

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**CHALLENGES FACING EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND
DEVELOPMENT TEACHERS IN THE MANYA KROBO DISTRICT**



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MASTER OF EDUCATION



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

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DEVELOPMENT TEACHERS IN THE MANYA KROBO DISTRICT**



**A Dissertation in the Department of Early Childhood,
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of Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment of
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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, **Millicent Sakyi**, hereby declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotation 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 in this university or elsewhere.

Signature:

Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2022



Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that, the preparation and supervision of this research work was done in accordance with the guidance for the supervision of research work as laid down by the School of Graduate Studies, University of Education, Winneba.

Mr. Eric Ofosu-Dwamena

Signature:

Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2022

DEDICATION

To my husband, Stephen Selorm Droefenu and children; Genevieve Enyonam, Jessica
Yayra and Jared Makafui.



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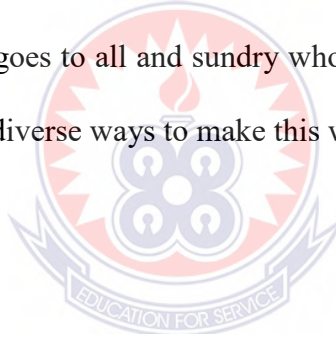


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ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the challenges facing early childhood care and development teachers in some selected schools in Lower Manya Krobo District. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population of the study comprise all preschool teachers in the Lower Manya Krobo District. A purposive sampling technique was adopted to select 42 teachers for the study. The main research measuring instrument was a questionnaire. Data were analysed using frequency, counts and percentages. The study revealed that, majority of the respondents knows the preschool curriculum. Interpersonal relationship between teachers and parents was shown by the results as unfriendly. Inadequate teaching learning materials, infrastructure and poor supervision by government officials were some of the major challenges addressed the respondents. The study concluded that curriculum planners should collaborate with preschool head teachers, teachers and attendants in the planning of the preschool curriculum that is they should seek their opinions and involve them in the planning process. The study recommended that, parents should also make the effort to interact with the teachers to know how their children are cared for and in effect contribute their quota to make it better and intensifying the supervision of the childcare centres by government officials could solve some of the challenges facing ECD programmes.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

The challenges of early childhood care and development arose when developmental psychologists and individual experts in the field of early childhood, felt the need to emphasize the uniqueness of children of two to five years and the urgent need to provide them with learning experiences that were appropriate to their level of development. This growing interest in providing better care and development for such children prompted the establishment of the first nursery school in New Harmony, Indiana in the United States in 1820 (Wortham, 2006). Since then, the growth of the preschool educational programme in the US has been given greater attention.

According to the Wai-Yum (2003) teachers are human beings, they are also being affected by many factors and these factors are interrelated each other. For him, sometimes there are things out of teachers' control. So for the problems faced by teachers during curriculum implementation, individual teachers will always not be the responsible for. To illustrate, in the study, conducted by Wai-Yum (2003), it was aimed to find out the problems of early childhood teachers experienced in the process of top-down curriculum reform at a local kindergarten in Hong Kong. It was discovered that teachers were not always the source of the problem. Sometimes, the problems occurred as a result of external factors such as frequent supervision and intervention of the principal into the classroom teaching, the lack of getting answers

from principals regarding the new curriculum reform, lack of support and encouragement from the administrators and parents.

In Africa however, and for that matter Ghana, this programme has been on the decline. For example, most of these centres are overcrowded and lack most facilities such as toilets, water, teaching and learning materials, good buildings and trained teachers or educators. Most of the teachers do not have good knowledge about preschool programmes, have no professional qualities and have poor relationships between parents and preschool teachers. It must be noted that the above cannot be achieved in a vacuum but should come through efforts of the government, Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), other stakeholders as well as competent individuals (Mack, 2016).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In the past, each community had a well-organized traditional education and social welfare system (Wang & Barrett, 2013). The community ensured that each child born was brought up according to its socially valued knowledge, skills and attitudes. So important was the education of the children that the communities contributed all the necessary resources to ensure that their children were equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills for their lives. The community saw to it that the expecting mother had enough food, rest, good health, and no worry, fear or anxiety. Young people received prior training in parenting and parenthood. Today, the traditional set-up, its beliefs and values are broken down due to the prevailing dynamic social changes. That may be the reason the establishment of preschool centres by the government and private sector was recommended by all.

The establishment and practices of preschool (Nursery) resulted in parents living their young ones in the hands of caregivers or teachers most of whom lack specific training and experience in working with children in the range of 2 – 5 years of age (Morgan, 2006). Unfortunately, some of the qualities required by the nursery teachers are not displayed. For example, a caregiver needs to show love to the children under her care as she goes about her daily work. She should be interested in children and have endless patience.

Wang and Barrett, (2013) assert that curriculum planning has also not been given due consideration. It is obvious that due to the busy economic and technological pressures of the twenty-first century children between ages 2 and 5 are sent to preschools to be confined to enable their parents to pursue their economic activities. Limited studies touched on early childhood education especially preschool classroom environment. The vast majority of studies on the nature of best educational practices focused on primary, junior high and senior high school settings and therefore did not address issues in best educational practices of preschool teachers. The present study is an attempt to fill this research gap by exploring the challenges facing early childhood care and development teachers in the Manya Krobo District in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

The theories underpinning the study are the Maria Montessori Model and Reggio Emilia Model.

1.2.1 Maria Montessori Model

The name itself comes from Maria Montessori, an Italian medical doctor who was influenced by Pestalozzi. Pestalozzi thinks that a teacher must have a special training

combining both intellectuality and the ability to touch the hearts by feeling respect and sympathy for the children (Montessori, 1972). Montessori followed the ideas of Pestalozzi and she focused on the process of normal development to discover how human beings could reach their potential more fully than they did in traditional schools. Montessori worked with younger children before elementary schools and Montessori began her experiment in January 1907. She viewed her schools as Labourites in which to study how children learn best (Lillard, 2015).

According to Montessori's philosophy, a child-sized environment offering beauty and order is the best for children's learning because it is cultivating and stimulating. In such an environment, children may choose their own work- activities that have meaning and purpose for them. In addition, there are times when carefully sequenced and structured materials (sensory materials) are introduced by the teacher to the child (Wortham, 2016). The Montessori curriculum is divided into motor education, sensory education, and language and intellectual education (Wortham).

Motor education: The Montessori classroom is designed in order to provide children's free movement during the day. Children's fine motor skills are enhanced by the sensory materials as well as the work in the area of practical life. In addition, as children learn to pour materials, sweep, polish shoes, they have the opportunity to foster both large and fine motor skills.

Sensory education: Manipulative and didactic materials are used for sensory education. The sensorial curriculum includes a large number of sets of materials that promote seriation, classification and conservation activities in a variety of media. The materials are sequenced according to difficulty with control of error being a primary objective.

Language and intellectual education: The sensorial materials are part of intellectual education. The teacher involves in the careful pronunciation of words as he or she talks to the children and during teaching a concept, it is common to use physical dimensions of the objects such as big, thin, large and small. On the other hand, there is a three part lesson and when learning, for example, concepts of large and small, the teacher would first say, "This is the small ball". Second the teacher wants the child to show the small ball and finally, the teacher wants the child to name the object.

Writing and reading activities are also crucial in the Montessori curriculum. First, children's fine motor skills are enhanced by active hands-on activities with the sensory materials. At the same time, the visual-motor understanding of alphabet letters and how to form them is introduced. Exercises to write letters, words and how to read them are done. Once a child does those independently, reading and writing are expanded to writing sentences and reading simple books.

1.2.2 Reggio Emilia Model

Reggio Emilia, a small city in industrial northern Italy, established what is now called "The Reggio Emilia approach" shortly after the Second World War when working parents helped to build new schools for their young children (Wortham, 2016). Founded by Loris Malaguzzi, the early childhood schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, have captured the attention of educators from all over the world. Inspired by John Dewey's progressive education movement, Lev Vygotsky's belief in the connection between culture and development, and Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development developed his theory and philosophy of early childhood education from direct practice in schools for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers (Thorton & Brunton, 2019).

The teachers in Reggio Emilia are partners and collaborators in learning with the children and parents. The teachers become skilled observers of children in order to plan in response to the children. Each group of children is assigned co- teachers. There is no lead teacher or director of the school. A pedologist, a person trained in early childhood education meets with the teachers weekly. Every school has an atelierista, who is trained in visual arts, working closely with teachers and children. The hundreds of languages of children are the term teachers use in referring to the process of children depicting their understanding through one of many symbolic languages, including drawing, sculpture, dramatic play and writing. Teachers and children work together to solve any problems that arise (Goffin & Wilson, 2011).

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the challenges facing early childhood care and development teachers in some selected schools in Lower Manya Krobo District.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study include the following;

1. To assess the knowledge level of early childhood teachers“ in Lower Manya Krobo District about the preschool curriculum.
2. To find out the interpersonal relationship between preschool teachers/parents in Lower Manya Krobo District schools.
3. To identify the challenges facing early childhood teachers in Lower Manya Krobo District.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. What is the knowledge level of early childhood teachers in Lower Manya Krobo District about the preschool curriculum?
2. What is the interpersonal relationship between preschool teachers/parents in Lower Manya Krobo District schools?
3. What are the challenges facing early childhood teachers in Lower Manya Krobo District?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The result of this research would alert teachers of preschool to critically identify the exact curriculum to be used. Secondly, proprietors and Heads of preschools would be able to identify the kind of educational training that would equip teachers and caregivers to handle the children in more appropriate ways. Besides, since learning takes place in convenient and friendly classroom interaction, this research will help teachers to adopt the best methods of teaching. Finally, the research findings would also help to recognize the interpersonal relationship that should exist among all stakeholders who provide early childhood care.

1.7 Delimitation

The research study is restricted to the challenges of Early Childhood Care and Development teachers in selected schools in the Lower Manya Krobo District of the Eastern Region.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

The study is structured into five chapters. Chapter one covers the introduction of the study, which discusses the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of

the study, objectives, research questions, significance, limitations, delimitations and organization of the study. Chapter two deals with the literature relevant to the study. Chapter three discusses the methodology used in the study. These includes the research design, population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection instruments and administration of the instruments, validity and reliability, data analysis procedures and ethical issues. Chapter four focuses on the presentation and discussion of findings obtained from the field. Chapter five entails a summary of the major research findings, conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature that is related to the issues on the topic. It deals with the following topics: what early childhood education is, the importance of early childhood education, globalization and early childhood education, early childhood curriculum, early childhood education policy in Ghana, quality of early childhood education in Ghana, roles played by preschool teachers in early childhood care and development and finally, challenges of early childhood development to preschool teachers in Ghana

2.1 The Concept of Childhood Education

In terms of a child's life, it is the period from birth to eight years of age (Gonzalez-Mena, 2008). Grotewell and Burton (2008) also shared this definition and elaborated it accordingly as the time between zero and eight years of age. However, by school terms, early childhood education incorporates the group settings for infants through elementary school grade three (Gonzalez-Mena, 2008). In other words, early childhood education is a special branch of education serving children from infancy to elementary grade level three (Abdulai, 2013).

There have been various definitions of Early Childhood Care and Development over the years. These vary when the perspective changes but the central ideas of educating a child in their early years remain. Education of the child has historically been deemed as the duty of the mother but at the turn of the 19th Century, education for

young ones was outsourced to other people (Brown, File, & McMullen, 2019). As there was a need for formal education, the duty of educating the child was shifted from the mother.

Over the years, the focus on education has shifted to early childhood education. The preschool was defined as a primary site for developmental prevention (Schindler & Yoshikawa, 2012). This means that society can stop vices and crimes from occurring when there is effective socialization of the child. Ghana and Africa for that matter have a well-organized traditional education and welfare system. The community ensured that every child born was brought up according to its social and valued knowledge, skills and attitude (Lemaire, Amoah, Ntsiful, Micah, & Bonney, 2013). The Ghanaian society being communal in nature believed in the adage that “It takes a community to raise a child.” It is through this that the nature of early childhood was handled in the old Ghanaian society.

Early Childhood Education was not part of the Basic Education in Ghana before the 2007 Educational Reforms Early Childhood Education was then run by mostly private individuals. There were Early Childhood Education Policies that were then put in place to promote Early Childhood Education. This led to a great increase in the establishment of private schools or international schools in Ghana (Lemaire, Amoah, Ntsiful, Micah, & Bonney, 2013) Education for children aged 4-6 years became an integral part of the formal educational system in Ghana in 2003, following recommendations from the President's Committee on Review of Education Reforms about the importance of early childhood development. Early Childhood Education, therefore, has become an integral part of our basic education for teaching preschool

children (Donkor, 2011) These educational reforms made preschools are prerequisite before the young child entered basic school.

Preschool education helps children in the early childhood stage to discover their skills by using their hands in making things, leading to the unearthing and developing of their hidden talents. This lays the foundation for writing which is a fundamental skill they need in later years. (Lemaire, Amoah, Ntsiful, Micah, & Bonney, 2013) Preschool education is therefore a necessary stage for young children to be able to find their footing and help them in their basic education.

Preschool teachers serve as essential staff in the care and development of young children. They serve as guidance and discipline for the child, motivating the young child on how to be independent and most importantly, impart knowledge. The perspective is that preschool teachers have a huge influence on the teaching and learning that takes place in Early Childhood Care and Development Centres. It is therefore highly important that the challenges that are faced by preschool teachers are identified to help in the tackling of these issues.

Schindler and Yoshikawa (2012) defined early childhood care and development as a range of services that promotes a child's total development through care, socialization and education in the home and the community. Child care simply means responding to the basic needs of child development. It is also defined as the range or set of behaviours that support a child's development including breastfeeding and feeding, provision of shelter and supervision, and preventing a stimulating and safe environment for play and exploration.

Thompson (2016) confirms this definition when he stated that child care includes protection, food and healthcare, affection, interaction and stimulation, security and

play and allowing exploration and discovery in children. Child development on the other hand is defined by UNICEF as a process of change in which the child learns to handle more complex levels of moving, thinking, feelings and relating to others. Research has shown that quality care is closely linked to child survival and development outcomes. For a normal and healthy development to occur, it is necessary that the child's basic needs of food, protection and healthcare along with affection, interaction and stimulation and allowance for exploration and discovery should be met (Donkor, 2011). It is generally recognized that (high quality) Early Childhood Care and Development should provide the foundational requirement of children's personal care, health and safety, socialization and education in an integrated manner. These services should be available to support family life at an affordable cost for all parents who need and want them (Donkor, 2011).

It can be deduced from these perspectives that; Early Childhood Care and Development programmes include both "Child Care" and "child education" initiatives. Although the need exists for providing and expanding child care and childhood education, there is a growing consensus among researchers and practitioners that child care and early childhood education are inseparable issues and must be considered as one. For example, good child care involves Development and social experiences, cognitive stimulation and physical care. Children cannot be well catered for without being educated and children cannot be well educated without being cared for. Proper care and education must be given (Schindler & Yoshikawa, 2012).

2.2 Globalization and Early Childhood Education

Globalization has reshaped many issues, international relations, population growth, development, human rights, the environment, labour, health care and poverty (Grant & Grant, 2017). It also affected and reshaped the education as well. Beginning from early childhood education to college education, we may see the influences of globalization.

Effect of globalization seemed to be seen in all countries more, after 1985s, when entered into an information age by the mass spread of computers and internet all around the world, education and holding the information in hands became more crucial. In other words, knowledge became power. Bearing this in mind, the active, productive and having knowledge of producing their own technology, skilled at several foreign languages, leader type of human beings are valued. So, countries started to reshape their curriculums in all levels of education (from early childhood to college) towards cultivating those types of people (Dulger, 2020). As this cultivation process starts from the first level which is early education, the countries are looking for the best curriculum model in early childhood education.

In addition to the need for fully competent individuals having the skills and knowledge of dealing with the new world's demands, changes in the family units (Morrison, 2008) such as more mothers entered into the work force or rich parents who look for the best educational places for their children as early as possible, brought the early childhood education as growing concern.

On the other hand, more women have been favoured in employment than in the past (Edwards, 2016). As manufacturing industries declined, service industries expanded. Employers seeking a more flexible, part time, cheaper, non- unionized work force

found that women fitted more passively into such patterns of employment than men. Women also traditionally have better 'people skills' and that quality was both useful and profitable for industries serving the public at a face-to-face level. So, as more women involved in the work force, the problem of educating those women's children aroused.

Both the place need for education of working mothers' children and the necessity of cultivating individuals being able to deal with the new world's demands urged to ask the question of what the most beneficial curriculum model for educating of young children. So, countries started to make investigations on enhancing the quality for early childhood education such as developing early childhood curriculum models.

2.3 Early Childhood Curriculum

To be able to understand the foundations of early childhood curriculum, looking at the historical process gives us opportunity to see how young children and their way of learning is perceived by the past generations based on religious, ethnic, political and economic pressures of the times (Jackman, 2005). For example, Rousseau, who is famous with his book "Emile", believed in the idea of unfolding. For him "unfolding" can occur as a result of development according to children's innate timetables (Morrison, 2008, p.58). In fact, such an approach is used now as teachers choose their activities according to children's developmental levels. Moreover, Pestalozzi believed in that children learn through their senses and through this they can achieve their natural potential. "Whole person", observation and sympathetic approach of teachers were among the significant principles that he contributed to early childhood education (Clough, Nutbrown & Selbie, 2008, p.28). Owen, on the other hand, believed in the importance of environment which has effects on children's development. This idea is

still valid today and early childhood classroom environment helps children to develop their beliefs, behaviour and achievement (Morgan, 2006).

Froebel, known as the father of kindergarten, is another influential figure in early childhood curriculum (Gordon & Browne, 2004). Froebel used planned curriculum which included gifts and occupations to educate children. Today, it is the same with the toys we use when we educate children. The concepts of unfolding and learning through play are among the biggest contributions of Froebel to early childhood curriculum models (Morrison, 2008).

It can be recognized that early childhood education has a rich history (Gordon & Browne, 2004) and the history of its development include many figures most of which are developmental theorists. In that sense, foundation of all curricula is developmental theory or beliefs regarding how children develop and learn (Catron & Allen, 2003), in fact, those are the ones guiding our view of teaching and supporting children as learners. In other words, in early childhood education, theories of child development have served as the dominant foundation for curriculum development model (Jackman, 2005) and early childhood curriculum has been largely informed by the belief that early childhood education should be directly derived from child development research and theory (Jackman, 2005).

For those aforementioned reasons, curriculum in early childhood education is dramatically different from that at other levels of education. Because children are developing at such a rapid rate during the early years, and because what children are capable of learning and doing is so dependent on their development, curriculum decisions regarding young children's education must take into account each

individual's developmental level (Spodek & Saracco, 1994). Accordingly, there is a variety in early childhood curriculum models.

Early childhood has many knowledge bases that are rooted in child development, social work, family relationships, anthropology, as well as health, developmentally appropriate practice and special education (Kendall, 1993). So teachers need to be skilled at many issues which in turn create a big responsibility in the shoulders of early childhood educators.

In other words, early childhood teachers' roles vary in the classroom. McDonnell (2019) describes the early childhood teachers' role as having the knowledge of twelve areas; (1) foundations, (2) child development and growth, (3) curriculum, (4) health, safety and nutrition, (5) child observation, record keeping and assessment, (6) creating environments for young children, (7) child guidance and disciplines, (8) cultural diversity, (9) special needs, (10) family and community relationships (11) professionalism and professional development (12) administration and supervision. On the other hand, The National Association for Education of Young Children (1997) identifies the role of the early childhood educator in five areas: (1) creating a caring community of learners, (2) teaching to enhance development and learning, (3) Constructing appropriate curriculum, (4) Assessing children's development and learning (5) Establishing reciprocal relationships with families. Moreover, Lundin (2000) distinguished the role of the early childhood educator within 6 components: (1) understanding needs and capabilities of the children, (2) creating an environment for social and emotional learning (3) accommodating a wide range of abilities, (4) balancing teacher initiated and child- initiated activities, (5) assessing how well the curriculum meets children's needs (6) developing strong needs with families. The

roles of the early childhood teachers can be expanded more however there is a common point in all explanations: the teacher's role in curriculum.

Considering the teacher's role in curriculum, there are various factors affecting it. Both the personal and environmental factors are affecting the curriculum implementation in the real classroom settings. To begin with, characteristic of the teacher might be among the factors. As the teachers are social beings and as they are coming from different backgrounds, they bring their past experience into their classroom practice. Accordingly, the personal characteristics have an impact on the implementation of the curriculum (Butera, Czaja, Daniels, Goodman, Hanson, Lieber & Plamer, 2009). To illustrate, teachers characterized as motivated, responsible, organized and open to new learning opportunities were found high curriculum implementers (Butera, et, al., 2009) compared to teachers described as unmotivated, not open to changes.

Moreover, the level of support from administrators and colleagues can be explained as one of the factors effecting early childhood teachers' curriculum implementation. Fedoravicius, Finn- Stevenson, Desimone, Henrich and Payne (2004) insisted on the support from the school principal as a key factor for successful curriculum implementation. In other words, collaborative environment is a necessity. In the study, it was found that collaborative relationship and networking were detected as positive factors increasing the teachers' attitudes and motivation, as well as their teaching (Fedoravicius, et, al., 2004). Teberg (1999) supported the necessity of administrative support for a successful curriculum implementation by discussing the fact that teachers need more than just knowledge and skills, they need encouragement and assistance to reach the goals defined for their children.

In addition to the factors affecting the curriculum implementation, early childhood teachers are facing with the problems when there is a curriculum reform. In one of the study conducted by Cisneros, Cisneros- Chernour and Moreno (2000), Mexican kindergarten teachers' problems and dilemmas was explored after the K-9 curriculum reform. The new curriculum emphasizes "individualism and assertiveness" which are opposed with the Mexican culture and there was a stress on accountability. Data gathered through a qualitative method by interviews, focus groups, document analysis over 8 weeks of period. First problem was the conflict between the school and home. Parents perceive kindergarten as a playing ground for the children not as a learning place after the curriculum reform so this creates a barrier between the school and home collaboration. Second, there was a lack of continuity and compatibility between kindergarten and some elementary schools.

In another study, Wai-Yum (2003) tried to find out the problems of early childhood teachers experienced in the process of top-down curriculum reform at a local kindergarten in Hong Kong. The purpose of the study was to reveal the lived experience of the real people in real context. The qualitative method was used through individual and focus-group interviews.

On the other hand, in the study of Dusek (2008), the views of early childhood teachers (#=91), schools principals (N=22) and inspectors (N=27) about the 2006 Early Childhood Curriculum were gathered. The data were collected in the city of Ordu and both questionnaires and interviews were used. Inspectors, school principals and early childhood teachers all reached a consensus that the new curriculum was child-centered and more flexible compared to the previous one. School principals and early childhood teachers also appreciated that there was an emphasis on the parent

involvement by the new curriculum. Besides, inspectors and school principals indicated the appropriateness of the new curriculum with the curriculum used in primary education.

In addition to the positive sides of the curriculum, school principals described the problems of the new curriculum implementation as the lack of information regarding the new curriculum among early childhood teachers. They also added the physical environment deficiencies as the hurdles confronted during implementation.

In a study conducted by Sivgin (2005), early childhood teachers' views regarding the curriculum being implemented were gathered. The data were collected from early childhood teachers (n=114) in Ordu city and their views categorized into four areas: objectives, education and planning, parent involvement and evaluation. Regarding the objectives, it was detected that teachers did not have difficulties both on deciding the objectives to choose for an activity and choosing objectives from all areas of development appropriate for the age group of the children.

Teachers, in terms of education and planning, proposed that there was a need for examples regarding which methods to use, what kinds of technological materials to be included in the daily plans. In addition, teachers elaborated that the examples of science and nature activities, music activities and reading- writing activities should be included in the curriculum.

Finally, teachers found evaluation forms designed for evaluating children inadequate. They suggested that there should be more examples of evaluation forms to understand whole progress of the children. In other words, observation forms designed for children were not adequate so other evaluation techniques should be included in the curriculum.

Another study (Inal, Kandir, & Ozbey, 2009) focused on the difficulties faced by preschool teachers in the planning and implementation of curriculum. The study sample consisted of a total of 154 teachers working at private and government kindergartens in Ankara and Afyon. Questionnaire with two sections (demographic information of teachers and their views on educational contexts) was used to gather the data. In the study, it was aimed to analyse whether teachers' views on planning educational contexts varied with respect to their years of experience, educational background and type of the school they are working in.

2.4.1 Curriculum models used in early childhood education

Throughout the history of early childhood education, diversity in early childhood curriculum can be seen. For example, Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Head Start, High/Scope can be given among the well-known early childhood curriculum models. Today, principals of those models are appreciated in many early childhood education settings (Clough, Nutbrown & Selbie, 2008).

High scope is a cognitively oriented curriculum (Wortham, 2006) when it is first developed in order to serve 3 and 4 years-old children from poor neighbours in Ypsilanti, Michigan, in 1962 so it helps children to become independent thinkers and problem solvers (Wortham, 2006). However through the four decades of working, the curriculum has evolved to the model that is used today. There are principles of the curriculum (Morrison, 2008).

Active learning: Active learning is the most crucial way for children to make sense of their world because as they interact with the real world, as they have immediate first-hand experience, they are able to build their own understanding.

Key experiences: Interacting with people, materials and ideas through a creative and ongoing way helps children to enhance mentally, emotionally, socially and physically.

Plan-do-review process: Children have right and time to plan their own activities, perform them and at the end, reflect on what they had done.

Parent component: By offering ideas about child development and learning, teachers make home visits.

Among those principles, active learning and key experiences form the core of the High Scope Model. In fact the four elements, child-adult interaction, learning environment, daily routines and assessment are the ones support active learning.

Child-adult interaction: Adult is the supporter in High-Scope Preschool program. Positive interaction strategies such as focusing on children's strengths, sharing control with children, forming an authentic relationship with children are highly valued in High- Scope classrooms. In other words, when dealing with the every situation in the classroom, the teacher is the guider and supporter which creates a harmony in the classroom.

Learning environment: Environment is significant in this model and it is arranged into different areas to foster children's different developmental levels. Many kinds of activities can be carried out in High-Scope classroom by the wide variety of materials.

Daily routines: Active learning is also supported by daily routines. Consistent routine is important. Plan- do- review session, small group and large group times when teachers also engages in, are crucial part of a typical High-Scope preschool classroom.

Assessment: There is a special observation record used for assessing the children's progress, The High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) because observation is the major tool to understand children's development and learning. While observing and interacting with children, teachers also keep daily anecdotal records and planning sessions.

As early childhood curriculum models and guidelines were enhanced throughout time, countries' early education curriculum also affected by the innovations and developments in the field accordingly. Turkey also had gone through many ways regarding early childhood curriculum.

2.5 Early Childhood Education Policy in Ghana

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) is the timely provision of a range of services that promote the survival, growth, development and protection of the young child (Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, (MOWAC, 2005). Traditionally, Ghanaians have always demonstrated devoted attention to child up-bringing. Children constitute the future leadership and workforce of Ghana. Ghanaian children, therefore require serious commitment from state institutions to ensure their proper growth and development into adulthood. This is manifested in the various Constitutional provisions, Parliamentary Acts and Legislative Instruments by the Government of Ghana.

Before 2001, the focus of ECCD had been on the cognitive development of the child. This was seen in the establishment of Creches, Day Care Centres, Nurseries and Kindergartens by the Government and private operators to take care of children whilst their parents go out to work. The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare had joint responsibilities for these early childhood facilities because of

the welfare/care and educational needs of children. Furthermore, the mandate of the Ghana National Commission on Children (GNCC) made the commission responsible for the welfare of all children in Ghana. The responsibility for policy making in respect to children had shifted from the GNCC to the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) with the establishment of MOWAC in 2001. MOWAC is now the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection.

The new approach to ECCD is to formulate comprehensive policies and programmes for children from birth to age eight, their parents and caregivers. This is with the aim of protecting the child's rights to develop his or her full cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential. This relatively new approach promotes and protects the rights of the young child to survival, growth and development (MOWAC, 2005). Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) policy became operational in 2007.

The purpose of the policy is to provide a framework for the guidance of the Government and all stakeholders specifically Sector Ministries, District Assemblies and its structures, communities, families, civil society, including Non-Governmental Organizations and the Donor Community in their effort to support the survival, protection and development of the children of Ghana in their early years. The Children's Act 1998 (Act 560) enjoins the District Assemblies and other Decentralized Departments to facilitate the establishment of day care centres and other ECCD institutions in Ghana.

The main goal of the policy is the survival, growth, development and protection of all Ghanaian children. The government shall therefore take measures to expand access and improve the quality of ECCD programmes in that direction to 100 percent of children aged 0-8 by the year 2015. Quality, equity in delivery, cost sharing, holistic

approach, community and parent participation will be the guiding principles (MOWAC, 2005).

Under the ECCD Policy, the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs shall have the sole responsibility for ensuring the successful implementation of this policy and its programmes through monitoring and evaluation responsibilities which are:

1. Develop a Communications and Advocacy Strategy to create a nationwide awareness on the Policy and ECCD issues
2. Establish a Unit within its offices which shall serve as the Secretariat for National ECCD Coordinating Committee
3. Recommend, in consultation with the relevant Ministries and other stakeholders, minimum standards for the operation of ECCD centres
4. Establish and operationalize a national programme for research, monitoring and evaluation of ECCD issues
5. Ensure that the provisions of the policy are adhered to and decisions of the National Co-ordinating Committee are carried out
6. Mobilize resources for purposes such as research, advocacy, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of ECCD programmes
7. Encourage the formation of a National ECCD Consultative Group of NGOs working with children within the relevant age group
8. Submit annually to relevant Statutory bodies a comprehensive report on the status of implementation of the policy.

Also, under the ECCD policy, the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service (MOE/GES) have the following responsibilities:

1. Take a lead role to regulate the establishment and registration of preschools (Kindergarten)

2. Take a lead role in providing technical input in early intellectual stimulation and development issues in ECCD programmes, both centre-based and non-centre based. These would include, but not be limited to, the development of curriculum.
3. Make a provision for ECCD programmes within its budget
4. Expand and maximize the use of existing ECCD training facilities and establish new ones, existing training institutions could, in the meantime, offer their facilities for use in conducting courses for caregivers during vacation
5. Offer qualitative training to ECCD attendants and caregivers and support all Nursery Training Centres both financially and materially
6. Ensure a smooth transition from preschool programmes to formal schooling.

2.6 Quality of Early Childhood Education in Ghana

The Government of Ghana has shown interest in improving the quality of early childhood programmes offered in ECE centres in Ghana. This is reflected in the government's policy statement on the agenda for growth and prosperity, the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (2002-2004). Furthermore, in pursuance of the EFA goals, the Ministry of Education has adopted a policy to attach kindergartens to all primary schools in the country (Abdulai, 2013). In Ghana there are different forms of ECD programmes delivering services directly to children. These include institutional/center-based preschool programmes which are either publicly or privately owned and managed, and home-based care. Public preschool programmes are mostly community-based programmes while private centres are mostly urban-based (Donkor, 2011).

Although there has been a rapid expansion in ECD and preschool services in Ghana, the quality of many ECD centres (both public and private) leaves much to be desired and only a relatively low proportion of children benefit from the services (UNESCO, 2006).

While some centres, especially in the rural areas are held under trees and in old dilapidated rooms, others are poorly ventilated with bad lighting and little or no room for play. However, privately owned ECE centres have relatively better infrastructure than their public counterparts (Ghana Districts, 2015). The problem is compounded by overcrowding of children in classrooms. This situation is affecting the quality of education and an increasing concern about the competence of our public schools. Staffing in the various schools is quite encouraging, however, with more untrained teachers. There has been efforts by policy makers to encourage teachers to upgrade their skills to ensure effective teaching and learning in ECE centres to improve the level of quality in ECE centres in Ghana (Ghana Districts, 2015).

2.7 Roles Played by Preschool Teachers in Early Childhood Care and Development

The preschool teacher plays a variety of roles in the care and development of the young child. These roles are necessary to make sure that child gets effective socialization and the proper care and development needed.

The preschool teacher firstly plays the role of a facilitator. The facilitator ensures that the learning and development of the young child takes place in the most efficient manner. The early years of the child are a period of incredible growth and development. There is development in the cognitive ability of the child. The preschool teacher must ensure that the learning environment is stimulating and as encouraging

to help the young child learn and develop at their own pace. To be an effective facilitator the teacher is interested in setting up the environment, planning programmes to suit individual children's needs and reflecting on practice (Clough, Nutbrown & Selbie, 2008).

Another role of the preschool teacher worth mentioning is the bridge serve between the young child and the family. The parents usually who work are not available as the child makes small milestones as they develop and learn. The preschool teacher therefore can communicate and keep the family updated on these developments so as to keep the family abreast of the child's development. Preschool education is seen as a collaborative effort between the preschool teacher and the parents of the young child. It is therefore necessary that the preschool teacher informs the parents on necessary information about their child in their bid to make the early childhood care as holistic as it can be (Goffin & Wilson, 2001).

As the early years are the period of growth and development, the young child is expected to pick up social skills which are needed in day-to-day life. Social skills are necessary because human beings are social beings and everyone needs a whole host of them to be a proper functioning member of the society. The preschool teacher ensures that the right social skills are adapted by the young child. The young child is discouraged from picking up social skills which are deemed unacceptable by the society (Wortham, 2006).

The preschool teachers also offer guidance to the young child in the learning and development. The preschool teacher through meaningful and purposeful interactions guides the young child on what to do and not to day-to-day. The stage of life which the young child finds themselves in is an impressionable stage. It falls on the

preschool teacher to guide and make sure that the young child makes good choices and decision (Mack, 2016).

2.8 Importance of Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education, within the last few decades, took the attention of the different fields (Roopnarine & Johnson, 2005) such as developmental psychology, cultural psychology, childhood studies, cultural anthropology, history and philosophy because recent studies showed that babies and young children are born with the capacity to understand (Nutbrown, 2006). In other words, their brains are ready to learn when they came into the world and during this process; both the environment and genes take an important role which in turn, builds the brain (Lillard, 2005). This view regarding children, perceiving them as competent learners rather than empty slates changed the disciplines' way of looking at the education of children or early childhood education.

The readiness of the children to learn even when they are just born triggered the ideas of necessity of early childhood education both for the individual child and for the society as a whole, in a broader sense. Longitudinal studies have shown that early childhood education is the period when children's development was rapid and when children were affected more from the environmental factors. In addition, two thirds of the brain development was completed between the years of 0-4 (Abdulai, 2013). Therefore, education in this crucial period creates significance for the development of children. In a study conducted by Barnett (2015), it was found that getting an early childhood education provided an increase in the IQ level of children in the short term and in the long term; it increased the child's school achievement.

Early childhood education becomes more beneficial especially, for the children coming from low socio-economic background. Loeb, Bridges, Fuller, Rumberger and Bassok (2007) identified benefits of being exposure to early education for the children coming from low-income families as cognitive growth and school readiness. Besides children from low socio-economic background, good quality of early childhood education provides early reading and math skills to children from high and middle socio-economic status.

Early education cultivates children in terms of socialization rather than purely academic enhancement such as math and reading. Webb (2003) elaborated that children learn cooperation through education in child care centres and such skills help them to obey rules and stay safe in a society. Regarding socialization, parents also share the same perspective. In the study of Seng (1994), it was revealed that one of the biggest reasons for parents sending children to early childhood education centre is to get them socialized. In fact, in a longitudinal study, Kagitaibasi (2021) explained that children who received early childhood education became emotionally and socially more competent adults compared to the ones whom did not received early education.

In terms of children, in addition to social emotional and academic benefits, early education provides them a better future in the long term such as preparing them for school and increase in high school graduation rates. Inevitably, knowing the benefits of early education for the individuals in the short and long term brings the discussion of early childhood necessity in society as a whole.

Modern societies, as Durkheim clarified, are composed of many institutions and there is a dynamic relationship among those. Each institution depends on each other to

survive and to create the harmony within the society (Greve, 1998). Keeping this logic in mind, societies need individuals who function well within that system. So, educational institutions gains significance from early childhood education to university to reach that harmonic society.

Governments start to put early childhood education into their agendas, especially, after it was proved that good quality of early education has long lasting effects on the children's later life productivity for the society. To illustrate, Oppenheim and MacGregor (2002) distinguished that children received early education are less likely to involve in crime and more likely to complete their high school education and get into a college education. In another studies such as Chicago Longitudinal study and the Cost, Quality and Child outcome study indicated that getting high quality early childhood education make children become successful students and citizens in their later lives (Reynolds & Ou, 2004).

On the other hand, according to the World Bank Report (2005), between 0-6 years of age, each 1 dollar invested on children will be returned back as 7.6 dollars in the future as a result of the productivity gained through early childhood education. Parallel to this study, Everingham, Karoly, and Kilbourne (1997) indicated that rate of the return of the investment in people in early childhood period is higher compared to investment in other periods of human life.

In addition, research results supporting that earlier the children are exposed to good quality of experience, the more the connections in their brains develop, triggered early childhood education to gain greater importance in the society. Such results opened the way to start education of brains as early as possible.

In one of the study conducted by Mack (2016), it was elaborated that developmental flexibility of brain wiring or its ability to change due to influences of experience were affected by both genes and early environmental factors. So, the necessity occurs for educators, policy makers and others in the society helping children to construct their initial brain architecture by providing education for them in their early ages.

Findings of the longitudinal and cross-sectional studies (Openheim & MacGregor, 2002; Reynolds & Ou, 2004) related the benefits of early childhood education provided logical reasons to emphasize on early education for a better society. Besides all, in the last twenty years, socio-cultural changes such as getting into the information age and changes in the world order through globalization triggered early childhood education to be concern of many societies.

Early childhood care and development is a vital part of a child's young education. Early childhood care and development is a holistic approach to the education of the young child. Learning is more than just cognitive development. In addition, learning includes; learning skills and competencies that help children acquire further understanding in formal and informal settings, socio-emotional development that supports emotional well- being and the social skills for learning with other people, and physical development and health that provide essential resources to early learning (Thompson, 2016). Beginning in infancy, when the baby's "mastery motivation" denotes the persistence, focus, and curiosity accompanying exploration and problem-solving (Wang & Barrett, 2013) Early childhood care and development provides all these skills and competencies to help the young child develop in a holistic manner. The emotional and social needs of the young child are also met by the educators.

These points further highlight the importance of early childhood care and development.

Early child care and development also eases socialization the young child. Socialization involves various social skills which include social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision making, self-management and self-awareness. These skills are essential to the successful interactions in and about the classroom. Children are also taught how to show appreciation to their parents, teachers, friends, and how and when to say sorry if they offend their friends, parents, and teachers (Lemaire, Amoah, Ntsiful, Micah, & Bonney, 2013). It is very necessary as good and effective socialization help in reducing emotional and behavioural problems that may rear its head in the future.

Another importance of Early Childhood care and Development that can be highlighted is that it helps the young child learn about co-operation or teamwork. The young child through play and interactions with other young child learn the spirit of teamwork and how teams can make things fun and easy. More importantly, preschool education teaches children human relations. These include the importance of living together, working together, playing together, giving and sharing, loving themselves and loving others (Lemaire, Amoah, Ntsiful, Micah, & Bonney, 2013).

2.9 Challenges of Early Childhood Development to Preschool Teachers in Ghana

This research significantly addresses specific identifiable challenges that preschool teachers face in the Early Childhood Care and Development programme in Ghana. These challenges are in the areas of teaching methodology, availability of trained preschool teachers, relationship between parents and teachers, the teacher's

knowledge of the preschool curriculum, teachers not being abreast with current findings and research in early childhood care and development, preschool teachers not having access to adequate resource materials and facilities, and tackling students' behavioural problems

2.8.1 Teaching methodology

The methods for teaching preschool children differ from formal teaching in primary schools. It is important for the teachers to understand and know the child. According to Mack (2016), some preschool teachers in Africa, Ghana specifically, tend to copy the methods from their school days in teaching the preschool children. They often use "teacher centered method", which is the passive role by listening without participating in the teaching process. The method is also called the "banking method" in other words the knowledge is 'banked' in the children even before they are ready for it. This method is particularly unsuitable at preschool level since the children learn when they are actively involved in the learning process. Mack (2016) further propose some teaching methods that are suitable for children at this level. These are;

The child centred method: in which the children are at the centre of attention and take active part in the lessons. Children learn to know the world around them by discovering, exploring, observing and finding out things for themselves. Dialogue method - this means that there should be a dialogue between children and educators at school. Together, they should discuss different events and happenings and also learn from each other.

Theme Method: Activities for shorter or longer periods are concentrated on special areas of interest. This method does not divide their world into subjects and this makes it easier for them to learn when there is a connection and continuation in learning.

Play Method: This is the most natural method through which children learn and experience the world around them. Enough time should be given for them to freely play and activities should be in the interest of the children.

2.8.2 Availability of trained preschool teachers

In Ghana although the official attempts to develop programmes for the Care and education of young children began in the early 1950s, it was not until 1965 that a nursery unit was established within the ministry of Education. Most programmes for the care and education of the young child were operated by private and voluntary organizations and the Department of Social Welfare and Community development. The ministry of Education was in charge of kindergarten (4 - 5 years) and the Creches and Nurseries of the department of social welfare. Both Ministries had training institutions, which offered in-service training for early childhood educators, and had guideline policies for setting up centres (Clough, Nutbrown & Selbie, 2008).

In October, 1993, there was a national seminar organized on early childhood development to assess the state of development of Ghanaian Children and the way forward. The research showed clear inadequacy in the provision of the early childhood services especially in the rural areas. Most of the teachers in the private sectors had very low academic potentials, not professionals and were not motivated financially (Goffin & Wilson, 2001).

Based on this, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) decided to Collaborate with some key agencies in the childhood development in order to learn more about the sector and to offer the necessary inputs that would help to improve the sector. Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) United Nations International Children's Emergence Fund (UNICEF), and Danish International Development

Agency (DANIDA) initiated a programme to upgrade the National Training Institute for Early Childhood. Education both physically and professionally so that it could operate as a resource centre. This was to improve the professional competence and skills of care groups of educators placed at the National Centre and at their community level (Donkor, 2011).

2.8.3 Relationship between parents and preschool teachers

Wortham (2016) early childhood care and Development refers to a comprehensive approach to policies and programmes for children from birth up to six years of age, their parents and caregivers. The purpose is to protect the child's right and to develop his or her full cognitive, emotional, social and physical potentials to the optimum. However, the National Seminar organized in October 1993 indicated that parents were not seriously involved either in the care of their children or in preparing them for school in the morning. They left the children to fend for by their older brothers and sisters as parents engaged in farming and trading activities. The performance of these functions invariably, implied that the children could not go to school. The impoverished situation also affected them later in their school careers since it resulted in low learning ability and poor self- esteem.

Thompson (2016) hoped that the relationship between home and school, between parents and teachers, would become a closer partnership between the two partners to every child's education, to which Mack (2016), added further hope that the good school should become an extension of the child's home or family rather than a substitute, and therefore it should co-operate positively with the parents. Lack of understanding and communication between home and school often lies at the root of children's poor school adjustments and performance. Parent assemblies, open days,

parent evenings, parent's room for a cup of coffee and a chat, parents helping in the classroom all demonstrate the intention of creating open and accessible schools where parents can be involved in their children's learning and can have some say in the organization.

Involvement in the schools, however, is not universally welcome or practice. Staff in one-quarter of the primary schools surveyed by Mack (2016), were unwilling to have parents in their classroom, one-third expressed anxiety about parents gossiping and the lack of confidentiality, one-fifth thought that parents in classrooms caused behaviour problems in the children, and that parents' failure to understand and the aims of the school lead them to criticize the teachers. Again, this situation is no less different in Ghana.

2.8.4 The preschool teachers' knowledge of the preschool curriculum

The curriculum defines what the students are to learn, the skills they are to master, the concepts they are to develop and the values, attitudes, habits and feelings they are to acquire. Further, the curriculum includes the day's routines and activities including group practices, schedules, classroom management and the physical and social learning environment. Above all, the curriculum responds to the deferring learning and developmental needs of young children. Each decision about the curriculum is made in the light of what is best for particular children being served as what is developmentally and individually appropriate. As integrated approach the curriculum recognizes that content areas in instruction are naturally interrelated, as they are in real life experiences. In the resulting integrated curriculum, learning is regarded as a process rather than a collection of facts.

According to Donkor (2011) the preschool is often viewed by most people as a playing ground and not a place of learning. It is therefore difficult for the teachers to get parents involved in carrying out the assigned tasks so as to make learning conducive for the young child. This presents a large task to the preschool teachers because most curriculum demands home collaborations for it to be effective. Also, teachers vary in upbringing and socialization so the way the collaborations curriculum can be imparted depends on the teacher. Some teachers are open and this allows for easy impartation of knowledge while others are closed off (Clough, Nutbrown & Selbie, 2008).

However, preschool teachers lack the understanding of analysing the components of the curriculum and how to structure sequential behaviour of the children. A well-designed early childhood programme takes into account the fact that the thinking process of children in the three to eight-year age range are qualitatively different from those of older children. Young children acquire knowledge by manipulating, exploring and experimenting with real objects. They learn almost exclusively by doing and through movement.

2.8.5 Pre-school teachers not being abreast with current findings and research in early childhood care and development

The world is ever changing and improvements and growth are always happening in the world of early childhood care and development (Mark, 2016). These trends and improvements vastly improve the quality of the learning process and help ensure that the young child gets the best training available. Preschool teachers not being able to have access to these findings or not being abreast with the current developments make it tedious for the young child to achieve the best.

2.8.6 Preschool teachers not having access to adequate resource materials and facilities

It is pretty obvious that no actual learning can take place when there is a lack of materials and facilities for the efficient care and development of the young child. These resource materials and facilities help in making an enabling environment where care and development can take place. Resource materials like textbooks, play equipment, art supplies are all needed by the young child in order for the child to function appropriately under the right care.

2.8.7 Tackling pupils behavioural problems

Preschool is usually the first time some young children encounter a formal setting. (Mack, 2016) These behavioural problems which usually stem from the home distracts other student and it is left on the preschool teacher to find appropriate measures to counter these problems. The preschool has to make sure the young child follows behavioural rules and often than not this is a difficult challenge.

2.9 Summary of Literature Review

In summary, the current study reviews literature challenges facing early childhood care and development teachers. The literature reviewed in this study suggests that there has been a significant amount of research that extols the benefits of early childhood education. Based on an extensive search of the literature, among the frequently stated indicators parents and teachers deem as important in childcare challenges were, relationship between parents and teachers, low level of knowledge about the preschool curriculum, pupils behavioural problems and availability of teaching and learning materials.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the methods and selected ways by which the objectives of the study will be achieved. It includes the research design, population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, validity and reliability of instrument, data collection procedures and ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Design

A research design is an essential part of the research because it determines to a large extent which analysis and outcomes to expect from a study. When the design is badly done, it could lead to error in the results generated (Krippendorff & Bock, 2018). The research design adopted for this study is descriptive survey. Descriptive survey research design aims at describing accurately and systematically a population, situation or phenomenon (Patton, 2015). Patton further explained that, survey research allows you to gather large volumes of data that can be analysed for frequencies, averages and patterns. Descriptive survey research has the advantage of uniqueness since information gathered is not available from other sources, having unbiased representation of population of interest and standardization of measurement as same information is collected from every respondent (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The design chosen was very useful with regards to data collection as it allowed the researcher to gather data from teachers based on their views or opinions about the current trend in factors affecting effective teaching in the basic schools. The

anonymity of the survey design used allowed the respondents to answer with more candid and valid answers.

3.2 Population

The research population includes the preschool teachers and early childhood educators in the Lower Manya Krobo District in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The category of educators targeted for the research population includes 242 preschool teachers from preschools in the Lower Manya Krobo District in the Eastern Region. This brings the total population to 242.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a sample is a subgroup of the population that is carefully selected. It is the process of selecting a few members from the bigger group to become the basis for estimating the outcome of the bigger group. The following schools formed the sample for the study. They are; Akuse and Somanya Methodist Kindergarten Schools, Messiah preparatory Kindergarten School Akuse, Somanya and Akuse Roman Catholic Kindergarten Schools, Presby Kindergarten Schools in Akuse and Somanya and E.P Kindergarten School in Kpong. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 42 teachers from the selected schools for the study. This technique was deemed appropriate because as far as quantitative study is concerned, the size of the sample is relatively appropriate (Creswell & Luketic, 2017).

3.4 Research Instrument

The instrument used to collect the data was the questionnaire. Questionnaires have the ability to gather large amount of data in the shortest possible time. The questions can be changed to suit the researcher's needs. This makes it easier for the researcher to find new things about their study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The questionnaire consists of 27 questions in two sections. The first section, is about bio-data of the respondents and consist of questions that are closed-ended, where possible answers will be given for the respondents to tick the category that best describes them. Other items are open-ended, where the respondents are asked to write the answers in their own words. The questionnaire is chosen as the instrument for the study because it is less expensive, saves time, and convenient than interviews (Dumyei, 2007).

3.5 Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

Creswell (2014) asserts that the reliability of a research instrument is widely regarded as the stability of the instrument while the validity deals with how honest the research findings are. In order to reduce research biases and make the research as transparent as possible, there must be a valid and reliable research instrument to invoke confidence in the research material. In quantitative research, reliability is the consistency, stability and repetition of results (Dumyei, 2007). This explains why the use of questionnaires as a research tool has been consistent over time. It can be seen that the selection of the questionnaire as a research tool is to provide accurate and legitimate research findings that can be transferred to interest groups.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection as the gathering of information needed to address a research problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Therefore, data collection entails the use of instruments to collect data so as to provide answers to research questions. Before the fieldwork, the researcher acquired an introduction letter from the Department of Educational Administration and Management, University of Education, Winneba, to help secure permission from the Lower Manya Krobo District Directorate of Ghana Education

Service. A permission letter was sought from the directorate which enabled the researcher to gain access to the schools.

The researcher visited the schools and introduced herself to the headteachers, sought permission from them to carry the study in their schools, and had a conference with the teachers who were selected for the study. The purpose of the study was explained to the teachers and how they would be involved in the study. After few questions were asked by the teachers which the researcher addressed. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to the teachers and explained to them how to respond to the items. The researcher was available to clarify concerns raised during the data collection. All the filled in questionnaires were collected and sealed in an envelope.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedure

After the data has been collected it was cross-examined to confirm their accuracy, and identify those items wrongly responded to, spelling mistakes and blank spaces. Simple descriptive survey design such as percentages and frequencies will be used to answer research questions. Quantitative data was queued into the computer for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. This processed the frequencies and percentages which were used to discuss the findings. Tables were used to present the data.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues considered in this study included:

3.8.1 Informed and voluntary consent

The cornerstone of ethical research is „informed consent“ (Creswell, 2014). The term consists of two important elements, with each requiring careful consideration, that is,

„informed“ and „consent“. For this purpose, participants were fully informed of what would be asked of them, how the data would be used and what (if any) consequences there could be.

Participants were also made to understand their rights to access their information and the right to withdraw at any point. The informed consent process can be seen as the contract between researcher and the participants. The aspects of „informed“ in this study included clear explanation on: Who the researcher was, what the intent of the research was, what data were to be collected from participants, how the data were be collected from participants, what level of commitment was required from participants, how the data were to be used and reported and what were the potential risks of taking part in the research.

3.8.2 Confidentiality of information shared

This principle is also concerned with offering respect and protection to research participants through assurance of confidentiality of information shared. Participants were assured that the information shared would be between the researcher and participants only. However, if there would be a third party, it would be the researcher’s supervisor. This would help the supervisor to guide the researcher to write the research report well.

3.8.3 Anonymity of research participants

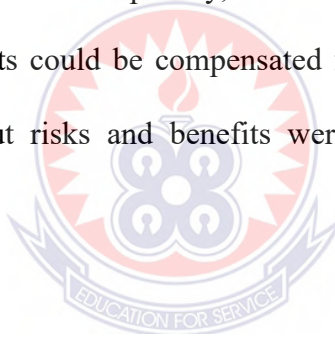
Participant anonymity means the participant’s identity are unknown to the researcher (for example, when using anonymous surveys, the participant identity is truly unknown to the researchers). Anonymity can be ensured by not revealing the identity of the individuals and institutions involved in a study. Typically, anonymity is

provided through the use of pseudonyms. In discussing the themes derived from the data collection, participant's identities were hidden by using pseudo names.

3.8.4 No harm to participants and reciprocity

The researcher needs to consider the potential of harm to the participants, the researcher, the wider community and the institution. The harm can range from physical, resource loss (including time), emotional and reputational. When considering the potential for harm, the approach should be, in descending order, to eliminate, isolate and minimise the risk, with the participants being fully informed on what the risks are.

Also, in ensuring the ethic of reciprocity, the researcher considered actively ways through which participants could be compensated for their time and effort. For this reason, information about risks and benefits were provided to participants while seeking their consent.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with how data obtained from this study was analysed in order to draw valid conclusion from it. It also identifies the significant and novel findings of the research and inferences made from them in view of findings from related previous studies. The data was collected from preschool teachers in selected preschools in the Lower Manya Krobo District, Eastern Region. This was done using questionnaires. The data for the study is presented in tables and analysed using frequencies and simple percentages.

4.1 Bio-Data of Respondents

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
21 – 30	7	16
31 – 40	5	12
41 – 50	15	36
51 – 60	15	36
Total	42	100

Source: Field data, (2022)

Table 1 reveals that, 15(36%) respondents each were between 41 – 50 and 51- 60 years respectively, whilst 7(16%) were between 21 – 30 years, and as low as 5(12%), of the respondents fell between 31 – 40 years. This means that more elderly teachers teach preschoolers.

Table 2: Academic Qualifications of Respondents

Academic Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Preschool Certificate	10	24
Teacher's Cert „A“	22	52
Diploma	7	17
First Degree	3	7
Total	42	100

Source: Field data, (2022)

Table 2 indicates that 22(52%) of the respondents were holders of teachers' certificate "A", 10(24%) were Preschool Certificate holders with 7(17%) being Diploma holders while 3(7%) were degree holders. This means that more than half of the respondents were holders of Teachers Cert "A".

4.2 Knowledge Level of Preschool Teachers about the Preschool Curriculum

Research Question 1: What are the challenges facing early childhood teachers in Lower Manya Krobo District?

Table 3: Knowledge Level of Preschool Teachers about the Preschool Curriculum with Regards to the Studying of the Preschool Curriculum

Have you studied the preschool curriculum?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	30	71
No	12	29
Undecided	-	-
Total	42	100

Source: Field data, (2022)

Table 3 shows that with regards to the respondents who studied the preschool curriculum, 30(71%) said they studied the preschool curriculum while 12(29%) of the respondents said they did not study the preschool curriculum. According to Donkor (2011) the preschool is often viewed by most people as a playing ground and not a place of learning. It is therefore difficult for the teachers to get parents involved in carrying out the assigned tasks so as to make learning conducive for the young child. This presents a large task to the preschool teachers because most curriculum demands home collaborations for it to be effective. Also, teachers vary in upbringing and socialization so the way the collaborations curriculum can be imparted depends on the teacher. Some teachers are open and this allows for easy impartation of knowledge while others are closed off (Clough, Nutbrown & Selbie, 2008).

4.3 Interpersonal Relationship among Preschool Teachers

Research Question 2: What are the social interactions between preschool teachers in Lower Manya Krobo District schools?

Table 4: Interpersonal Relationship among Preschool Teachings in the Lower Manya Krobo District

What relationship exist among preschool teachers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Non-interactive	34	81
Interactive	8	19
Total	42	100

Source: Field data, (2022)

Table 5 shows that 34(81%) of the respondent had non-interactive relationship with their colleagues while 8(19%) of the respondents had interactive relationship with their colleagues.

Table 5: Relationship that Exists Between Teachers and Parents of Preschool Pupils in the Lower Manya Krobo District

What relationship exists between teachers and parents of preschool pupils?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Non-interactive	29	69
Interactive	13	31
Total	42	100

Source: Field data, (2022)

With regards to the relationship between teachers and parents of preschool pupils in various preschools in the Lower Manya Krobo District, Table 6 reveals that 29(69%) of the respondents said it was non-interactive and 13(31%) said it was interactive. Thompson (2016) hoped that the relationship between home and school, between parents and teachers, would become a closer partnership between the two partners to every child's education, to which Mack (2016), added further hope that the good school should become an extension of the child's home or family rather than a substitute, and therefore it should co-operate positively with the parents.

Lack of understanding and communication between home and school often lies at the root of children's poor school adjustments and performance. Parent assemblies, open days, parent evenings, parent's room for a cup of coffee and a chat, parents helping in the classroom all demonstrate the intention of creating open and accessible schools where parents can be involved in their children's learning and can have some say in the organization.

4.4 Challenges Facing Early Childhood Teachers

Research question 3: What are the challenges facing early childhood teachers“ in Lower Manya Krobo District?

Table 6: Challenges Facing Early Childhood Teachers

Challenges	SA f (%)	A f (%)	N f (%)	D f (%)	SD f (%)
Inadequate trained personnel	42(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Lack of financial support from government	42(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Lack of teaching and learning materials	42(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Inadequate infrastructure	42(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Poor supervision by government officials	42(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Lack of staff motivation	20(47%)	15(36%)	7(17%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Lack of education on ECD programmes	30(71%)	12(29%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

Key: SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, N= Neutral, D= Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree
Source: Field data, (2022)

Table 7 shows challenges facing the implementation of ECD programmes which were cited by teachers. Among the popularly mentioned challenges, majority of the teachers 42(100%) strongly agree that inadequate trained personnel is a challenge to early childhood education, all the teachers 42(100%) again responded to lack of financial support, lack of teaching and learning materials 42(100%) and 42(100%) for inadequate infrastructure. Again, majority of the teachers 42(100%) agreed to poor supervision by government officials while 20(47%) of the teachers strongly agree to lack of staff motivation, 15(36%) of the teachers agreed to the same challenge and only 7(17%) were neutral.

Furthermore, 30(71%) of the teachers strongly agreed that lack of education on early childhood development is also a challenge while the remaining 12(29%) of the teachers also agreed to the statement. A study conducted in Nigeria by Tombowua (2013) also found similar challenges facing ECD institutions. Notable among them were ineffective supervision, low teacher quality, low staff to pupil ratio, poor salary, negligence on the part of government among others. Mack (2016) revealed the use of teacher-centred pedagogical methods, salaries of teachers which fluctuates each month, low teacher-child ratio, lack of resources among others.

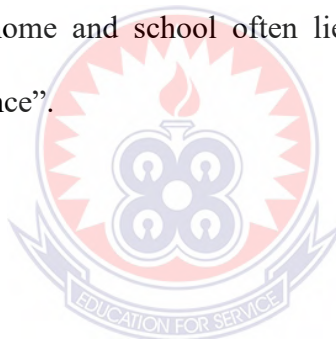
4.6 Results of Findings

With respect to teachers' knowledge of the preschool curriculum, majority of the respondents, including headteachers, teachers and attendants, had a broad knowledge in the area of preschool education and think the curriculum is appropriate for the young children. This enabled teachers to have an extensive knowledge of the subject matter taught to young children. Besides, the findings show that majority of the head teachers, teachers, and attendants had academic qualifications below degree level, which in a way affects service they rendered to preschool children. The research clearly showed that most of the teachers in private sector had very low academic credentials.

It was again revealed from the findings that an average percentage of the respondents attended organized in-service educational programmes. This makes the efforts of the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) and other non-governmental agencies futile as seen in the literature review. Besides, it came to light that most of the respondents used teaching learning methods and materials to instruct the young children. This promotes and improves the care and development services they render

to the young ones. These findings are not in tune with what said in the literature review by Mack (2016) that “some preschool teachers in Africa, Ghana specifically, tend to copy methods from their school days in teaching and the young ones”. In short, “teacher centred method”.

Finally, the analysis revealed that the interpersonal relationship that existed between teachers and teachers as well as teachers and parents was non-interactive (unfriendly) one. Inevitably, this may possibly affect teachers’ ability to provide proper care and development to the young children. In relation to this, Wang and Barrett (2013) added that “the good school should become an extension of the child’s home or family rather than a substitute, and therefore, it should cooperate positively with parents. Lack of understanding between home and school often lies at the root of children’s poor adjustment and performance”.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the research made and conclusion drawn out of the research. It also gives some recommendations for curbing the challenges that preschool teachers face and suggestions for future research.

5.1 Summary

The research began with finding the challenges that early childhood care and development teachers in some selected schools in Lower Manya Krobo District face. It was due to the fact that most preschool teachers seemed not to be adequately equipped and know the way to care for and help develop the preschool children.

The study specifically sought to find out the teacher's knowledge about the preschool curriculum. It also looked at the knowledge base of the preschool teachers and caregivers. Again, it looked at the best interpersonal relationship that must exist in a preschool that will enhance children's development. A review of related literature on the challenges of early childhood care and development teachers face was done to help the researcher make reasonable findings from the study. The instruments used in the collection of data was questionnaire which was personally handed over to 42 respondents in their various schools after seeking permission from the Municipal Director through the respective head teachers. These questionnaires were administered and collected three days afterwards so as to give respondents enough

time to carefully think through and answer the questions. The data collected was analysed using frequency tables and percentages.

5.2 Conclusions

In the light of the findings the following conclusions could be drawn. Majority of the respondents studied the preschool curriculum and they thought it was appropriate for the level of the children. This helped teachers in the provision of quality early childhood care and development services to preschool children.

It was also revealed that most of the respondents had academic qualifications below degree level which in a way affect preschool education. Besides, it was also realized that majority of the respondents took little or no part in in-service education programmes. This as a result posed a challenge to their ability to care and help in the development of preschool children.

From the results, respondents proved that they had the requisite teaching and learning skills as well as the appropriate teaching and learning materials with which to instruct the children. Besides, most of the interpersonal relationship between teachers and teachers as well as teachers and parents, as shown from the results are non-interactive (unfriendly). That is, not having a cordial relationship and communicating freely between and among teachers and parents. However, interactive relationship which is the opposite of the non-interactive relationship is the best and should exist between teachers and parents. This enhances the care and development of these children.

The results also revealed major challenges which need to be addressed, such as inadequate trained personnel, lack of teaching and learning materials, inadequate infrastructure and poor supervision by government officials. Again, lack of staff motivation and lack of education on early childhood development

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the research findings from the study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Curriculum planners should collaborate with preschool head teachers, teachers and attendants in the planning of the preschool curriculum that is they should seek their opinions and involve them in the planning process.
2. The Ghana Education Service (GES) should make it a point to post or employ headteachers, teachers and attendants with higher academic qualifications in the field of early childhood education in preschool s.
3. Parents should also make the effort to interact with the teachers in order to know how their children are cared for and in effect contribute their quota to make it better.

5.4 Limitations

In an attempt to conduct this research using all the skills and carefully selected methods, the researcher still had some challenges that limited her during the research work. Some limitations are inadequate financial resources and time constraints. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to cover the entire nation.

5.5 Suggested Areas for Further Research

For future research, the researcher suggests the effect of pre-school teacher's inability to have adequate knowledge of the pre-school curriculum and its impact on teachers' performance.

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APPENDICES

A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT

A questionnaire to determine the challenges that preschool teachers face in early childhood care education.

The objective of this questionnaire is to determine the challenges preschool teachers face in caring for and developing the preschool child. All responses to this questionnaire will be treated confidentially. Tick and answer the following questions as appropriate:

SECTION A: Bio Data of Respondents

1. Name of school
.....
2. Status/position
.....
3. Age: 21 – 30 [] 31 – 40 [] 41 – 50 [] 51 – 60 []
4. Sex: Male [] Female []
5. Academic qualification: Preschool Certificate [] Cert. „A“ []
6. Diploma [] Degree [] Any other

SECTION B: Knowledge Level and Relationship between Teachers and Parents

7. Have you studied the preschool curriculum? Yes [] No []
8. Do you refer to the preschool syllabus when writing your lesson notes?
Yes [] No []
9. What are some of the topics in the curriculum which do not have textbooks?
A.
B.
C.
10. Do you think the curriculum is appropriate for preschool children?
Yes [] No [] Undecided []

11. Do you think something should be added or subtracted from the curriculum?
Yes [] No [] Undecided []
12. Do you have in-service education programmes?
Yes [] No [] Undecided []
13. How often do you have them?
14. How many so far have you had or attended?
1 – 3 [] 3 – 4 [] 5 or more []
15. Were they useful? Yes [] No []
16. For how long have you been teaching in your present school?
.....
17. How many pupils are in your class?
.....
18. What learning materials do you use in your class?
A.
B.
C.
19. What teaching methods do you use in your teaching?
.....
.....
.....
20. What are some of the play materials you have in your school centre?
.....
.....
21. How many subjects do you have on your school time-table?
6 [] 5 [] 4 [] 3 [] 2 []
22. What is the relationship that exists among teachers in the school?
Interactive [] Non-interactive [] Cordial []
23. Do you normally discuss unfamiliar topics with colleague teachers?
Yes [] No []
24. Are you able to find solutions to unfamiliar topics you discuss with colleagues?
25. As teachers, what relationship exists between you and the children's parents?
Cordial [] Interactive [] Non-interactive []

26. How did you involve parents in caring for the children?

.....

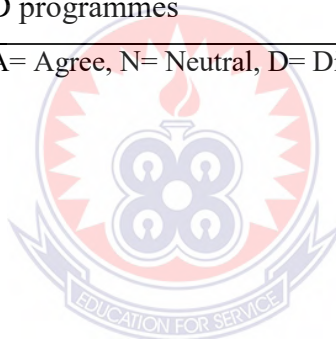
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SECTION C: Challenges Facing Early Childhood Teachers

Challenges	SA	A	N	D	SD
Inadequately trained personnel					
Lack of financial support from the government					
Lack of teaching and learning materials					
Inadequate infrastructure					
Poor supervision by government officials					
Lack of staff motivation					
Lack of education on ECD programmes					

Key: SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, N= Neutral, D= Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree



B

INTRODUCTORY LETTERS



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

P. O. Box 25, Winneba, Ghana
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ece@uew.edu.gh

FES/DECE/S.6

27th January, 2022

The Director
Ghana Education Service
P. O. Box 49
Odumasi Krobo

Dear Sir/Madam

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

We write to introduce to you **Ms. Millicent Sakyi** with index number **200050398** who is an M. Ed student in the above department. She was admitted in 2019/2020 academic year and has successfully completed her course work and is to embark on her thesis on the topic: *“The challenges of early childhood education to pre-school teachers in the Lower Manya Krobo District, Eastern Region”*.

Ms. Sakyi is to collect data for her thesis, and we would be most grateful if she could be given the needed assistance.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Samuel Oppong Frimpong'.

Samuel Oppong Frimpong, Ph. D
Ag. Head of Department



GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

In case of reply the number and date of
this letter should be quoted
My Ref. No. GES/ER/LMKM/L.166/V.10/55



MUNICIPAL EDUCATION OFFICE
P. O. BOX 49
ODUMASE – KROBO
23RD MARCH, 2022.

Your Ref No:

REPUBLIC OF GHANA

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

MS. MILLICENT SAKYI

(UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA)

Ms. Millicent Sakyi is an M. Ed student at the above-named university.

She is carrying out a data collection/research in selected Kindergarten Schools in our municipality on the topic: *'The Challenges of early childhood education to pre-school teachers in lower Manya Krobo District, Eastern Region'*. I would be grateful if you could grant her the needed assistance and cooperation for this study.

Thank you.



.....
MR. WILLIAMS KWAKU ODOI
MUNICIPAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
LOWER MANYA KROBO

**MUN. DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
LOWER MANYA
ODUMASE KROBO**

**HEADTEACHERS
SELECTED KINDERGARTEN SCHOOLS
LOWER MANYA KROBO**