phase, individuals are often confused, impatient and uncertain as

they experience skepticism, low productivity and anxiety about their role. Specific to student transitions, the external and internal changes during this phase can result in anxiety due to meeting new people; stress and anxiety regarding academic performance; fear of embarrassment over not being able to answer questions during presentations and stress and anxiety before, during and the days after an exam has taken place (Gu et al 2010; Wrench et al 2013; Yumatov et al 2001).

Cheng, Barnes, Edwards, and Valyrakis (2015) stated that, people are considered to have entered the third phase, 'The New Beginning' when they have started to embrace the change initiative and begin building the skills they need to work successfully in the new way. In other words, they experience openness to learning, high energy and a renewed commitment to their role. In terms of student transitions, this can be when students become more confident as they progress through university and adapt to the university learning routines. For example, they are more organised, prepared and have learned how to plan ahead. Although, students at this stage will have reach a stage they can cope, the model explains that students go through a long chain of suffering before they are able to adjust.

2.4.2 How Transition Affect Academic Adjustment

Transition of any form from one stage to another generates some impacts on the individual making the transition. For school transition, academic is also affected. McMillan, (2013) noted that primary-secondary school transition is often associated with declines in academic achievement and negative impacts on health and well-being as well as difficulties which lead frequently to academic under-performance and to withdrawal from university (Harris & Nowland 2020; Jindal-Snape, Cantali, MacGillivray, & Hannah, 2019). Other studies show that students experience negative emotional and academic outcomes following the transition from one school to another

school. For instance, (Grolnick, Kurowski, Dunlap, & Hevey, 2000; Simmons and Blyth, 1987; Simmons, et al., 1991, Seidman et al., 1996) argue that transfer to a middle school negatively affect students' grade point average and academic achievement. This fact is dissimilar to findings of a study conducted by Lipps (2005). The study of Lipps (2005) was based on transition of children in Canada. Findings of the study show that there is no negative relationship between any form of transition and academic performance. Though these studies focused on primary-secondary and middle school, deaf students in the University have similar challenges. They mostly encounter decline in academic achievement during the time of transition to the University. McGee, Ward, Gibbons, Harlow (2003) in their study associated a decline in academic competence and motivation with a change of school. Some factors were associated with the larger size of school and the difficulty pupils had in finding their own niche. Others included the move to a subject-specific timetable. But the most significant factor appears to be the move away from more intrinsic methods of assessment (McGee, Ward, Gibbons, Harlow 2003).

McMillan, (2013) conducted a study on the role that emotion plays in transition. Studying academic environment, four descriptive tags emerged. Thus, 'knowing what to expect', 'feeling familiar', 'knowing what is going on', and 'relationship with lecturers'. With the issue of students knowing what to expect, results showed that students expressed fear with regard to academic expectations which were, for them, clearly unknown and consequently not clear. One student remarked that, 'it was exciting but at the same time scary because you didn't know what to expect'. With the issue of feeling familiar, it was revealed that deaf students were not able to know their classes until a long while. With the issue of knowing what is going on, it was revealed that deaf students find the workload in the University to be more difficult for them to

cope. Finally, with the issue of relationship deaf students have with lecturers, the study revealed different relationship with school teachers and university lecturers. Relationships with teachers were ‘more personal’ and with lecturers were ‘more formal’. Rice et. al., (2015) noted that various features of friendship most notably quality and peer characteristics affect children’s psychosocial and academic development.

Sharma, Singh, Kalhan and Garg (2017) in their study noted factors that adversely affect academic performance. Among them are: Individual factors which include lack of personal effort. Most deaf students do not put in much efforts to excel academically. Most of these deaf individuals tend to think that their hearing peers will help them during examinations. The study added to the individual factors to include too much addiction to smart phones, internet or movies and lack of effective time management were the main reasons adversely affecting academic performance. According to the study, environmental factors that affect academic include non-availability of sources of recreation, food and water quality, extremes of temperature were other factors reported. Among factors related to teaching – learning, students perceived vast syllabus as major factor adversely affecting their learning. A study by Liu (2013) showed that deaf college students had a preference for dependent, participative, and collaborative learning styles accordingly. Liu (2013) found out that dependent students like to follow teacher guidance and directions; participative students are more likely to enjoy classroom involvement; and collaborative students prefer to work and share ideas with teachers and peers.

Harris & Nowland (2020) also conducted a study on transition from primary school to Secondary school. The study reviewed the existing literature on important

school transfer by focusing particularly on three key areas of adjustment: academic, social and emotional. Review on academic adjustment reveals that academic attainment notably declines during the first year of the school transition. It explained that decline in academic performance is considered to be due to several reasons relating to the child, such as children not enjoying the new school, or believing that the first few years are not as important, and also the result of adjustment to differences in pedagogy from primary to secondary school (Evans et al., 2018; Galton, Gray, & Rudduck, 1999). The review continued that in most cases, the decline in academic attainment is temporary and once children adjust to the new environmental and structural changes, academic performance begins to rise again, however, for some children, the dip in academic attainment remains. Children who have lower ability or poorer academic attainment and/or those with a learning difficulty are more prone to experiencing a retention of this dip in their academic performance (Zeedyk et al., 2003)

2.5.1 How Transition Affects Social Adjustment

Deaf students are faced with many challenges while adjusting socially in the University environment. Social adjustment is defined as the ability or capacity of the individual to react effectively and appropriately for the reality of the situation, and social relations so that the demands of social life are met in a way that is acceptable and satisfactory (Daulay & Rahmawati 2016). Social adjustment is an important component of overall adjustment to University. It involves feeling included in the University social culture and being satisfied with University social life, meeting and making friends and forming connections with other students, feeling at ease with others at University, and feeling part of the first-year cohort (Dawborn-Gundlach 2018; DeSilva, Robinson & Watts, 2011; Kantanis, 2002; Rahat & Ilhan, 2016). Dawborn-Gundlach (2018) added that, without social connections, feelings of loneliness and social dislocation put

students at a higher risk of attrition because they do not have social support in the university environment (Ayres & Guilfoyle, 2009; Mallman & Lee, 2016). Daulay and Rahmawati (2016) noted that good social adjustment in society is characterized by respect for the rights of others, the ability to cooperate with others, concern for others, and a willingness to help, as well as adherence to the values and norms prevailing in society. Studies also show that, having close peer relationships is associated with increased self-esteem (Batten et al., 2014), emotion regulation (Yuhan, 2013), successful adjustment to school transitions, and positive attitudes toward all levels of education such as pre-school, primary school, junior high school, secondary school, college and tertiary institutions. Danek and Busby (1999) opined that a successful transition is much more than getting that first job or starting a postsecondary program- it includes the personal and social skills to adapt to the work and community environment. Social skills, rather than specific job skills, often make the difference in a successful transition to an adult work life Danek and Busby (1999).

In a study by Daulay, and Rahmawati (2016), it is revealed that social adjustment in adolescents with hearing impairment based on gender, there is little difference between adolescent social adjustment between deaf female and male. They said, apparently, the social adjustment of hearing impaired female adolescents is better than male. This can be caused by the differences in the treatment of women and men in society. Men are generally more active, more independent and tend to be laxer in opposing the rules and norms of society, while women are generally more accustomed to following the norms that will be easier to adapt in their social environment (Papalia, Old & Feldman, 2008).

Studies reveal that hearing individuals have misconceptions about the deaf. For instance, a study by Amoah (2022) revealed that students who are not able to

communicate with deaf students are likely to be influenced by outdated beliefs and cultural practices about deaf people. The study added that, seeing deaf students afar would make hearing students misjudge and misinterpret their actions, thus would affect their interactions with them. If deaf students are to have a reasonable level of adjustment in the University, there must a very good way they can communicate with other members of the University community. According to Vygotsky (1978) cited in Amoah (2022), humans use tools that develop from a culture, such as speech and writing, to mediate their social environments. This is the reason many deaf students have much difficulty in making social adjustments in the University; they are not able to communicate orally and their writing abilities are also very poor. To save themselves from stigma, they decide to dissociate themselves from their hearing peers. said that deaf people tend to be egocentric, have more anxiety feelings, more dependent on others especially those already familiar, difficult to be distracted, more focus on concrete things, poor fantasy, nature plain, simple but tend to be irritable or quick to take offense, and lack the concept of the relationship, so that they often impressed as an elusive character Heryati, (2010).

According to McGee, Ward, Gibbons, & Harlow (2003), students' social adjustment to transition is closely connected to their relationships with their teachers. Cocklin (1999) cited in McGee, Ward, Gibbons, and Harlow (2003), found that the nature of the teacher and the type of teaching were the main issues noted by students about transition to secondary school. Students came with particular expectations of teachers and the processes of teaching and learning. This involved a relationship of working together and interacting as learners and teachers, and students reported a regression in their relationships with teachers at the secondary level (McGee, Ward, Gibbons, & Harlow 2004).

Rice et al., (2015) carried out a study describing how friendships changed across the transition to secondary school. Their work also considered whether different aspects of friendships (stability, satisfaction and the characteristics of the peer group) predicted how well children settled into secondary school, how schools support friendships over the transition to secondary school. Their findings suggest that there are substantial changes in the nature of pupil relationships with peers and teachers across transition from primary school to secondary school (McLaughlin & Clarke, 2010; Seidman, Allen, Aber, Mitchell, & Feinman, 1994; Zeedyk, Gallacher, Henderson, Hope, Husband & Lindsay, 2003).

One factor that affects social adjustment is high demand for academic adjustment. Harris and Nowland (2020) stated that attempting to balance the academic and social adjustment can impact how each adjustment is made. For example, a successful academic adjustment can be at the detriment of social adjustment for children (Fisher, 2017). All stakeholders, including the student making the transition fix their gaze on how well the student can adjust academically, and thereby ignoring or giving little attention to social adjustment.

2.6.1 Mitigating the challenges of transition

After students are able to solve problems and fulfil needs on their own, developing mature interpersonal relationships is their next concern, such as respecting differences and increasing capacity for intimacy. 'With the growth of new (social) approaches to disability, there is a need to develop fresh insights into the way disabled people, and others, make sense of, cope with, manage and overcome disabling social and physical barriers (Reeve, 2006). Bridges (2003) opined that making change involves the ability to effectively transition from the old (comfortable) way of doing things to a new (unknown) way. Deaf students must make conscious efforts to make

relationship in order to get a meaningful transition. Ressa (2016) noted that appropriate management of transition programs promotes students' cognitive, social, and emotional competences (Madaus & Shaw, 2006; Webster, 2004). Dockett and Perry (2001) also noted that while it can be important for children to possess and demonstrate some specific skills and knowledge, their ability to form meaningful relationships is crucial to their successful transition and influential in their later school careers

According to Piaget (1970), adaptation of man is realized at the expense of interacting and complementary processes of assimilation (including new information into existing sudation, change of structures in conformity with the requirements of the external environment). Tinto (1988) argues that the first year of college, indeed the first semester in college, is critical to the students' being incorporated into the college campus, as well as his or her eventual persistence through to graduation. According to Tinto, retention programs are most successful when they utilize informal faculty-student contact (outside of the classroom) in order to help integrate students into the mainstream of the academic and social life of the college. Deaf students must ensure that they are ready to lose old friends and, ready to forget the system of the Senior High School and be willing to cleave to new friends and new system that exist in the University campus. A study was conducted by Rice et al., (2015) which revealed that children whose friendships did remain stable did better academically, had lower rates of conduct problems (e.g. being disruptive) and higher rates of prosocial behaviour (e.g. cooperating, sharing).

According to Bangser (2008) when students with disabilities enter postsecondary education or employment, they will be expected to play an increased role in identifying necessary supports. This underscores the importance of including the development of self-determination and self-advocacy skills as part of the high school

transition planning process (Kohler & Field, 2003). Students must also develop personal competences to cope with transition. Ressa (2016) explained personal competence to include behaviours, qualities, knowledge and skills needed for an individual to lead a valued and productive life, and include independent living skills, self-help skills, social skills or interpersonal skills, communication social skills, leadership social skills, and other self-qualities skills such as self-determination and self-advocacy. Ressa (2016) added that personal competence enables the individual to take an active role in being independent in his or her life (Garcia, 2014; Rosen et al., 2010)

Gyasi and Hayford, (2017) conducted a study on how to minimize frustration in school and academic challenges. One of the variables considered by the study was “coping strategies”. Participants of the study responded differently concerning how they cope with their transition experiences. Results show some of them saying that their roommates understand them, their roommates like to associate with them, thus they are willing to learn sign language. Results also show some of them saying that they take notes from their hearing friends after lectures to copy. The results also show generally that there is an association for all the disabled students on campus which makes it possible for them to meet to discuss issues concerning the disabled individuals, and where they also socialize. This implies that building of social networks helps in minimizing concerns (Gyasi & Hayford, 2017). Banks, (2014) noted that social networks provide social supports that are tangible, emotional, and informational, which helps students with disabilities’ overall well-being.

Amoah (2022) in his study used Vygotsky’s theory of Zone of Proximal Development. The Zone of Proximal Development, as described by Vygotsky, is the

difference between one's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and one's potential developmental stage as determined by problem solving under proper guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky 1978). Vygotsky's theory suggests that learning always occurs and cannot be separated from a social context. Consequently, instructional strategies that promote the distribution of expert knowledge where students collaboratively work together to conduct research, share their results and perform or produce a final project, help to create a collaborative community of students. Knowledge construction occurs within Vygotsky's (1962) social context that involves student-student and expert-student collaboration on real world problems or tasks that build on each person's language, skills, and experience shaped by each individual's culture" (Amoah 2022; Vygotsky, 1978, p. 102). Evans, Borriello and Field (2018) stated that good quality peer relationships have been shown to assist a smooth transition; children attending a school with other friends/siblings felt more assured and less anxious about the transition.

The study by Ressa (2016) mentioned the need for students to develop Self-awareness. Awareness of self in this study refers to knowing one's abilities (strengths and weaknesses), skills (self-awareness, self-determination), knowledge (e.g. about rights and responsibilities, services, career), and feelings and desires (e.g., anger, self-esteem, pride) while awareness of others is knowledge about the society, its compositions and the roles of families, friends, educators, teachers, specialists, and people in the circle of the child. Similarly, Gyasi and Hayford (2017) citing Ambati (2015) argue that in order to manage academic and social demands of University education, students with disabilities need to understand their disabilities, develop effective coping strategies to manage their conditions, accept their strengths and weaknesses, and have knowledge about policies and support available.

The study by Ressa (2016) also mentioned the need for students to develop social competence. According to the study, “Social competence” refers to the ability of an individual to thrive in his or her social environment (Stump, Ratliff, Wu, & Hawley, 2009, p. 28). That is, it is the ability of a student to determine appropriate behaviour in a given school milieu, to adapt to the school community’s expectations at each developmental stage, and to get along with peers and teachers (Vaughn & Hogan, 1990). The study argued that social competence is affected by how a student interacts and communicates with other children and with adults and how a student views himself/herself in relation to her family, peers, and the wider world around them. Elements include social assertion, frequency of interaction, positive self-concept, social cognitive skills, and popularity with peers (Dodge, 1985). The study continued to argue that social competences include ethical development (formulating a clear value system that guides life choices and demonstrates personal character); emotional development (developing skills for understanding, controlling, and expressing emotions); spiritual development (appreciating the search for personal meaning, the purpose of human existence, and questions that transcend the material or physical world).

Daulay, and Rahmawati (2016) in their study stated four criteria to determine the extent a person's social adjustment achieved a good measure. The criteria include:

- a) Real appearance through the attitudes and real behavior: If the social behaviour of individuals is in accordance with the standards of a group or meet the expectations of the group, then the advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities individual will be accepted as a member of the group.
- b) Social adjustment to various groups: Individuals can adapt well to a variety of groups, both peer groups and groups of adults. It can be realized in cooperation with a group whose members support each other to achieve good results; carry

out the responsibilities of the well, sharing, and motivated to do good and loyalty in friendship.

- c) Social attitudes: Individuals will be able to adjust well socially if he/she is able to show good behavior towards others, participate in social participation, as well as participate in group activities. It can be realized by participating in social activities in the community, show empathy and mutual respect.
- d) Personal satisfaction: Individuals should be able to adapt to the social, able to feel satisfied with their social contacts and able to participate in various social situations. It can be seen through the self-confidence, self-discipline and life meaningful and purposeful.

If students can combat the challenges of transition, the roles of the family cannot be overemphasized. A study conducted by Liu (2005) suggested that positive family characteristics (e.g., good family relationships, parental supports, and higher expectations) result in higher academic achievement among deaf and hard of hearing students (Marschark & Hauser, 2011; Reed et al., 2008; Toscano et al., 2002; Whyte & Guiffrida 2008). In their study, Chen and Gregory (2010) cited in Morales (2014) found that students who reported their parents had higher expectations for their eventual educational attainment had higher GPAs and were rated as more engaged in the classroom by their ninth grade teachers. A study conducted by Docket and Perry (2001) revealed that during transition, opportunities to visit the school and to spend time with others at the school are important to children. In their study some children indicated that they started school on the day of their orientation, even if they had spent only a few hours at the school. The study again shows that parents placed emphasis on getting to know the school and the school's expectations as they aimed to help prepare their children for school. Though, the study of Docket and Perry (2001) focused on children

who are starting school, it is very important for parents of deaf students to make provision for their deaf students to visit the University before they finally come to stay fully. Parents reported in the same study that visit to school is not important just because they walk around the school and have a talk from the principal about what is expected at the school, but what is most important is that they get opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues to know the current trend in school. Ria (2013) recommended that parents and educational professionals should be more sensitive and responsive to students, so that they feel nurtured and supported during the transition period (Martinez et al., 2011).

Not only the parents, but the responsibility of overcoming challenges of transition should be the collective effort of all stakeholders. For students in the University, sign language interpreter is one of the stakeholders. However, if deaf students must benefit from interpreting service in the University, interpreters in the University must possess competencies for academic interpreting. A study conducted by Fobi Fobi & Oppong, (2016) suggested that Sign Language interpreters who are knowledgeable in student's subject matter area should be assigned according to the student's area of study to ensure free flow of information during teaching and learning. Their findings were supported by Wit and Sluis (2014) who suggested that students who were deaf require Sign Language interpreters who are knowledgeable and willing to render a faithful and understandable interpretation. It is also supported by Andriakopoulou, Bouras, and Giannaka (2007) who opine that specific education is needed to ensure that qualified interpreters, who understand their important and special role and also the different situations they may encounter in their work, are available for the Deaf community. Verwey-Jonker (2003) cited in Fobi, Fobi & Oppong (2016) identified the following as the main competences interpreters would need to have and which relate to all

interpreting settings: adjusting signing style to the topics in the setting, extensive use of facial expressions and lip movements, and learning new signs (training).

Schick (2007) described the Guidelines of Professional Conduct for Educational Interpreters, recommendations to the profession—but in many cases also defined by federal and state law or by educational practices—are listed below:

- a. Supporting student understanding of interpreter
- b. Meeting minimum state requirement with at least a 3.5 on the EIPA (ideally 4.0 or higher)
- c. Holding a bachelor's degree in educational interpreting or related field recommended
- d. Becoming familiar with policy, procedure, and ethics for professional conduct within the school setting
- e. Understanding confidentiality (i.e., mandatory reporter status)
- f. Protecting educational rights of students
- g. Discussing any situation with supervisor if unable to handle
- h. Participating in the IEP meeting
- i. Understanding the educational goals for the student he or she works with
- j. Considering: age level of student, content of classes, student's language skill, interpreter's language skill, Student sign language preference
- k. Continued education and professional development

The University's role in making sure that students have successful transition cannot be overlooked either. Under the IDEA, it is the schools' responsibility to identify and provide appropriate services and resources to students with disabilities. According to the World bank group (2016), as public spaces within a web of social relationships,

schools must create enabling learning environments where children feel secure and where there is an absence of fear. There should be what is referred to as accommodation. Thus, the adjustments that the school provides that will make a student more successful academically. These may include strategies to bypass a weak function or skill. The University should be a welcoming environment to all category of persons. Dawborn-Gundlach (2018) stated that the responsibility of ensuring a smooth transition for newly enrolled students is ultimately the role of the institution (Kantanis, 2001; Meuleman, Garrett, Wrench & King, 2015; Fragoso, Goncalves, Miguel Ribeiro, Monteiro, Quintas, Bago, Fonseca & Santos, 2016). The World Education Forum stated clearly that, the school environment must be an environment that not only encourages learning but is welcoming, gender-sensitive, healthy and safe. Dawborn-Gundlach (2018) added that Universities need to understand the diversity of their students and the particular issues that impact their transition and adjustment both academically and socially. In the view of Dawborn-Gundlach (2018), When orientation and transition programs identify and support the needs of different groups of students, the transition experience and subsequent adjustment and retention of first year students is enhanced (Cushman, 2004). Swail, Redd and Perna (2003) suggested a comprehensive strategy for improving student retention, including academic and student services, curriculum and teaching, and financial aid.

Oliver, Rodriguez and Mickelson (2005) conducted a study on The Social Adjustment and Academic Performance of Chicano and Black Students in a Predominately White University. The study revealed that Support from the university is an important way in which Chicanos come to feel tied into the university structure, providing them with a sense of security and well-being that allows the positive expression of their scholarly abilities. One of the findings of their study was that

Chicano students do better academically and adjust better socially when they receive grants and aid from the university. It behooves on the University to provide grants and release bursary meant for deaf students to boost their academic and social adjustment.

A study by Nicole (2015) indicated that, students who use interpreters are receiving the information several seconds after the rest of the class. The study suggests that teachers should allow enough time for the student to get the information from the interpreter before calling on someone. The study said, “When asking the class to respond, have them raise their hands, rather than just shout out the answer”. This will allow the deaf or hard of hearing student to participate. The World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990) affirmed the necessity to provide basic learning needs by stating that: ‘Every person — child, youth and adult — shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs’ (World Education Forum, April, 2000). Thus, lecturers in the University must realise the need to ensure that deaf learners meet their learning needs in the University. The World Education Forum, (April, 2000) reiterate that, starting from early childhood and extending throughout life, the learners of the twenty-first century will require access to high quality educational opportunities that are responsive to their needs, equitable and gender-sensitive. These opportunities must neither exclude nor discriminate. Since the pace, style, language and circumstances of learning will never be uniform for all, there should be room for diverse formal or less formal approaches, as long as they ensure sound learning and confer equivalent status.

The work of counsellors is paramount in helping deaf students to combat challenge of transition. McNeil and Kelley (1993) posit that the school support service (SSS) counsellor plays an important role as the link between the student and the

university community. McNeil and Kelley (1993) added that the SSS counsellor provides technical assistance in situations where questions arise concerning the use of assistive listening devices (ALDs), telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDDs), or the role of interpreters in the classroom. Sharma, Singh, Kalhan and Garg (2017) recommended in their study that counselling should be provided to students having problems with lack of interest or issues with time management.

2.6 Summary of the literature

This chapter discussed applicable literature on the empirical literature and the theoretical context. The following subtopics addressed the chapter: preparation of deaf students for transition, challenges that deaf students face as they make transition into the University, effect of transition on academic adjustment, effect of transition on social adjustment, and strategies that help deaf students to cope with challenges of transition. There was also a discussion of the theoretical context. There are few observational studies that have highlighted the transition experiences of deaf students.

Literature reviewed revealed transition experiences of deaf students, involving the preparations, challenges, effect on academic and social adjustment. Literature also revealed strategies that deaf students can use to cope with transitional challenges. However, none of the above-mentioned research has attempted to look at transition experiences of deaf students in the University of Education, Winneba. Though, one of the literature reviewed focused on how students with disability can manage frustration in the University of Education, Winneba, more studies should be conducted on transition of deaf students in the University of Education, Winneba.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methods and procedures used to collect and analyse data for the study. The areas covered were: research approach, research design, population, sample size, sampling techniques, instrumentation, dependability, confirmability, credibility, transferability, procedure for data collection, methods for data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Paradigm

This study was conducted under the interpretivist paradigm which is also known as social constructivism paradigm. Interpretivist paradigm was used for the study because the study sought to explore experiences of deaf students and should use a subjective tool which will allow for further probing and follow up questions. It is a philosophical position and research method that analyses events in society based on the specific value-system of the society or culture they occur in. according to Blackwell (2018), interpretivist argues that truth and knowledge is subjective, culturally constructed and historically situated based on lived experiences and understanding of them.

3.1 Research Approach

The approach adopted for this study was qualitative research approach because the study conducted in-depth interviews which allowed the participants to express their views vividly about transition experiences of deaf students. By using qualitative approach, it allowed the use of questions on the spot to gain more in-depth understanding of the participant's beliefs, attitudes, or situation on the experiences deaf students have as they make transition. Qualitative research is a process of social life

that portrays dynamism and change in life (Bryman, 2012). According to Kusi, (2012), Qualitative research involves an interaction between the researcher and the researched in the socio-cultural context of participants of a study. Creswell (2012) emphasised that qualitative data are useful within the research setting because participants will freely express their thoughts, perceptions and views in more detailed manner in relation to the research topic. Salkind (2009) also noted that, qualitative research is a social or behavioural science research that explores the processes that underlie human behaviour using such explanatory techniques as interviews, case studies and other relatively personal techniques and since the study was in a social context, the researcher adopted the qualitative approach which was suitable for the study.

3.2 Research Design

A multiple case study research design was employed for the study in order to develop deeper understanding of transitional process. Multiple case research design was used because two different locations were chosen for the study which also involved two different groups of respondents. It helped in addressing the issue of transition separately in the two study contexts which involved issues such as how deaf students are prepared for transition, challenges deaf students face in the period of transition, effect of transition on social and academic adjustment of deaf students, and the strategies deaf students adopt to overcome challenges of transition. Multiple case study includes two or more cases or replications across the cases to investigate the same phenomena (Yin, 2017). It is a valuable qualitative research tool in studying the links between personal, social, behavioural, psychological, organizational and environmental factors that guide organizational and leadership development. It allows a wider discovering of theoretical evolution and research questions. Creswell (2005) defines case study as an empirical inquiry which involves an in-depth exploration of a phenomenon in its real-life context

through an extensive data collection. It also has a holistic focus, aiming to preserve and understand the wholeness and unity of the case (Kusi, 2012).

3.4 Population

The population for the study was 22 participants, consisting 12 teachers from Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf, and 10 deaf students in the University of Education, Winneba. It comprised teachers who have been teaching for about three years or more in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf. Teachers who have been teaching for about three years or more were chosen because they have been with the students for a long time and have more knowledge about the subject matter. Also, deaf students who participated in the study included all deaf students who came from Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf to the University of Education, Winneba directly without passing through the college. This is because Mampong Senior High School for the Deaf is the only Senior High School for the Deaf in Ghana. The teachers who participated were First degree holders while one was a master's degree holder. Also, the ages of deaf students who participated ranged from 21 to 35 and they were of different levels of hearing loss. Their hearing losses ranged from moderately-severe to profound. Eight of them were pre-lingual deaf while two were post-lingual deaf.

3.5 Sample size

The sample size for the study was 16 which was made up of six teachers comprising five males and one female in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf, and 10 deaf students comprising six males and four females in the University of Education, Winneba. There were three students in level 100, two students in level 200, and five students in level 300 who participated in the study. Six of the students were in the Department of Special Education, 1 from the Department of Early

Childhood Education, 2 from the Department of Basic Education and 1 from the department of Art education.

3.6 Sampling techniques

Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the participants in each setting who participated in the study because the respondents possessed some common characteristics. Purposive sampling technique was employed because it enabled me to use my own judgment to make selection of the sample based on prior information obtained which I believed could provide the data needed (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). For the teachers who participated, the type of purposive sampling technique used was homogeneous sampling and that of the deaf students was also homogeneous sampling. The teachers who participated in the study were those who have been in the school for three years or more and have witnessed students graduating from the school. Deaf students who participated in the study have all gone through transition from the Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf into the University of Education, Winneba. They were those who came directly to the University from the Senior High School without passing through the college. This was to ensure that results obtained from both teachers and students would be consistent. Purposive sampling also called a judgmental sample is one that is selected based on the knowledge of a population and the purpose of study.

3.7 Instrumentation

semi-structured interview guide was used for data collection. Semi structured interview guide was used in order to probe further through follow up questions in order to get deeper into participants' personal lived experiences on transition. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morison (2004), interview is an exchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest and emphasize the social context of research data.

The instrument was divided into two subsections described in the study as Appendix A and Appendix B respectively.

Appendix A

This section of the data collection instrument is focused on the teachers. The instrument for data collection for the teachers is interview. This appendix contained the demographic data of teachers who participated in the study and on main research question. The research question sought to find out how deaf students are prepared in Mampong school for the deaf for further studies. This subsection also contains seven minor questions that are used for the interview of the teachers. Each interview lasted for about 10 to 15 minutes at the Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf. was grouped into four parts, which focused on the key strands of the research questions.

Appendix B

The second section of the instrument, thus the appendix B focused on the deaf students in the University of Education, Winneba. The instrument for data collection for deaf students was interview. The semi-structured interview guide designed for the study contained both questions to obtain demographic data and three main research questions for the study. The main research questions in this section sought to find out 1. Challenges deaf students face during transition 2. Effect of transition on social and academic adjustment and 3. Measures to mitigate challenges of transition. The section contains eight sub questions that were used to interview the deaf students who participated in the study. Each interview for the deaf students lasted for about 10 to 15 minutes.

3.8 Interviews

Data were collected via semi structured interviews. Participant at the Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf were interviewed in one of the class rooms.

Covid -19 protocols such as observing social distancing was taking into consideration. There were face-to-face interviews for all the interviews and the duration for each interview ranged between 20 and 30 minutes. The interview questions, which focused on preparation of deaf students, are provided in the Appendix A. Under each of the interview guide there were questions under each of the themes with probes and prompts to help obtain vital information from the respondents. For the interviews for teachers at the SHS, speech was used as the mode of communication since all the teachers interviewed were hearing. While conducting the interviews, the researcher repeated each of the participants' answers back to them to check and review his interpretation of their answer to guarantee the validity of the interview. The interviews were recorded using mobile phone (Tecno Pop 5) and were later transcribed to get results. On the other hand, participants in the University of Education, Winneba were interviewed in one of the lecture halls at the Faculty of Educational Studies. Sign language was used as the mode of communication since all the participant were individuals with deafness. No interpreter was employed to translate the communications between the interviewer and the interviewees since the interviewer has the ability to communicate using sign language. The services of Research Assistants (RAs) were employed. The Research assistants were the interpreters who were doing their National Service in the University. Their roles were specified and explained to the deaf participants so as not to cause them intimidation. Though the research assistants could sign, they were not made to interpret the interviews between me and the participants since I am able to sign to the deaf directly. The RAs helped to videotape the interview process at the University of Education, Winneba. Interviews were later transcribed with the help of the RAs. To ensure dependability, the I took note of any changes to the interview format while asking the question to each participant. The interview questions, which focused on

challenges deaf students encounter during transition, effect of transition on social and academic adjustment, and strategies deaf students adopt to mitigate the challenges of transition are provided in Appendix B. Under each of the interview guide there were questions under each of the themes with probes and prompts to help obtain vital information from the respondents.

3.9.0 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was used in this study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Speziale & Carpenter, (2007) stated that, Qualitative research is trustworthy when it accurately represents the experiences of the study participants. Trustworthiness of a research depend on factors such as credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability as proposed by Guba and Lincoln (1985).

3.9.1 Credibility

Utilizing experts in the field to determine accuracy in transcription and interpretation helped in demonstrating credibility. Experts such as lecturers in Special Education were made to check the validity of the interview items. Member checks process permitted the participants to check that the language used represented what they reported. Both teachers and students were also made to verify the Videotapes and audio records to ensure the accuracy of the work. To ensure that the data were dependable, the interview were analysed with the help of two RAs who supported me to analyse the data. In the course of the analysis the two RAs and the researcher agreed on the interpretation from what participants said. Credibility refers to the truth of the data or the participant views and the interpretation and representation of them by the researcher (Polit & Beck, 2012).

3.9.2 Transferability

To ensure that transferability of the study is achieved, detailed information of all participants (both deaf students in UEW and teachers in MSHTS for the deaf) were provided. Also, there was detailed explanation of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for selecting participants. Moreover, a detailed description of the study settings, how they admit both deaf students and how students select program of study was provided. Transferability deals with the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts (Trochim & Donnelly, 2006). Lincoln and Guba (1985) further explained the provision of thick description of the participants and the research process, to enable the reader to assess whether the findings are transferable to their own setting; this is the so-called transferability judgement.

3.9.3 Dependability

To ensure dependability of the interview questions used, they were first administered to five deaf students in the University of Education, Winneba. The results were collated and recorded before its administration on the sample size for the study. In addition, experts in Special Education were made to scrutinize the interview questions after they were pretested and they made modification to questions that were not well stated and those that did not aim at achieving the target of the study. Dependability is known as reliability in qualitative research. It refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what is supposed to measure, whether it would deliver the exact same result no matter how many times it was applied to random members of the same target group. It is the extent to which an instrument yields the same results on repeated trials. It describes the consistency of a test (Hatonfil, 2007). In addressing the issue of reliability, the positivist employs techniques to show that, if the work were

repeated, in the same context, with the same methods and with the same participants, similar results would be obtained (Shenton 2004).

3.9.4 Confirmability

To achieve confirmability of the study, I stated clearly my role as a researcher and also explained to participants of the study the purpose of the research by assuring them absolute confidentiality. Confirmability refers to the researcher's ability to demonstrate that the data represent the participants' responses and not the researcher's biases or viewpoints (Polit & Beck, 2012; Tobin & Begley, 2004).

3.10 Procedure for data collection

An introductory letter was obtained from the Department of Special Education of UEW to introduce the researcher to Heads of various Departments in the University of Education, Winneba where there are participants and the Headmistress of MSHS for the Deaf. The researcher went to the heads of departments offices and discussed the purpose of the study with them. After permission was granted, participants were contacted and informed about the study in a way to get their consent. Content of the consent form was read to participants. The consent form was then given to each participant to append their signature before starting the interview. On the consent form, it was made clear to participants that the interview was not compulsory and it was voluntarily and they could decide to stop at any point in time. Consents of teachers in MSHS for the deaf who were hearing were sought for audio recording for onward transcription from spoken language to written language. For participants who are deaf in the University of Education, Winneba, consents were sought for the interviews to be videoed for onward transcription from sign language to written language.

A consensus was reached between the researcher and the participants on the meeting days. For participants at MSHS for the deaf, one day was used for the conduct

of interviews. On the other hand, for participants in UEW, three working days were used to conduct the interviews. Three days were used because the participants of the study had different lecture times and each participant came in for the interview at the time they were free. The interviews at MSHS for the deaf were conducted in one of the classrooms while the interviews at UEW were conducted in one of the lecture halls at the Faculty of Educational Studies. In all 6 teachers at MSHS for the deaf and 10 deaf students at UEW were interviewed making it a total of 16 participants.

3.11 Data Analysis

Tables, frequencies and percentages were used to analyse demographic data of the study while thematic approach of data analysis was used to analyse other data collected. Data presented using tables showed the participants of the study, the frequency and the percentage representation. For the teachers, it covered the ages of participants, gender, academic qualifications, number of years they have been teaching deaf students, and number of years they have been teaching in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf. For the deaf students, it covered their ages, gender, departments, levels, and onset of disability.

The other interview data for the study was analysed based on each theme drawn from the research question raised. After data was transcribed, I familiarized myself with the data by reading it continuously. I formulated coding categories into manageable units of sentences or phrases, according to the research questions. All the information collected from different participants through the interview were colour coded to identifiable themes. Verbatim expressions of participants were also used where necessary. The transcription and translation of the data was carried out immediately after the data collection through the help of the RAs. Data analysis is a process of

gathering, modelling and transforming data with the goal of highlighting useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision making.

3.12 Ethical consideration

Research ethics educate and monitor researchers conducting research to ensure a high ethical standard. Ethics are very paramount in research because they guard against possible harmful effects of the research Resnik (2010). Consent was sought from all participants before collecting the data. Some of the targeted participants volunteered to take part of the interview session and they willingly gave details needed for the study. Also, participants were duly informed about the purpose of the research. Further, permission of participants was sought to record their responses during the interviews.



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and analysis of findings from the study. The analysis reflected on the themes that emerged from the interview data collected on the themes of the research questions. The settings for the study are two, thus Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf and the University of Education, Winneba.

Analysis of Bio-data of Teachers

The study was carried out at Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf, Akwapim-Mampong.

Table 1: Gender of Teachers

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------|-----------|----------------|
| Male | 5 | 83.33 |
| Female | 1 | 16.67 |
| Total | 6 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Table 1 shows the gender of the teachers who were interviewed. From the table, out of the 6 teachers, 5 of them representing 83.33% were males while 1 representing 16.66% were females. This indicates that there were more male teachers than female teachers who participated in the present study.

Table 2: Age of Teachers

| Age range (%) | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 20 - 25 | 0 | 0.00 |
| 26 - 30 | 2 | 33.33 |
| 31 - 35 | 1 | 16.67 |
| 36 - 40 | 2 | 33.33 |
| 41 - 45 | 0 | 0.00 |
| 46 – 50 | 1 | 16.67 |
| Total | 6 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Table 2 shows the age of the teachers who participated in the study. From the table, out of the 6 deaf students, none of them representing 0.00% was between the ages 20 - 25, 2 representing 33.33% were between the ages 26-30, 1 representing 16.66% was between the ages 31 – 35, 2 representing 33.33 were between the ages 36 – 40, none representing 0.00% was between the ages 41 – 45, and 1 representing 16.66% was between the ages 45-50.

Table 3: Highest academic qualification of Teachers

| Qualification | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Master's Degree | 1 | 16.67 |

| | | |
|--------------|---|-------|
| First Degree | 5 | 83.33 |
| Diploma | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | 6 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Table 3 shows the educational qualification of the teachers who were interviewed. From the table, out of the 6 teachers, 5 of them representing 83.33% were First degree holders while 1 representing 16.66% was a master's degree holder. None of the interviewee was a diploma holder. This implies that large number of the respondents are degree holders, which gives the study a more elites response.

Table 4: Educational background of the Teachers

| Background | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Special education | 1 | 16.67 |
| Non special education | 5 | 83.33 |
| Total | 6 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Table 4 shows the educational background of the teachers who were interviewed. Only 16.66% of the teachers who were interviewed pursued special education. A large number of respondents (83.33%) have no special education background.

Table 5: Number of teaching experience of teachers in Years

| Number of years | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1 – 5 years | 5 | 83.33 |

| | | |
|---------------|----------|------------|
| 6 – 10 years | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11 – 15 years | 0 | 0.00 |
| 16 – 20 years | 1 | 16.67 |
| Total | 6 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Table 5 shows the number of years each teacher has been teaching deaf students. Out of the 6 teachers who participated in the study, 5 representing (83.33%) have been teaching deaf students for about 1 – 5 years, none of the participants has been teaching for 6 – 10 years, none has been teaching for 11 – 15 years and only one has been teaching for 16 – 20 years.

Table 6: Number of years of teaching in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf.

| Number of years | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1 – 5 years | 5 | 83.33 |
| 6 – 10 years | 0 | 0.00 |
| 11 – 15 years | 0 | 0.00 |
| 16 – 20 years | 1 | 16.67 |
| Total | 6 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Table 6 shows the number of years each teacher has been teaching in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf. Out of 6 teachers who participated in the study, 5 representing (83.33%) have been teaching in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf for 1 – 5 years, none of the participants representing 0.00% has been

teaching for 6 – 10 years, none representing 0.00% has been teaching for 11 – 15 years and only one representing 16.66% has been teaching for 16 – 20 years.

Table 7: Language for lesson delivery by participants (Teachers of deaf student)

| Language for | | |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Lesson delivery | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
| Only sign language | 0 | 0 |
| Only speech | 0 | 0 |
| Both speech and sign | 6 | 100 |
| Total | 6 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Six teachers representing 100% of teachers that took part of the study reported that they use both speech and sign language in teaching the deaf. None of the participants use only speech and none of them use only sign language. It is evident from the study that both sign and speech are used to teach the deaf in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf.

4.1.1 methods teachers use in teaching deaf students

Research Question one sought to find out how deaf students are prepared in the Secondary School before they move to the University. To find out that, there was need to look at methods that teachers use in teaching. Methods that teachers use to teach deaf students in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf vary. However, most of the teachers use same or similar methods while others use more than one method of teaching to make sure that deaf students understand. Some of the participants use

demonstration method, others use methods such as project, practical, discussion, audio visual, peer tutoring, question and answer, black board presentation among others. Teachers do not do modifications to the curriculum before they teach deaf students; they take the whole content as it is and teach because they are supposed to match with what is done by teachers in the regular schools.

Some of the comments from the participants were:

I use the normal methods of teaching such as demonstration and question and answer method. (teacher 1)

I write on the board and sometimes too I use some of their colleagues to teach them. When I see that they will understand the lesson better when their colleague explains to them, then I allow their colleagues to teach while I guide. (teacher 5)

I use demonstration, project, practical, discussion, and audio visual depending on which of them will suit the lesson. (teacher 3)

The use of different methods by teachers in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf is due to varied reasons. The study revealed that mostly the method used by a teacher is based on the subject that particular teacher teaches. Subject variation includes practical courses which require practical lessons or method of teaching, and the reading courses which require discussion method of teaching. Some comments made were:

I use practical method because the subject I teach is full of practical.

The normal discussion method because the subject I teach deals with discussion. (teacher 4)

Notwithstanding, it is evident that some of the teachers use more than one method of teaching. This suggests that the teachers use the best method that will suit a particular period of teaching. Comments made were:

I use demonstration, project, practical, discussion, audio visual (teacher 2)

I write on the board and sometimes too I use some of their colleagues to teach (teacher 6)

4.1.2 Operation of collaborative teaching

Since the teaching of deaf students should involve some different strategies from the general strategies teachers use, it was necessary to find out whether teachers in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf do collaborative teaching. Collaborative teaching is where two or more teachers would be teaching in the same class at the same time. Some collaborative teaching methods are; One Teach, One Observe, One Teach, One Assist, Station Teaching, Parallel Teaching, Team Teaching, and Supplemental Teaching. The comments of the various participants on this particular theme reveal that there is no collaborative teaching in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf. Though some of the participants mentioned that there is collaborative teaching, but in their explanations it shows clearly that they do not have collaborative teaching. Responses of other participants augment the assertion that there is no collaborative teaching in the school. Some of the participants simply responded no to the question. comments of the participants who reported that there is collaborative teaching in the school were as follows:

I will say that we have collaborative teaching, because, sometimes when one of the teachers gets to a topic that he/she is not conversant with the sign language, they call on a colleague to help. Sometimes we will be in the class together and as I am on the board he/she will be explaining” (teacher 1)

Once a while we have collaborative teaching. What happens is if a teacher is struggling to handle a topic I go and help them. It looks like most of them came to meet me, so because of the advantage of the sign language I have over them they call on me to help them”. (teacher 4)

Comments given by the rest of the participants also showed that teachers in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf do not do collaborative teachings. They commented as follows:

There is no collaborative teaching, I only call on a colleague to help me when I am not around. (teacher 2)

No! there is no collaborative teaching in the school because we do not have enough teachers here. (teacher 3)

I will say there is no collaborative teaching in the school because I have not experienced that before since I came to the school. (teacher 5)

No! We do not have collaborative teaching in the school. I do not even know what collaborative teaching is since I do not have special education background. (teacher 6)

4.1.3 Available Infrastructure to Help in Teaching Deaf Students

Availability of infrastructure to help in teaching deaf students was one of the themes that emerged from the interview data. Many a time, infrastructure deficit is common in educational institutions, which cause much discomfort to students. A study conducted by Gyasi & Hayford (2017) in the University of Education, Winneba, noted infrastructural deficit coupled with uncondusive environment for students with disability. Similarly, in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf, the situation of inadequate infrastructure was reported by participants of this study. Based on the responses of the teachers who took part in the study, it shows obviously that, there is infrastructural deficit in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf. Classrooms, studio, Teaching and learning materials among others are not adequate for the preparation of the deaf students. When there is no much infrastructure, it affects the academic preparation of students which can lead to poor academic performance and the end results will be poor academic preparation towards postsecondary studies. The following are some of the comments that they gave:

Infrastructure in general is very bad. There are no adequate tables and chairs and sometimes during preps you would see the students hanging around and sometimes you would see two of them pairing one table and one chair. The lighting system is also very poor and the Teaching and Learning materials are not also enough. (teacher 3)

We lack infrastructure. For example, when I went to the class this morning to teach, the technical class comprises wood work, metal work, and building and construction. When it is time for them to have separate lessons, they have to be looking for empty classrooms before they can have classes and that is very bad. (teacher 4)

There is no enough infrastructure. As I am speaking, it is just recently that an NGO came and did a block for us. (teacher 5)

As for infrastructure, we have a deficit. When it comes to teaching and learning materials, we do not have most of them especially for practical courses. (teacher 2)

4.1.4 Preparation of Deaf Students for Further Studies

Preparing deaf students enough for further studies is paramount. Preparation is necessary because it allows students to fit in in the new environment that they are going to. Such preparation should involve, social, academic and emotional preparation. The school should ensure that every student is prepared well enough to know where next they are going and then be able to make personal decisions. This suggest that the individual at the microsystem level needs to be well prepared enough before moving to the mesosystem stage. This is necessary because when they are not well prepared and they move to the mesosystem stage, they are going to meet an unfamiliar microsystem which will make the two microsystems in the mesosystem level incompatible, thereby causing inconveniences to the student. The school must realize that deaf students may be limited in getting information about educational institutions since they are not able to get information through hearing which is the most common way to get information. In this study however, it is evident that deaf students rather have to make their own enquiries about where to go next after the secondary school education. The school seem

to have no greater responsibility in ensuring that their students are able to make it to next level of education. There are no modification strategies by teachers to ensure that students are prepared rigorously to meet the demands of postsecondary education. They use the same syllabi, the same curriculum with the same number of instructional hours. This may be ill-preparation for the students and may limit them in ability and functions. The comments that were made by the participants include the following:

We prepare them the normal way; the same way the hearing students in the regular schools are being prepared; we normally prepare them to move to areas where we see they are strong. We also depend on their WASSCE results to give them guidance. Most of the times, the subject area teachers are normally made to guide the students, but the parents of the students have greater influence. (teacher 1)

We only prepare them to pass their SHS final exams and that is the only way they can make it for further studies. Sometimes tutors from Takoradi Technical University normally come around to give them orientation on some of the things they need to know and what is required to get into the university. (teacher 2)

Students are prepared for further studies through the normal WASSSCE method. We teach them using the same strategies that teachers in the regular schools use and also encourage them to study hard and pass their WASSCE. (teacher 3)

We impart the practical knowledge to them and hope that they pass their WASSCE and those who cannot pass their WASSCE branch into other vocations. (teacher 4)

We train them the same way other students in the regular schools are trained for the WASSCE. (teacher 5)

The aim is for the students to pass to pass their WASSCE. So normally, we use the syllabus approved by the Ghana Education Service. We also ensure that they do much practical work. (teacher 6)

4.1.5 Existence of Transition Program.

Planning for transition should be done in the earliest part of the student's education to make the students familiar with the process. For students at Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf, there are no transition programs at all to

prepare them for postsecondary education or career. The responses of the participants show evidently that there are no special programs of transition for the deaf at Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf. Teachers in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf only have the responsibility of imparting academic knowledge into their students, but they have no further duty as to guide students for life outside the school especially after the Senior High School education. The deaf students have to make sure that they pass their final examinations and then take their own decision as to whether to go for further studies or to join a vocation. Comments made by some of the participants indicate that they do not even know anything about what a transition program is. The comments made by the participants were as follows:

Sometimes some of the tutors from Takoradi Technical University come around to just orient them on some of the things they need to know, but I don't know whether it is a program planned by the school. (teacher 3)

There is no any special transition program for the deaf in the school here. (teacher 2)

No! there is no any transition program here. This is because of how the curriculum is being structured that is the only thing that they can get. I was thinking that the course would have been made to be pure technical and vocational courses so that the art subjects would have been eliminated. (teacher 4)

No! There is no any transition program for the deaf, it is just the normal WASSCE that we prepare them for. (teacher 1)

over here there is nothing like transition program, we prepare them like other students in the regular schools. The only difference is that here we use sign language. (teacher 5)

Since I came I have not seen anything like transition program. (teacher 6)

Analysis of bio-data of students

The study was carried out at the University of Education, Winneba.

Table 8: Gender of Students

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Male | 6 | 60 |
| Female | 4 | 40 |
| Total | 10 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Table 8 shows the gender of the participants with deafness who were interviewed. From the table, out of the 10 deaf students, 6 of them representing 60% were males while 4 representing 40% were females. This indicates that there were more male deaf students than female deaf students who participated in the present study.

Table 9: Age ranges of Students

| Age range | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| 15 - 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 21 - 25 | 5 | 50 |
| 26 - 30 | 3 | 30 |
| 30 – 35 | 2 | 20 |
| Total | 10 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Table 9 shows the age ranges of the deaf students who took part in the study. The results from the table indicate that, out of the 10 deaf students, none of them representing 0% was between the age range of 15-20, 5 of them, representing 50% were between the age

range of 21-25, 3 of them representing 30% were in the age range of 26-30, and 2 representing 20% were in the age range of 31-35

Table 10: Levels of Students

| Levels | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Level 100 | 3 | 30 |
| Level 200 | 2 | 20 |
| Level 300 | 5 | 50 |
| Level 400 | 0 | 00 |
| Total | 10 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Table 10 shows the age ranges of the deaf students who took part in the study. The results from the table indicate that, out of the 10 deaf students who participated in the study, 3 of them representing 30% were in level 100, 2 of them, representing 20% were in level 200, 5 of them representing 50% were in level 300 and none of them representing 0% were in level was in level 400.

Table 11: Departments of Students)

| Departments | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Special Education | 6 | 60 |
| Early childhood education | 1 | 10 |
| Basic Education | 2 | 20 |
| Art Education | 1 | 10 |

| | | |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Total | 10 | 100 |
|--------------|-----------|------------|

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Table 11 shows the various Departments of deaf students who participated in the study. The table indicated that out of a total number of 10 deaf students who participated in the study, 6 of them representing 60% were in the Department of Special Education, 1, representing 10% was in the Department of Early Childhood Education, 2 representing 20% were in the Department of Basic Education, and 1 representing 10% was in the Department of Art Education.

Table 12: Onset of disability of Students

| Onset of disability | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Pre lingual | 8 | 80 |
| Post lingual | 2 | 20 |
| Total | 10 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, May, 2022.

Table 12 shows the Onset of the disability of deaf students who participated in the study. It revealed that, 8 of them representing 80% had hearing loss before they acquired language and two of them representing 20% of had their hearing loss after they acquire language.

4.2.1 Challenges Deaf Students Encounter during Transition

Challenges that deaf students encounter during transition to the University was one of the themes captured under research question two. As deaf students leave their old school which is the initial microsystem to the new University environment which

is the second microsystem, there may be some inconsistencies due to difference in the two microsystems. From the responses given by the various respondents, it is evident that deaf students go through so much anxiety when they are coming to the University. The problems include; lack of knowledge about the program to come and read, finances, differences in the structures of the Senior High School and the University, search for accommodation among others. These problems cause discomfort in one way or the other for deaf students upon their entry into the new educational environment.

The following responses were given:

When I applied, I didn't have knowledge about the course to come and offer. I came to the University and I realised that the program I chose for myself is not my program of interest. When I came to the University, I was confused because I realised that the program I chose is not the best program for me. (deaf student 1).

When I was making transition into the University of education, Winneba, it was not easy because the system of the University is different from that of the Senior High School. (deaf student 2)

Entering the University was something very hard for me. I did not know the place so I had to roam before I was able to know the place. (deaf student 3)

When I had admission into the university, there was error in how my names were written. On my Senior High School certificate, my names are three but when I came to the university, I realised that only two names were captured. I had to struggle very well before the correction was made. (deaf student 4)

It was very difficult for me when I completed SHS, there was problem with my results; it was withheld, before it was released, two papers were being cancelled. Also, I faced a lot of financial problem. (deaf student 5)

However, a few number of deaf students who participated in the study remarked that they had just little or no challenge when they were entering into the University. The contradictory comments made by participants of the study revealed the differences in preparation for postsecondary education. For most of those who encountered less

challenges, the home might be a supportive agent in their transition, or they might have got serious academic preparation that made them to be much confident during the transition stage. Comments made by those who did encounter notable challenges include the following:

I did not have challenge when I was entering the University, because my results were good and when I applied, I got the admission. (deaf student 7)

I have not had any significant challenge when I was coming to the University. I only applied and later I received a letter that I have been admitted into the University. (deaf student 8)

When I wrote my WASSCE and the result were out, I passed very well and I applied to the University and later, I received a letter of admission into the University. (deaf student 6)

4.2.2 Interference of Senior High School with Transition

Mostly, when individuals are making transition from one stage to another, the former environment have influence over the transition process. In the same vein, when deaf students are making transition, their old school environment mostly interfere with the process. This could be as result of how they are knit to the structures of the old school environment. Most of them find it so difficult to let go of the experiences that they had with the old school environment. Under Bronfenbrenner ecological theory, the macro system which is considered as the outermost layer of the individual's environment deals with cultural values, customs and laws. The problem is that, as the students move from the old microsystem to the new microsystem, they may not be able to adjust easily to the macro system of the new microsystem which will lead to interference in transition by the old school. Comments of participants are the following:

My senior high school did not give me information about how to enter into the University. Back at the SHS they only motivate us to study and pass our examination. (deaf student 3)

In the Senior High School, we don't often use interpreters, so when I came to the University and they use interpreters here, it is sometimes a challenge. (deaf student 2)

In the Senior High School, they never had any program to teach us on how to further education. The teachers only tell us that, if we pass our exam, we can make it to the University. Because of this, I did not know much about University education. What I only knew was that I will go to the University after SHS. (deaf student 7)

There are some of the participants who asserted that they did not encounter any challenge from the Senior High School in relation to transition to the University. The disparity in response is due to how rigorous students have been taken through in academics. It is also due to differences in home factor. How some of the homes have concern about transition of their wards is commendable. Other homes however, are so much indifferent towards their children transition. More so, some of the homes are willing to make their children transition good, however, the financial standings of such homes are not strong. This can be explained best by using the exosystem which Bronfenbrenner considered as the large social system which talks about the indirect effect that the individual has if the home is not okay. Many of the deaf students have problem with transition because their homes are not okay. Comments of participants who did not have interference from their Senior High School are as follows:

I did not have interference from the Senior High School when I was making transition into the University. (deaf student 5)

My senior high school has not interfered in my transition into the University. I did not have any challenge from my senior high school. (deaf student 4)

The Senior High school did not have any interference with my transition to the University, except that we were not educated on how University education is. (deaf student 10)

4.2.3 How the University System Interfere with Transition.

The responses of deaf students concerning how the University system interferes with their transition shows clearly that there is much interference from the system of the University on the transition of deaf students. The interfering factors include; the use of interpreters while the lecturer is teaching. Their responses show that they are used to a system where the one teaching will be the same person signing so that their attention would not be divided. With the system that is in operation at UEW, the lecturer may be explaining something while the interpreter is also explaining it minutes after what the lecturer is saying. Mostly, the interpreters are forced by the situation to skip certain parts of the information in order to follow what the lecturer is currently saying. This interferes greatly with what deaf students learn in lectures. Also, the responses show that some of the interpreters in the University are not experienced enough and therefore do not help them to get correct message during lectures. The University system also gives much problems and discomfort in terms of course registration. At the University every student is supposed to register their courses at the beginning of every semester which is opposed to what deaf students are used to back at their Senior High School. Hence in the first semester of the first year, these students find difficulty in registering their courses. Moreover, the use of topics taught during radio lectures for assessment is not a practice that deaf students are familiar with. further, compulsory selection of second area courses for deaf students. Interpreters in the University of education influence the selection of second area courses for deaf students. This practice is believed to be linked with how the University system is; the interpreters in the University do not like to interpret for certain courses since they do not have knowledge in those courses. Comments from participants include:

The University environment is very different from that of the Senior High School environment, so I was confused when I first came into the campus. I did not know where to go because of how things are set up in the University. (deaf student 1)

Sometimes when we have lecture in the morning, the interpreters would not be there and we have to go and check in the office to see if they are there. In the Senior High School, we do not need an interpreter before we benefit from lesson. This is a big challenge for us the deaf in the University. (deaf student 5)

The university does not have accommodation for deaf students. So when I came, it was very difficult for me to get accommodation since I did not get one on campus. I roamed a lot and later had to rely on some friends to help me to get accommodation. (deaf student 10)

When I came to the University first, it was not easy; the system was not easy at all. I had to change courses many times until I became stable. (deaf student 7)

When it comes to selection of second area courses, the deaf are not treated well. Everyone has a different aim, but some people want to choose courses for other people. When I came to the University, I wanted to choose ICT as my second area course but they said when I chose that ICT, I will not get interpreter that will always follow me to lectures to do interpretation for me. (deaf student 6)

4.3.0 Research question 3. In what ways do challenges deaf students face during transition affect their social and academic adjustment?

Three themes emerged from the data on research question two – effects of transition on social and academic adjustment, effect of transition on academic adjustment and effects of transition on academic adjustment.

4.3.1 Effect of Transition on Social and Academic Adjustments

It is obvious from the comments given by the deaf students who participated in the study that deaf students have effects on their social and academic judgement in the University as a result of transition. Some of the participants however reported that they have not encountered much difficulties in relation to social adjustment as compared to

that of academic adjustment. The disparity in responses may be due to difference in cultural background of the students, and or difference in training they had before coming to UEW. Many homes of the deaf students are not supportive enough to help the students to adjust completely into the University system. The following comments were made:

Yes, transition to the University affected how I make friends and also affected my academic work. (deaf student 3)

Yes, transition to the University has much effect on my social and academic adjustment in the University. (deaf student 7)

Transition to the University was a very good experience, but it has great effect on my academic and social adjustment. (deaf student 5)

The comment below is from a participant who opined that, though transition has effect on adjustment, it has not affected the social adjustment much as compared with that of the academic adjustment.

Transition has not affected my social adjustment much, but as for academic adjustment, transition has affected that greatly. (deaf student 4)

4.3.1 Effects of Transition on Academic Adjustment

Educational transition has always been characterized by academic decline. When students make transition to a new school, they are faced with diverse challenges which consequently leads to decline in academic. In this study, it is obvious from the comments given by the deaf students who participated in the study that deaf students have effects on their academic adjustment in UEW. Considering the remarks given by the deaf students who participated in the study, it is evident that deaf students face many difficulties in adjusting to academics in the University. Causes of the difficulties are due to variety of factors which includes: indifferent attitudes of lecturers especially

lecturers who are not in the department of special education toward the deaf. It is remarked that most of the lecturers are not friendly towards the deaf students and they tend to ignore them during lesson delivery. Also, the lack of experience on the part of some interpreters was reported as a challenge. Most of the interpreters are not experienced, most of them are only doing their internship programs and instead of them to be made to under study a more experienced interpreter, they are rather made to do the interpreting job. This causes a big worry to the deaf students. Again, the use of lessons taught during radio lectures for assessment. It study revealed that there is radio lecture series in the University where every student would have to listen to and learn since it forms part of topics that will be used for assessments. However, for deaf students and are not able to perceive sounds, this system puts them at a disadvantaged position. Moreover, change of results from the portal was reported. It was also found out that, students' results are being changed in their portals years after they have written those courses. For deaf students, this problem is very great since they will need an interpreter to always go with them to the administration to explain the situation. The following were comments made by participants:

Back at the senior high school, we had only one teacher doing the teaching and at the same time doing the sign language. In the university here, the lecture will be teaching whiles the sign language interpreter will be doing the sign language. I always find it difficult because I want to watch the two people at the same time. Deaf students always understand better when the same person will be teaching and doing the sign language. (deaf student 4)

Many lecturers in the University do not understand the deaf. They do not know how to meet the academic needs of the deaf. They always focus on their lecturing and whatever the interpreter is doing, they do not care. (deaf student 5)

Most of the interpreters in the University do not have much experience in sign language. Most of them too do not know the sign for

most words. Hence, anytime they are interpreting the message they convey is not clear. (deaf student 3)

I am doing Mathematics as my second area, but the interpreters are not able to sign the concepts very well. Also, because it is Mathematics, I have to be writing on the Board and at the same time watch the interpreter for the explanation; this makes it very difficult for me to follow Mathematics lectures. (deaf student 9)

Sometimes, in the University here, there is radio lecture, and after the lecture on the radio, the lecturer would not return to teach that topic. However, it is a disadvantage to us the deaf students because we do not benefit from the radio lectures. Also, when the interpreters are interpreting, there are many words that they just fingerspell and we do not understand, the interpreters were supposed to write on the board so that we can also know the words. (deaf student 10)

4.3.2 Effect of transition on Social Adjustment

Social adjustment is one component that is always considered when it comes to educational transition. It involves feeling included in the university social culture and being satisfied with university social life, meeting and making friends and forming connections with other students, feeling at ease with others at university, and feeling part of the first-year cohort (Dawborn-Gundlach 2018). How transition affects social interaction of deaf students in the University was one of the themes generated under this theme. Though the participants of the study gave contradictory remarks concerning their social adjustment in the University, it is obvious that adjustment of deaf students to social interaction in the University is very difficult. The difficulty stems from the fact that, back at the Senior High Schools, they live mostly in the “deaf community”, when they came to the University, it is a mixed community of the deaf and the hearing. As the deaf use sign language in communication, the hearing use speech in communication. Also, the responses show that, most of the hearing students in the University do not show interest in making friends with the deaf and due to that they do not also care about learning the sign language. Such hearing students are therefore

ignored by the deaf since the deaf believe that they do not have to force anyone to like them. However, it was also remarked by the participants that, they have many friends who are hearing and they teach them sign language in order to ease communication.

Comments made by participants are as follows:

My social adjustment in the University is very good for me. Most of the hearing students in the University like the sign language and I normally ask most of them to explain things to me after lecture. There are however some hearing students who are not interested in sign language. I ignore those hearing students and go for those who are interested in sign language. (deaf student 1)

Making friends with in the University especially with the hearing people is very difficult. This is because the hearing people do not understand deaf culture. (deaf student 3)

Social adjustment in the University was somehow difficult especially with the hearing. For the deaf, I already know some of them before I came to the University. it was easy to relate with other deaf students too. However, it was not very easy for me to relate with the hearing. I have been able to make friends with many hearing students with the passing of time, but some of the hearing people who did not care about the deaf, I ignore them since it is personal decision to make someone your friend. (deaf student 6)

It is easy for me to adjust in the University because, I was once a hearing person and I used to have many friends who are hearing. I rather find it somehow difficult to make friends with the deaf. I have many hearing friends in the hall, and I use speech when I am communicating with them while they also write and show to me. (deaf student 8)

Making friends in the University was not easy for me. This is because back at SHS we were all deaf and so communication was easy. Here in the University, we are mixed with the hearing and it makes friendship and communication very difficult. However, as time passed by, I begun to adjust little by little and now I am used to the system of communication in the University. (deaf student 5)

4.4.0 What strategies do deaf students use to manage with challenges of transition in relation to social and academic adjustment?

Two themes emerged from the data on research question four- Strategies deaf students use to cope with challenge of social adjustment and Strategies deaf students use to cope with challenges of academic adjustment.

4.4.1 Strategies deaf students use to manage with challenges of social adjustment

Under this theme, participants remarked on the various strategies that they used in overcoming the numerous challenges they encounter while adjusting to social interaction in the University. Responses from participants show that despite the challenges they encountered in adjusting to social interaction, they were able to adopt one strategy or the other to combat the challenges. Some of them remarked that they made themselves readily available for hearing students who were willing to learn sign language. They said, in teaching sign language to the hearing students, they gradually learn how to make friends with them. Also, some of the participants said, when communicating with the hearing, they write whatever they want to say on paper or phone and show it to the hearing person who in turn writes what they want to say using the same media. This means that they are able to break communication barrier that is perceived to exist between the deaf and the hearing to a large extent. Some also said the interpreters in the University play great role in their adjustment to socialisation in the University. They said, during social gatherings, the interpreters help them to know about what is happening. By implication, the role of the interpreter is paramount to the social adjustment of deaf students in the University of Education, Winneba. Most of them however said, any hearing student that is not willing to be their friend, they ignore them as well. This also means that, the deaf stigmatize the hearing on the premise that the hearing do not want to associate with them, hence they want to retain their honour

by ignoring the hearing individuals that will not want to associate with them. The comment made by participants were as follows:

To cope with social adjustment, I quickly made friends with both deaf and hearing students. The interpreters are also my friends. The hearing students that did not know how to sign and were interested in learning sign language, I helped them to learn the signs and we easily adjusted to be friends. When we go to social gathering, the interpreters also help us to understand whatever is going on. (deaf student 1)

I make friends with both the deaf and the hearing because many hearing people in the University know how to sign. It makes friendship in the University very easy. Other hearing students who do not know how to sign, I teach them sign language and we become friends. It is not easy, sometimes when I teach them they will forget but I continue until they know how to sign. However, hearing students who do not show interest in sign language ignore them and look for new ones. I do that because I am not the only person who wants the friendship. (deaf student 4)

When I came to the University, my first friends were the deaf. Later, when I started to make friends with the hearing, when I meet them, I write something and show it to them, and later I teach them how to sign that. I like to make friends with many hearing people, but sometimes individuals are different so some do not like friends and you cannot force them to be friends. Those who understand me, we become friends. (deaf student 5)

Adjusting socially in the University is not easy because many people in the University do not know how to sign. When I came first, anytime I wanted to communicate with a hearing person, I called for an interpreter to help me. (deaf student 4)

I make friends with the interpreters in the University and other people who understand sign language. The interpreters help us a lot, especially in social gatherings. They make the deaf to understand everything that is going on. (deaf student 6)

I have many friends in the University, the deaf and the hearing. When I came to the University first, my roommate always asked me to teach him sign language, so I started teaching him the alphabets and later, he was able to sign concepts. When I am moving with the hearing people who do not understand sign language and we want to

communicate, I write what I want to say on a paper and show it to them, and they also write and show it to me. (deaf student 2)

In my class there are no deaf students apart from me. Communication with them was very difficult since they do not know how to sign. I later devised a plan whereby I write whatever I want to say on paper so that they can read and understand what I want to tell them. (deaf student 3)

4.4.2 Strategies to Mitigate Challenges of Academic Adjustment

Under this theme, participants made comments on the various strategies that they used in overcoming the numerous challenges they encountered while adjusting to academic life in the University. It is obvious from comments of deaf students who participated in the study that, they are able to adjust academically by adopting certain strategies. They develop diverse strategies such as asking interpreters to explain certain concepts to them or taking notes for them during lectures which they can thereafter go and study. Also, they resort to the use of the internet with the help of the Wi-Fi provided by the University to search for certain information that need to be searched for. They also form study groups with their hearing peers which is a helpful practice to fill the gaps created in lecture due to inappropriate interpreting. When they go to their hearing peers, they are able to explain certain concepts clearly to them. Forming of study groups with hearing peers also explains how there is a break of the barrier that exist between the deaf and the hearing and this helps in improving the academic lifestyle of deaf students. Moreover, the use of teaching and learning materials also yield much in making deaf students to manage with academics. This is especially applicable to those who offer courses related to practical work. Their comments are as follows:

It is the interpreters that help me in the University to cope with academic work. Unlike the teachers in my SHS who do not have skills in sign language, interpreters here are very skillful in sign language though some of the things they sign I do not understand, but I am okay with their interpreting. I am very happy here in the University.

Sometimes when we are given assignment, I go to my friends both hearing and the deaf and we do it together. (deaf student 3)

I always make sure that I buy books that lecturers use to teach us. After the lecturers have finished teaching and I go to the hall, I make sure that I read the books very well. I also join some hearing students for group discussion where we exchange ideas. (deaf student 4)

I always take notes from hearing students that I know that they can make good notes after lectures. I read through the notes to get better understanding of what the lecturers teach. (deaf student 8)

I try to make friends with the interpreters to make notes of what the lecturers teach so that I can learn later. I do not normally like to study with other people so I do personal studies and use the University internet system to search for information to study. When we are given group work, sometimes we invite interpreters to come and sign for us so that we can also participate in the group work discussion. (deaf student 7)

When I am learning and I do not understand, I try to go over many times to get the understanding. I also confront interpreters sometimes to explain certain concepts that are difficult for me to understand. (deaf student 10)

I sometimes use the internet to search for information in order to study. I also go to friends so that we study together. Sometimes too, I ask the interpreters to write note for me so that after lecture, I can go and study. (deaf student 5)

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of findings. The discussion highlighted the major findings of the research and inferences made from them in view of findings from related previous studies. The discussion was guided by the research questions that were raised to guide the study.

5.1 Preparation of deaf students for transition

Just as preparation is essential in everyday life activities, so also it is in transition from one stage to another. Bousquet, Bielawska and O'connell (2021) believe that, adjusting to new and unusual settings can be a very anxious time for children, so preparation and planning are key factors in making the transition as smooth as possible. Bangser (2008) opined that special attention should be paid to increasing the rigor, relevance, and engagement of the high school curriculum, including for students who have traditionally faced barriers to successful postsecondary transitions. Bangser (2008) added that, effective implementation of transition will require sustained financial support along with appropriate investments in technical assistance and professional development.

This study however revealed that there are no specific programs for deaf students when they are making transition from the Senior High School to the University. This finding is similar to that of Garray (2002) whose research revealed that in preparing students for transition to the higher institutions, the students who are being prepared for the transition are not aware whether they are being taking through any process called transition. In this current study, both teachers and deaf students confirmed that there are no specific programs to prepare them (the deaf students) for

transition. This brings about a high degree of limitation both in functions and abilities in the University after transition. The lack of programs for students and also the non-involvement in transition programs lead to lack of motivation. This is also in agreement with Garray (2002) who is of the view that, one way to increase deaf students' motivation is by teaching deaf students how to make decisions about their learning and participation in their transition experiences. By teaching students how to make effective decisions and providing them with opportunities to make important learning and career decisions, they can be empowered to become active participants in advocating for and negotiating their own futures.

Results of the findings also show that deaf students receive intermittent counselling from individual teachers of their school and some other teachers who visit the school on how to get ready for higher education. This is also in agreement with Bousquet, Bielawska and O'connell (2021) who opined that children making transition must be talked to about the institution and what they will be doing there, what they need to bring with them, who else will be there, activities, rules etc. Teachers in this study however do not place much emphasis on the details, but they just tell deaf students about the opportunity they may get to enter the University after they have passed their examinations.

If deaf students are to have effective transition devoid of fear of poor academic performance, teachers in the secondary school need to prepare them academically before they step feet on the University campus. A study by Howard (2010) shows that, students' academic preparation in high school is linked clearly to college performance. The preparation includes providing courses that are required for entry into a two- or four-year college and providing rigorous academic coursework that prepares students for the demands of college (Howard (2010)). Teachers in the High schools should

therefore endeavor to prepare their students very well before they are ready for transition.

5.2 Challenges of Transition

According to Garay (2002), individuals with disabilities face many challenges at critical transition points in their lives. These individuals go through diverse forms of difficulties, trauma, pains among others. Challenges that deaf students face during transition to the University include increase in workload and academic standard, loneliness, and homesickness (Pargetter 2000, & McMillan 2013).

Results of the study revealed that deaf students face a wide range of challenges when they are making transition from the secondary school to the University. It includes change in environment leading to frustration. This is in line with Christie (2004), and McMillan (2013) who are of the view that transition into the University is experienced as a ‘cultural shock’ – brought on by the anxiety of not knowing what is expected. It is also in tandem with Cheng et. al., (2015) who opined that during transition, students experience similar feelings as to those in other life events, such as changing jobs, moving from one country to another or even losing a loved-one. According Cheng et. al., (2015), higher education can be viewed as consisting of multiple, concurrent transitions both in context (such as a move to a new city, to a new educational system) as well as in interpersonal relationships (such as forming new relationships with students, peers, university support and academic staff as well as changes to existing relationships with family and school friends). They added that, the transition to university life involves changes and potential challenges that students may experience.

Results of the findings is also in line with Ressa (2016) who citing certain authorities believe that transition of students with disability into college is influenced by certain variables such as: Culture (Cole, 1996; Pollock, 2008), institutions (Apple,

2004; Hetherington et al., 2010), ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), systems (Masten, 2003), personalities (Butler, 2011; McGrew, 2008), learning theories and education practices (Danforth & Gabel, 2006; Gabel, 2005; Vygotsky(1978), economics, disability legislations (e.g., Education Strategic Plan (2010-2020), Persons with Disability Law, 2006, Act 715, and the Inclusive Education of Ghana, 2015).

5.3 Effect of Transition on Social and Academic Adjustment?

Concerning the issue of how deaf students adjust socially and academically, results of the study revealed that deaf students encounter the problem of being stigmatized; most lecturers, and their hearing peers in the University environment usually ignore them in many of the activities due to their disability. Stigmatization that deaf students face lead to loss of self-esteem which consequently brings about poor academic performance among them. This finding is in line with Clair (2018), whose research showed that negative implications of stigmatization are poor self-esteem, poor academic achievement, poor mental health, and poor physical well-being. Notwithstanding, the results also show that deaf students mostly want to move with their peers who are also deaf. This is due to the deaf culture that they share together. This is also in line with the findings of Kusow (2004) in his work on contesting stigma. He believes that, in some instances, groups or individuals normatively regarded as stigmatized in turn stigmatize the “normal” members of society. When he researched on how immigrants are treated, he found that one way that immigrants attempt to create a separate system of honor is by limiting their interaction to the confines of their communities. Since deaf students do not want to feel inferior among their hearing peers, they tend to dissociate themselves from their hearing peers thereby creating a deaf community. Clair (2018) also documented how stigmatized individuals manage their

stigmatized identities and cope with specific instances of discrimination that they attribute to their stigma.

The works of many researchers also confirm to this that students with disabilities find ways of separating themselves from their non-disabled peers. For instance, (Trunk, Russo & Trammell; Belch, 2011; Hartley, 2010; Kranke et al., 2013), are of the view that, students with disabilities are less likely to seek accommodations through offices of disabilities services or other student support offices when they perceive greater levels of environmental stigma.

5.4 Mitigating challenges of social and academic adjustment

Ability of deaf students to manage challenges of social and academic adjustments vary depending on the demands of each deaf student. Results of the study revealed that deaf students use diverse strategies to overcome challenges they encounter during transition. Danek and Busby (1999) found that a successful transition is much more than getting that first job or starting a postsecondary program-it includes the personal and social skills to adapt to the work and community environment. Social skills, rather than specific job skills, often make the difference in a successful transition to an adult life (Schmidt, et. a., 1988).

The study revealed that, deaf students make friends with their hearing peers in the University. This agrees with Dockett and Perry (2001) who opine that while it can be important for students to possess and demonstrate some specific skills and knowledge, their ability to form meaningful relationships is crucial to their successful transition and influential in their later school careers. Students have been able to break the monster “social barriers” and have been able to build bridges that permit them to interact with other people in the University community. Also, the finding is in

congruence with Amoah (2022) who found that deaf students and their hearing peers had positive relationship towards each other, as a result they engaged in some sort of interactions. The finding is also in line with Rice et al., (2015) whose study showed that children whose friendships did remain stable did better academically, had lower rates of conduct problems (e.g. being disruptive) and higher rates of prosocial behaviour (e.g. cooperating, sharing). Finding again agrees with (Vygotsky 1962) who stated that knowledge construction occurs within social context that involves student-student and expert-student collaboration on real world problems or tasks that build on each person's language, skills, and experience shaped by each individual's culture" (Amoah 2022; Vygotsky, 1978, p. 102). Findings also rhymes with Gyasi & Hayford, (2017) who conducted a study on how to minimize frustration in school and academic challenges. The study showed that deaf students were able to form associations with other disabled people who are hearing.

The study revealed again that deaf students are friends with their roommates who are hearing. The results also showed generally that there is an association for all the disabled students on campus which makes it possible for them to meet to discuss issues concerning the disabled individuals, and where they also socialize. Friendship building is a developmental goal for children (Luckner & Cooke, 2010), and contributes to later adjustment and life satisfaction (Bauman & Pero, 2011).

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations for the research.

6.1 Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore experiences of deaf students as they make transition from the Senior High School to the University of Education, Winneba. Sixteen participants, comprising of six teachers in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf, and ten deaf students in the University of Education, were purposively selected from a population of 22. Data were gathered through a semi structured interview guide. Data were coded and analysed using thematic approach. Findings of the study were presented systematically based on the themes generated from the research questions. The following were the key findings of the study.

6.1.1 Preparation of deaf students for transition

Findings from the study on research question (1) revealed that, various methods are used by teachers in Senior High School for the deaf, Mampong. The study also revealed that teachers in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf do not have special ways of teaching deaf students apart from the varied ways that are available for every other student. The findings however showed that students receive intermittent counselling from teachers in the school and sometimes people who come from some higher institutions. Again, Findings show that there are no collaborative teachings in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf. This suggests that teacher do the teaching all alone whether they are able to manage the class alone or not. Moreover, findings also show that there is infrastructural deficit in Mampong Senior

High Technical School for the deaf. It showed that classrooms, studio, Teaching and learning materials among others are not adequate for the preparation of the deaf students. Finally, findings of the research question 1 showed that students in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf are not given any special training to prepare them for transition. The deaf students have to make sure that they pass their final examinations and then take their own decision as to whether to go for further studies or to join a vocation.

6.1.2 Challenges deaf students encounter during transition

Findings of research question two revealed that the disparity between the Senior high school environment and the University environment interfere with the smooth transition of deaf students. In the University, there is a system where one will be teaching where another person will be interpreting. With this, there is lack of coordination between the lecturer and the interpreter in most cases. Findings also show that some of the interpreters in the University are not experienced and therefore do not help deaf students to get correct message during lectures. Again, findings revealed the use topic thought during radio lectures for examinations as a great worry to individuals who are deaf. Findings reveal finally that deaf students are forced to mandatorily select some second area courses on the premise that there are no interpreters for certain second area courses in the University.

6.1.3 Effects of transition on social and academic adjustment

Finding of this particular research question revealed somewhat contradictory outcomes with regard to social adjustment. Many of the students remarked that they have problem making adjustment in the University. Notwithstanding, some of the deaf students said they never have any difficulty in adjusting socially. The disparity that exists here depends on various factors which may include the home factor among

others. Findings also revealed that deaf students have much difficulty in adjusting to academics in the University. Difficulty in adjusting to academics is due to factors such as interpreting flaws, difficulty of lecturers, and radio lectures among others. Deaf students who feel that the hearing peers do not like them tend to isolate themselves in the name of ignoring the hearing peers for the peers who are deaf. Findings again reveals that there are many difficulties that deaf students encounter in academics in the University. It showed that most of the lecturers in the University portray indifferent attitudes towards deaf students. The lecturers do not care to know whether deaf students in the class are following their lessons or they do not, all they are interested in is to teach and conduct their examinations.

6.1.4: Strategies to mitigate challenges of transition

Findings from research question four revealed that deaf students developed various strategies that they use to cope with the challenges of social and academic adjustment. With regards to social adjustment, deaf students made friends with their hearing peers in the University where they teach them sign language so as to break communication barriers between them. Also, many of the deaf students make friends with the hearing peers by using diverse means of communication. Some of them write on paper, and or use phone to chat with them. Moreover, findings reveal that deaf students cope with academics by the help of interpreters, the internet, and their hearing peers.

6.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that deaf students in Mampong Senior High Technical School for the Deaf do not receive special preparation towards postsecondary education from the school aside the academic preparation they receive. They are not being prepared rigorously to meet demands of Post-Secondary Education or for independent

living after secondary education. Since the school does not have transition programs for the deaf student, parents of deaf students do not get the right collaboration that should exist between the school and parents concerning the students' educational progress.

Also, deaf students face diverse challenges in the process of transition into the University. The students face the trauma of facing a new environment and losing old friends and family. Searching for accommodation by deaf students on arrival is also something that is distressing and stressful. At this time, deaf students are not familiar with the town environment, they are not able to communicate with the Land Lords, and they do not have friends who are hearing to go round and get accommodation for them.

Moreover, deaf students go through challenges in academics and social adjustment. Academically, many lecturers are not friendly to the deaf and many interpreters who are in the University are not competent enough for educational interpreting. The University of Education employ the service of students who are on their school internship program to interpret for deaf students. Those students who are novice are not able to convey the message well enough to the understanding of deaf students. Also in academic challenge, the topics treated at radio lectures that are used to examine students is a major concern to the deaf.

Further, deaf students develop strategies that they use to cope with challenges of transition in the University. This is done through making of friends who are hearing, making friends with the interpreters, and taking notes from the hearing after lectures.

6.3 Recommendations

Recommendations for the study were made on both the Mampong Senior High Technical School and the University of Education, Winneba. Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

1. Mampong Senior High Technical School for the deaf should develop transition programs for children who are deaf in order to prepare their minds for Post-graduate studies and career.
2. The University should employ qualified interpreters to interpret for student who are deaf and avoid relying on inexperienced interpreters.
3. Topics taught during radio lectures should not be used for assessment since deaf students do not benefit from the radio lectures. However, if radio lectures will still be used to assess students, provision should be made separately for deaf students.
4. Deaf students should approach academic work with seriousness and not be giving excuses for their disability.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research

1. A study should be conducted on the transition experiences of deaf students.
2. A need for a study on transition experiences of deaf students to be conducted using different research approach in a different geographical area or institution.

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APPENDICES

Interview guide

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS OF DEAF STUDENTS

This interview schedule is intended to explore the transition of deaf students from the Senior High School to the University of Education, Winneba. The researcher would be grateful if you could respond to the following questions. Your responses would be used for the purpose of this research only. You are Assured of absolute confidentiality.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

1. What is your age range?
2. Which class do you teach?
3. How many of you teach your class?
4. What is your highest academic qualification?
5. How many years have you been teaching deaf students?
6. How many years have you been teaching in Manpong School for the deaf?
7. Do you have special Education background?
8. Do you use sign language in teaching or speech?

SECTION B: PREPARATION OF DEAF STUDENTS FOR TRANSITION

9. What method do you use in teaching the deaf?
10. Do you have collaborative teaching in the school?
11. Is there enough infrastructure (classrooms, teaching and learning materials etc.)
to teach the deaf?
12. In what ways do you prepare deaf students for further studies?

13. How does your preparation help deaf students to make transition to the University?
14. Do you have any special program to prepare deaf students for transition?
15. If yes, explain the program.



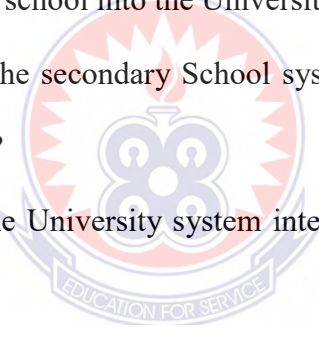
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DEAF STUDENTS

SECTION C: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF DEAF STUDENTS.

16. What is your gender?
17. What is your age range?
18. In which department are you?
19. What is your current level?
20. Are you a pre lingual deaf or a post lingual deaf?

SECTION D: CHALLENGES OF TRANSITION

21. What are some challenges you encountered when you were making transition from the secondary school into the University?
 22. In what ways did the secondary School system interfere with your transition into the University?
 23. In what way did the University system interfere with your transition into the University?
- 
- The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central shield with a cross and four smaller crosses in the quadrants. Above the shield is a sunburst. The shield is set against a background of a larger sunburst. Below the shield is a banner with the motto "EDUCATION FOR SERVICE".

SECTION E: EFFECT OF TRANSITION ON ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

24. Did transition from the secondary School to the University affect your social and academic adjustment?
25. In what ways does transition affect your social adjustment in the University?
26. In what ways does transition affect your academic adjustment in the University?

SECTION F: STRATEGIES TO COPE WITH CHALLENGES OF TRANSITION

27. What strategies do you use to cope with challenges of transition in relation to social adjustment?
28. What strategies do you employ to manage with challenges of transition in relation to academic adjustment?

