

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN
SOME SELECTED BASIC SCHOOLS IN THE AMENFI EAST DISTRICT**

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Faculty of Educational Studies, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of
Post Graduate Diploma in Education
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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, **Abigail Seyram Salah**, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:



SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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

Supervisor: Mr. Samuel Richard Ziggah

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my siblings Bright Salah Freduah, Doreen Akua Salah and Evans Salah.



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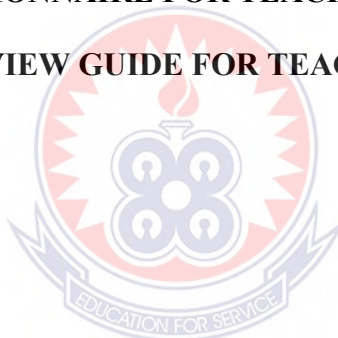
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ABSTRACT

A cross-sectional survey involving ninety (90) teachers from a population of one hundred and twenty (120) classroom and head teachers in some basic schools was conducted to investigate classroom teachers' attitudes toward inclusion of children with special educational needs in the inclusive basic schools within the Amenfi East District. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, namely frequency distribution tables and percentages. Most respondents said that children with disabilities needed more attention from their teachers; nonetheless, children with disabilities should not be included in traditional classroom settings alongside other children. More than half of the teachers responded that if they had their way, they would avoid teaching impaired kids, despite the fact that they are naturally thrilled to meet children with disabilities who want to study with other students. Less than half of the instructors said they try to encourage co-teachers to attention to the needs of disabled children as much as possible since all children have equal rights. Gender, prior experiences, encouragement from head teachers and special needs education coordinators, and availability to educational resources were found as factors impacting classroom teachers' views toward inclusive education in the district, according to the research. Teachers reported difficulty in implementing inclusive education due to a lack of evaluation, time allocation, training, teaching, and learning materials. The main recommendations are to conduct more research into the benefits of professional development and training, to provide adequate support and resources, and to provide intensive training on teaching special needs children in an inclusive setting so that they can respond effectively to the needs of all children in the class.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Globally, educational systems are undergoing significant changes, one of which is connected to a rise in the variety of school populations. This implies that in many nations, the educational system is increasingly accountable for including huge numbers of students with various needs making educational systems increasingly diverse. To put it another way, schools are growing more varied in terms of kids' skills and limitations (Forlin, 1995)

Inclusion is a widely accepted programme according to United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2005). Gadagbui (2008) opines that inclusive education ensures the participation of all students in schooling and involves restructuring the culture, policies and practices in schools so that they can respond to the diverse needs of students in their localities. The goal of inclusive education is to break down barriers that separate general and special education and make the included students feel liked and become members of the general education classroom. This provides the individual students with special needs, opportunities and confidence in learning independent concepts, skills and strategies. The fundamental principle of the inclusive education is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. As such inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different learning needs, pace and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnership with their communities (Gadagbui, 2008).

In 2003/2004, inclusive education, for the first time, was introduced in the Ghanaian schools under a pilot project, and in 2008, there were 129 schools adapting inclusive education. These schools are called inclusive schools and the purpose was to give disabilities and disadvantaged children the opportunity to receive education in general schools (Agbenyega, 2007). In Agbenyega's view, the Education for All (EFA) and Salamanca Agenda has led to the introduction of inclusive education (IE) in the 1990s in Ghana. A policy document was developed by the Government – Ministry of Education supported by UNICEF, STAR Ghana and Ghana Blind Union to serve as a guide towards achieving the goal of Inclusive Education. This policy documents also guides the practise of Inclusive Education in Ghana. Special Education Need Policy is also one of the policies developed to promote Inclusive Education.

Timothy and Agbenyega (2018) found that school heads and teachers' willingness and unwillingness to include children with disabilities in their classrooms is a result of personal and school related factors. Factors identified as personal are related to teachers' behaviour, competencies and skills as well as experiences, while school related factors include school administration and organisation as well as availability of resources. The authors recommended that more training of teachers and adequate support with resources and material will enhance school head and teachers' ability to manage diverse needs of students to increase learning outcomes. One of the most significant factors that allow for successful inclusion of special education needs pupils into the general education programme is the teacher acceptance to teach learners with disabilities and the support from school heads (Ainscow & Miles, 2008).

In the Amenfi East District, for instance, there are few special education resource teachers attached to selected public schools who work hand in hand with general education teachers and are responsible for teaching and meeting the learning needs of the special need children in each classrooms. The special education resource teachers are trained to operate in the inclusive schools, where they serve children with their specific categories of disabilities whilst regular classroom teachers are trained to operate in regular education classrooms. Gadagbui (2008) was of the view that unless all teachers are fully prepared inclusive, education will not be realized. This suggests that teachers' attitudes are critical in ensuring the success of inclusive practices since teachers' acceptance of the policy of inclusion is likely to affect their commitment to implementing it.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) released a report in 2017 that stated Ghana had made strides in supporting inclusive education, particularly for kids with disabilities. Despite the fact that there has been significant advancement in this area, the study stressed the need for additional efforts to be taken to guarantee that children with disabilities have equal access to education and are not excluded from regular schools.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Many regular education teachers who feel unprepared and fearful to work with learners with disabilities in regular classes display frustration, anger and negative attitudes. Furthermore, access to resources and speciality support affects teachers' confidence and attitudes towards, inclusive education (Timothy & Agbenyega, 2018). Understanding of the attitudes and perception of teacher remains vital as teachers play a key role towards making inclusive education a reality. For example, a study by Ocloo and Subbey (2008)

researched basic education teachers' attitude toward inclusive education in the Hohoe District and discovered that teachers attitudes toward inclusive education were not encouraging.

However, no study has been carried out on teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the inclusive schools in the Amenfi East District and how they treat these children in their classrooms. It is in the light of this that this current study sought to investigate the perception of teachers toward inclusive education in basic schools in the Amenfi East District.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the perceptions of teachers toward inclusive education in basic schools in the Amenfi East District.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

- a. Find out classroom teachers' views toward children with disabilities in inclusive schools in the Amenfi East District.
- b. Find out how attitudes of classroom teachers influence their teaching of special needs children in inclusive schools in the Amenfi East District.
- c. Identify factors influencing the attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education in the Amenfi East District.
- d. Find the challenges classroom teachers face in teaching special needs children in the Amenfi East District.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the views of classroom teachers towards children with disabilities in selected inclusive schools in the Amenfi East District?
2. How do classroom teachers' attitudes influence their teaching of special needs children in basic inclusive schools in the Amenfi East District?
3. Which factors influence the attitudes of classroom teachers towards inclusive education in the Amenfi East District?
4. What measures can be put in place to minimize or eliminate classroom teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education in the Amenfi East District?
5. What are the challenges faced by classroom teachers in educating children with special needs in inclusive basic schools in the Amenfi East District?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will help stakeholders of education, including the Amenfi East District Directorate of Education to appreciate the challenges teachers face regarding inclusive education in basic schools in the district. The findings will identify the perceptions and challenges of teachers who teach pupils with special needs for the District Directorate of Education to provide the necessary working environment, training, and support services that will enhance inclusive education in the district. Also, the study is expected to generate interest in other researchers to undertake similar studies in other districts which will increase awareness of stakeholders to the subject area. Finally the study will contribute to the existing literature in the area of study.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

This study was conducted in six (6) selected public inclusive basic schools in the Amenfi East District of the Western Region. This study was conceptually delimited to the attitudes of classroom teachers towards inclusive education in the Amenfi East District. Hence, the findings of this study will be limited to classroom teachers in this district only. Teachers were randomly selected so their views expressed will be representative of those of the larger population of classroom teachers in public inclusive basic schools in Ghana.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Education may be defined as the process of imparting knowledge, skills, values, norms and culture from one generation to another in a society. In the context of this study education is the process of receiving or imparting structured instruction, particularly in a school setting.

Perception in this study refers to attitudes/behaviour of people.

Inclusion education: Inclusion according to UNESCO (2013) is associated with commitment to the term “Education for all” by identifying the requirement and urgency of providing education for all children, youth and adults with Special Needs Education. In the context of this study inclusion is the action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure.

Children with disabilities refers to a wide range of disabilities and conditions that place limitations on children's learning of school tasks.

1.9 Organisation of the Study

The study was organised into five chapters. Chapter one deals with the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose and objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations, organization of the study. Chapter

two reviews the relevant related literature. Chapter three deals with the methodology which includes research approach, the research design, population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, validity and reliability, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations. Chapter four dealt with the data analysis and discussion of results. Finally, Chapter five discussed the summary of findings, conclusions and the recommendations of the study.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the related literature under the following sub-headings:

- a. Theoretical Framework.
- b. The Concept of Education
- c. The Concept of Inclusive Education
- d. The Concept of Attitude
- e. Factors Influencing Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education.
- f. Challenges Teachers face in Teaching of Children with Disability in Inclusive Schools
- g. Measures to Mitigate Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education.
- h. Summary of Related Literature

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan serves as the theoretical foundation for our investigation (2000). An empirically derived theory of human motivation and personality in social contexts, self-determination theory distinguishes between motivation that is autonomous and controlled (Van Lange, Kruglanski and Higgins, 2012). A self-determination continuum was established by Deci and Ryan (2000) to categorize motivating factors with varying levels of self-determination.

Deci and Ryan (2000) distinguished between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation as two different types of motivation. Activities carried out for their own sake, or for the enjoyment and satisfaction they bring, are referred to as intrinsically

motivated behaviors. Activities that are carried out as a means to an aim rather than for their own sake are referred to as extrinsic motivation.

Additionally, Deci and Ryan (2000) propose a self-determination continuum to describe different forms of extrinsic motivation that vary in their degree of autonomy or “self-determination.” From the least autonomous to the most autonomous; they are external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation. The first two types of extrinsic motivation fall into the category of controlled (non-autonomous) motivation, whereas the latter two go along with intrinsic motivation fall into the group of autonomous motivation. Both external and introjected regulations are controlled types of motivation since in both cases, individuals do not “identify with the value of a behaviour for their own self-selected goals” When a person engages in a behaviour because he/she finds it interesting (intrinsic motivation) or personally meaningful (identified and integrated regulation), then he/she is motivated by autonomous types of motivation. In contrast, if a person engages in a behaviour because he/she feels pressured by an external force, whether it is other people’s demand or threat, an imposed reward contingency (external regulation), or his/her own sense of guilt, anxiety or ego-involvement (introjected regulation), he/she is motivated by controlled types of motivation.

A motivation according to Ryan and Deci (2000) results from perceptions of helplessness or lack of self-efficacy, competence, or valuation of the activity. According to Ryan and Deci (2000) people have not only different amounts, but also different kinds of motivation. That is, different people have different orientations of motivation intrinsic or extrinsic as well as different levels of motivation. In context of this study, regular teachers are not motivated to teach special education needs children

in inclusive schools because of limited knowledge on inclusion, resource constraints, and other challenges. Hence, they have poor attitudes towards inclusion.

2.3 The Concept of Education

Education is the simple lifelong process of learning and knowing. Education not only enables individuals to put their potential to best use and do something productive in the upcoming future, but also plays a main role in shaping an individual to be a better, responsible citizen and an active member of the society. Education is a dynamic force in the life of an individual and influences his physical, mental, social, emotional, ethical, creative and spiritual development (Roul, 2015). It helps the individual in undergoing appropriate needed experiences into meaning, for his life activities. Socially, education promotes a sense of belonging, tolerance, respect for differences and generally build social cohesiveness and understanding. Education gives people the knowledge and skills they need to pursue their desired career and have a positive impact on the economy and society. Education strives to empower people to take on civic responsibilities and to know their rights.

2.4 The Concept of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education means that everyone should take part in society on an equal basis- academically, socially and culturally.

“Inclusion is both a process and a goal, where the educational institution should accommodate the individual’s aptitudes and needs in the best possible manner. This requires diversity and adaptation in the educational program to enable each individual to participate more and receive more benefits from being an active member of community” (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2008).

UNESCO (2005) elaborates on how an inclusive education system should be by stating that: An ‘inclusive’ education system can only be formed if normal schools become more inclusive. This is to say, if they must improve at educating all children in their

communities. The Conference proclaimed that: 'regular schools with an inclusive direction are the most active means of fighting discriminatory attitudes, building welcoming societies, establishing an inclusive society and attaining education for all.

Avoke (2008) defines inclusive education as a process of increasing the participation of all students in schools including those with disabilities. It is about restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in schools so that they respond to the diversity of students in their locality. According to Avoke (2008), inclusive education concept focuses on those groups which, in the past, have been excluded from educational opportunities. These groups include children living in poverty, those from ethnic and linguistic minorities, girls (in some societies), children from remote areas, those with disabilities or other special educational needs, the gifted and the talented children. The latter are often the most marginalized, both within education and society in general.

Mmbaga (2002) argues that inclusive education needs to be part of the whole school equal opportunity policy; in this case children with learning difficulties and needs would be incorporated into the curriculum and the school-learning environment. According to Ainscow and Miles (2008), inclusion means that students with special needs attend general school programmes and are enrolled in age-appropriate classes throughout their entire academic career.

Mmbaga (2002) gives some of the elements of inclusive education. Customary education was always being inculcated in the process of socialization, child rearing, formal/informal/non formal learning facilitated by parents, siblings, peers, elders, community leaders, artist and artisans and experts in such areas as language and oratory arbitrary and legal issues, health, plants, metallurgy, astronomy, and military science in fact by any adult. The process was non-discriminatory, functional and took place in and

was relevant to the local community. These are also the current indicators of inclusive education. According to Ocloo and Subbey (2008) an inclusive school should have the following characteristics: the use of adaptation of teaching and learning materials, flexible curriculum, supportive methodologies to students with learning barriers, proper organization of the classes, examination system and friendly physical environment and infrastructure. Furthermore, the authors stress some factors to be fixed in inclusive education that, education needs to be non-discriminatory in terms of disability, culture and gender, it should involve all in the community with no exceptions, students should have equal rights to access the culturally valued curriculum as full time appropriate regular classroom and there should be an emphasis on diversity rather than assimilation (Ocloo & Subbey, 2008).

Education is a fundamental right of every child. Some children experience difficulties in school, ranging from problems with concentration, learning, language, and perception to problems with behaviour and/or making and keeping friends. Regular education is designed to meet the needs of average learners. Children with disabilities may not profit fully from the regular classroom experiences. Due to the inclusion movement in education, students with disabilities are attending public school with typically developing peers. These students are also attending general education classes together. In the past, students with disabilities were taught in separate classrooms, and in some cases separate schools. The transition to inclusive education has not been easy for these two diverse groups of students, both academically and socially. For many reasons, students with disabilities have socialization issues. Many have behaviour problems or act inappropriately in social situations which calls for effective behavioural management strategies by teachers. These types of behaviours are disconcerting to typically developing children who do not have experience interacting with individuals

with disabilities. This can make having peers with disabilities in the classroom an uncomfortable experience for many students. This experience can be equally uncomfortable for students with disabilities who are lonely and depressed because they are unable to make friends in their classes. Many of these students do not understand why they have so much trouble socializing. Unfortunately, they do understand what it feels like to be rejected. The emotional pain from rejection and friendlessness can have damaging consequences on the psychosocial development of children. These consequences can perpetuate throughout adolescence and into adulthood.

However, due to increasing demands on teachers to raise achievement scores on statewide testing, little time remains to provide social skills instruction. Life skills and social skills training programs have been placed on the backburner in special education and have been replaced with an emphasis on raising test scores. While student academic achievement is a crucial component of special education, behavioural management, life skills and social skills training are areas that are necessary to promote a healthy and successful life after the school years are over.

Inclusion provides opportunities for the development of appropriate attitudes towards people with a range of disabilities. Exposure to students of all types on a daily basis allows typical students to see that, just like themselves, students with disabilities have strengths and weakness, and good days and bad days (Westwood & Graham 2003). Research has long established that changing attitudes towards people with disabilities requires, both, information about these disabilities and experience with people with disabilities (Bandy & Boyer 1994). Inclusion facilitates both of these requirements. With the appropriate supports in place, students with intellectual disabilities can achieve a high quality of life in many different aspects. Curriculum and instruction must

be carefully modified to help these students reach their potential in both academics and other functional areas such as independent living. While these students will have limitations in many adaptive behaviours, these limitations will co-exist alongside strengths in other areas within the individual. Independence and self-reliance should always be primary goals of all instructional strategies employed with students with intellectual disabilities.

Students with special needs have a wide range of needs and most exhibit behavioural problems. Training them to overcome the limitations in adaptive behaviour is the primary aim of any individual who is working for persons with Intellectual disability. A few of them also have behavioural problems posing challenges to the educator. A problem or a challenging behaviour in the individual interferes with his acquiring new skills or strengthening old skills or it interferes in someone else's activities. It is important to manage problems in behaviour in children because problem behaviours may interfere with learning, social acceptance, harm the child or others and at severe level they contribute to the burden of caregiving and also institutionalization. To be successful in an inclusive settings intellectually disabled students need to demonstrate classroom behaviours that are consistent with teacher's demands and expectations and that promote socializations with peers (Kauffman, Lloyd and McGee, 2015).

Appropriate social and behavioural skills will allow intellectually disabled to fully integrate into the social and behavioural skills will allow intellectually disabled to fully integrate into the social fabric of the class, the school, and the community. Unfortunately, due to factors both internal and external to the classroom, intellectually disabled students may exhibit behaviours that interfere with their learning and socialization and disrupt the learning environment (Kauffman, Lloyd and McGee,

2015). Therefore, teachers may need to employ a variety of strategies to increase appropriate and decrease inappropriate social and behaviour skills. So, the inclusive education programme should focus on establishing and maintaining positive peer relationship of the children with intellectual disability.

The emotional pain from rejection and friendlessness can have damaging consequences on the psychosocial development of children. These consequences can perpetuate throughout adolescence and into adulthood. In view of this, the study seeks to investigate teachers' behavioural management strategies that are useful for learners with intellectual disability. However, due to increasing demands on teachers to raise achievement scores on state-wide testing, little time remains to provide social skills instruction. Life skills and social skills training programs have been placed on the backburner in special education and have been replaced with an emphasis on raising test scores. While student academic achievement is a crucial component of special education, behavioural management, life skills and social skills training are areas that are necessary to promote a healthy and successful life after the school years are over.

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students reach their potential in both academics and other functional areas such as independent living. While these students will have limitations in many adaptive behaviours, these limitations will co-exist alongside strengths in other areas within the individual. Independence and self-reliance should always be primary goals of all instructional strategies employed with students with special needs.

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Therefore, teachers may need to employ a variety of strategies to increase appropriate and decrease inappropriate social and behaviour skills. So, the inclusive education programme should focus on establishing and maintaining positive peer relationship of the children with intellectual disability. Strengthening the capacity of the education system as an overall principle which should guide all education policies and practices, starting from the fact that education is a basic human right and the foundation for a more just and equal society. Inclusive education acknowledges and respects differences

in children: age, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, HIV and TB status (Gadagbui, 2008).

Inclusive education practice will be generally defined as the practice where: The lessons correspond to the diversity of students, which all students have access to teachers plan, teach and assess their lessons in collaboration, teachers are interested and support the participation and learning of all students, parents and the community is used as a source of support in the classroom (Acedo et al, 2009). Recent studies show that inclusive education provides the best opportunities to support the development for people with disabilities (Thomas & Loxley, 2001).

2.4.1 Inclusive Education in Ghana

The cost of special education per child is too high for most countries including Ghana. The need to develop a more affordable system which will provide quality education for all children, hence inclusive education is vital. (Wade, 2000). In Ghana, education of children and youth with disabilities started in 1936 and led to the establishment of a school for the blind at Akropong-Akwapim in 1946. Other Schools were built for the deaf and the intellectually disabled in the sixties. These schools were mostly segregated. The children grew up with their peers and developed a common culture. However, the system faced some challenges such as:

- The schools were usually not available in the child's immediate environment
- The expertise was only available for a small group of children
- System of teaching was very expensive. It was therefore not affordable (Gadagbui, 2008).

Gadagbui (2008), states that after 1951–Accelerated Educational Plan and the 1961 Educational Act for free education resulted in increases in basic enrolment. Then the

Jomtien World Conference of Education in 1990 set the goal of Education for all. UNESCO alongside with other UN Agencies and NGOs worked towards the achievement of this goal together with the efforts made at the country level. For example, the 1992 Constitution had emphasized the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE - 1995) which also increased access to basic schools. It has been observed that though FCUBE had provided access to a lot of children to attend school, this did not provide what it takes to run an effective inclusive education. Rather, access to special schools was possible for some and those integrated had no equal opportunity. Society or educational systems had not changed, the child was rather expected to change – to have hearing aid; the teacher or peer are not expected to learn to sign; the child must pass the standardized test in class to be promoted or if he fails to, he repeats or drops out. Contributions of UNESCO Teacher Education Resource Pack of 1995/96 started with Education of Teacher of Training Colleges as Trainer of Trainers at Saltpond. Series of workshops were held in many parts of the country to impact quality teaching for all children of diverse abilities in regular schools.

Adaptation of Inclusive Education by Ministry of Education and GES

In the light of global developments, the Ministry of Education pursued the right to quality education having participated in the Salamanca and Dakar Conferences hence the Ghana Education Service in its Education Strategic Plan of 2003 – 2015 adapted Inclusive Education. (Lewis & Doorlag, 2017). The strategic plan for inclusive focuses on how best to create access for children in Ghana to have their education without any difficulty. Under the Policy, the target is to increase access, participation in education and training and the related policy objective (Equitable Access). To achieve this target, the strategies identified were to:

- i. Provide training for all teachers in Special Education.
- ii. Re-design school infrastructure to facilitate the accommodation of pupil/students with special needs.
- iii. Organize sensitization workshop for parents and children with special needs.
- iv. Incorporate training in special education into all teacher training College courses.
- v. Establish special education assessment centres in all districts.

The inclusion of mild to moderate children with disability into the mainstream started as a pilot project from 2003/04 with three regions: Central Region, Eastern Region, Greater Accra Region with Ten (10) Districts but now Northern Region and Volta Region are added to create an increase of 4 districts to the 10 regions initially created. Initially, Special Education Division and the Health Sector were part of the pilot implementation of the project again in collaboration with Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) initially but the VSO withdrew very early after 11/12 years in 2005 due to lack of funds (Gadagbui, 2008). The Inclusive Education Policy is the result of series of consultations and workshops among key stakeholders in the delivery of education in Ghana. The Policy document takes its source from national legal documents including the 1992 Constitution of the republic of Ghana: the Ghana shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA), the Education Strategic Plan (2010-2020), the disability Act, the Education Act Among others. The document on education strategic plan was founded on the premise that every child has the right and can learn. Hence, the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) model is the super structure upon which the policy is expected to deliver quality equitable education to all. The UDL is complemented by the Child Friendly Schools (CFS) model. Under the UDL and the

CFS model, the strategic focus of the policy has the overarching goal to redefine the delivery and management of education services to respond to the diverse needs of all pupils/students within the framework of Universal design for learning. The strategic focus includes improving equitable access to quality education for all children of diverse educational needs; provision of requisite teaching and learning materials; capacity development for professional and specialised teachers and managers as well as improvements in education service delivery (Wade, 2000).

Inclusive Education in the New Curriculum

The Ghana education strategic plan (2010-2020) stipulates that the Ministry of Education shall provide education for those with physical and mental impairments, orphans and those who are slow or fast learners by including them wherever possible, within the mainstream formal system or only when considered necessary within special unit or schools. (Inclusive education policy, 2013).

Considering this and other reasons the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NACCA) in partnership with the Ministry of Education designed the new standards-based curriculum to ensure the good quality of education and inclusiveness for all learners. It is for this reason that the new curriculum sets all the subject areas learners must be taught, how they should be taught, and how to assess them. Also, it provides a set of basic skills learners are to acquire and demonstrate as they progress from one curriculum stage to the other.

The curriculum and its related teachers' manual encourage the use of inclusive and gender-responsive pedagogy which placed learners at the centre of teaching and learning. Hence, all learners regardless of their gender can participate freely in every

learning activity. Thus, the new curriculum places much emphasis on inclusion and diversity.

2.4.2 Benefits of Inclusive Education

According to Avoke (2008) the benefits of inclusive education are numerous for both students with and without disabilities.

Benefits of Inclusion for Students with disabilities

1. Friendships
2. Increased social initiations, relationships, and networks
3. Peer role models for academic, social and behaviour skills
4. Increased achievement of goals
5. Greater access to general curriculum
6. Enhanced skill acquisition and generalization
7. Increased inclusion in future environments
8. Greater opportunities for interactions
9. Higher expectations
10. Increased school staff collaboration
11. Increased parent participation

Benefits of Inclusion for Students without Disabilities

1. Meaningful friendships
2. Increased appreciation and acceptance of individual differences
3. Increased understanding and acceptance of diversity
4. Respect for all people
5. Prepares all students for adult life in an inclusive society

6. Opportunities to master activities by practicing and teaching others
7. Greater academic outcomes
8. All students need are better met, greater resources for everyone

2.5 The Concept of Attitude

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, (2004) contend that attitudes may be seen to have three related components: cognitive (the idea or assumptions upon which the attitude is based), affective (feelings about the issue), and behavioural (a predisposition toward an action that corresponds with the assumption or belief). As a result, the formation and modification of teacher attitudes are important areas of education research (Weisel and Dror, 2006).

Cook, Tankersley, Cook & Landrum, (2000) note the need for positive teacher attitudes and for teachers to create a 'sense of belonging' to support effective inclusive practice. In relation to the assertion, they point out that teachers' attitudes directly affect their behaviour with students and so have a great influence on classroom climate and student outcomes.

According to Cook, Tankersley, Cook, and Landrum, (2000), training in special and inclusive education has consistently been found out to have influenced educators' attitudes either in a single course or through a content-infused approach.

In his view, Mahat (2008) suggests that the attitudes of mainstream teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities are influenced by past experiences (previous experience with teaching students with disabilities), previous knowledge (training in the field of inclusive education) and newly acquired knowledge (professional development or training modules).

Avramidis and Norwich (2002) noted that the importance of positive attitudes of beginning teachers in inclusive settings has been well documented. However, both pre-service and in-service courses that address the skills and the attitudes of teachers towards students with disabilities are frequently deemed insufficient by teachers (Westwood & Graham, 2003).

The Influence of Teachers' Attitude Towards Teaching of Children with Disability in Inclusive Schools

The Salamanca Statement highlights the need to provide education for all children in an inclusive school (UNESCO, 1994). As a result, the implementation of inclusive schools has been a goal in many countries (Leyser & Kirk, 2004). Inclusion is based on the concept of social justice; wherein all students are entitled to equal access to all educational opportunities, irrespective of disability or any form of disadvantage (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2005). In Australia, the Commonwealth and State educational governments advocate for the inclusion of children with disabilities within regular classrooms (UNESCO, 1994). Nevertheless, advocacy alone does not ensure that the policy is favourably accepted by those on the frontline of implementation, namely, classroom teachers. Studies have revealed that teacher attitudes and expectations are significant barriers to the successful implementation of inclusive classrooms (Avramidis and Norwich 2002) and equitable participation of all students (UNESCO; 1994)

Attitudes are conceptualised as relatively stable constructs comprising cognitive, affective, and behavioural components (Bizer, Barden and Petty, 2003). Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are often based on practical concerns about how inclusive education can be implemented, rather than be grounded in any particular ideology

(Burke & Sutherland 2004). Common practical concerns raised by teachers include: accommodating the individualized time demands of students with disability without disadvantaging other students in the classroom; being apprehensive of the quality and quantity of work output of children with disabilities; lacking adequate support services; and limited training and competence in supporting inclusive educational practice (Ellins & Porter, 2005)

The severity of the disability that teachers are required to accommodate within their classroom is inversely associated with their attitude towards inclusion. That is, the more severe the child's disability; the less positive their attitude is towards inclusion (Forlin & Chambers, 2011). The type of disability also appears to influence teachers' attitudes. For example, teachers were found to generally be more supportive of including children with physical and sensory disabilities than those with intellectual, learning, and behavioural disabilities (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002).

Teacher education is viewed to be pivotal in developing the affirmative attitudes and skills required for successful inclusion, with formal educational training being identified as one of the main factors that promote an inclusive attitude (Ellins & Porter, 2005). Similar findings have been found with trainee teachers (Westwood & Graham 2003), where the inclusion of a compulsory module on diversity in a post-graduate degree promoted having an inclusive attitude. Pedagogies that combine formal training and planned hands-on experience with people with disabilities have been shown to improve preparedness and positive attitudes towards inclusion (Westwood & Graham, 2003). Moreover, irrespective of degree type, trainee teachers had a better understanding of the potential of children with disabilities after completing a unit of study with a strong focus on inclusive education (Campbell, Gilmore & Cuskelly 2003).

However, some authors argue that improving knowledge of and confidence in inclusive education alone is insufficient in improving a positive attitude towards inclusion and reducing related anxiety. They highlight the finding that there is a gradual decline of positive attitudes towards inclusion in trainee teachers as they advance in their training years (Costello & Boyle, 2013). Perhaps an increased awareness of the challenges one is likely to face by including all students with disabilities might dampen teachers' openness towards being inclusive (Campbell, Gilmore & Cuskelly, 2003).

The influence of age, gender, and role on having an inclusive attitude is largely mixed. Some studies reported no significant effect of teachers' age on having an inclusive attitude (Costello & Boyle 2013). While others suggest training in inclusive practices significantly improves the attitudes of younger trainee teachers, but not older ones (Forlin, Loreman, Sharma and Earle, 2009). Female teacher trainees are reported to be more tolerant in implementing inclusive education. (Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden, 2000) while other studies reported no effect of gender (Alghazo, Dodeen, & Algaryouti 2003; Van Reusen , Shoho & Barker 2000). Following training, teachers with less experience have been shown to have a more positive attitude towards inclusion when compared with their more experienced counterparts (Campbell, Gilmore & Cuskelly, 2003). Conversely, some studies found that teachers who have been exposed to people with disabilities (i.e., friend or family member) were found to be more open to inclusion (Costello & Boyle, 2003) whereas other studies do not report any influence of prior exposure to disability (Alghazo, Dodeen & Algaryouti 2003). A recent cross-cultural study on trainee teachers' attitudes toward multiple aspects of diversity found that overall attitudes toward people who differed from them were 'predominantly acceptance' regarding disability, gender, and special talents; with over 80% of the

participating trainee teachers upholding a positive attitude (Moltó, Cristina, Florian, Rouse & Stough, 2010).

In recent years, there has been growing interest in studying the pragmatic side of implementing inclusive education by measuring teachers' sense of self-efficacy of implementing inclusive education (Sharma, Loreman & Forlin, 2012). Self-efficacy in teaching is the belief that one's teaching can influence how well all students learn, including those who are unmotivated or demanding. The importance of self-efficacy emerges from its cyclic nature, whereby proficiency in performance creates a new mastery experience which, in turn, influences self-efficacy beliefs (Sharma, Loreman & Forlin 2012). Empirical findings validate the associations between high self-efficacy in teachers and openness to implement varied instructional strategies for students of all ability levels, including those with learning difficulties (Chester & Beaudin, 1996) and more positive attitudes toward inclusive education (Meijer & Foster, 1988). Conversely, teachers with low self-efficacy in their teaching are more likely to see difficulties in learning to be attributable to the child (i.e., internal to the child) and less willing to adapt their teaching methods to suit the needs of students with learning difficulties (Weisel & Dror, 2006) Teachers with a higher efficacy attribute students' difficulties more to external factors than those with a lower efficacy, suggesting that teachers who feel more competent are more comfortable in accepting some responsibility for students' difficulties (Brady & Woolfson, 2008). Emerging evidence suggests that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs are a better predictor of the attributes they uphold regarding inclusive education than their role (i.e., whether a teacher works in a special, mainstream, or learning support setting (Brady & Woolfson, 2008).

Thus, while the impact of teacher attitudes on the implementation of inclusion policies is widely recognized, the factors shaping these attitudes are poorly understood. The current study aimed to identify the factors associated with primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of students with all disabilities in mainstream schools.

2.6 Factors Influencing Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education

Tait and Purdie (2000) opine that teachers' attitudes might be influenced by several factors which are, in many ways, interrelated. For example, in most integration attitude studies responses appeared to vary according to disabling conditions. In other words, the nature of the disabilities and/or educational problems presented have been noted to influence teachers' attitudes. They further postulate that teachers generally exhibit a more positive attitude towards the integration of children with physical and sensory impairments than to those with learning difficulties and emotional-behavioural difficulties (EBD).

A great deal of research regarding teacher characteristics has sought to determine the relationship between those characteristics and attitudes towards children with special needs. Researchers have explored a host of specific teacher variables, such as gender, age, years of teaching experience, grade level, contact with disabled persons and other personality factors, which might impact upon teacher acceptance of the inclusion principle (Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden, 2000).

Regarding gender, the evidence appears inconsistent; some researchers noted that female teachers had a greater tolerance level for integration and for special needs persons than did male teachers. Harvey (2006), for example, found that there was a marginal tendency for female teachers to express more positive attitudes towards the idea of integrating children with behaviour problems than male teachers.

Teaching experience is another teacher-related variable cited by several studies as having an influence on teachers' attitudes. Younger teachers and those with fewer years of experience have been found to be more supportive to integration (Clough and Lindsay, 1991). Forlin's (1995) study, for example, showed that acceptance of a child with a physical disability was highest among educators with less than six years of teaching and declined with experience for those with six to ten years of teaching. The most experienced educators (greater than 11 years of teaching) were the least accepting. Forlin (1995) also obtained a similar result for the integration of a child with intellectual disability. His study seemed to indicate that as educators gained experience in teaching, they became less accepting of integration.

Leyser and Kirk (2004) also found that, in general, teachers with 14 years or less teaching experience had a significantly higher positive score in their attitude to integration compared with those with more than 14 years. They found no significant differences in attitudes to integration among teachers whose teaching experience was between one and four years, five and nine years and ten and 14 years (no mention was made based on individual country). Another study by Harvey (1985) compared the willingness of teacher trainees and primary teachers to accept children with special educational needs in their classes. His findings indicated that there was a clear reluctance on the part of the more experienced primary teachers compared to teacher trainees in their willingness to integrate such children. In this respect, it would not be unreasonable to assume that newly qualified teachers hold positive attitudes towards integration when entering the professional arena. However, although the above studies indicated that younger teachers and those with fewer years of experience are more supportive of integration, other investigators have reported that teaching experience

was not significantly related to teachers' attitudes (Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden, 2000).

The variable grade level taught and its influence on teachers' attitudes towards integration has been the focus of several studies. A study by Leyser and Doorlag, (2004) found that senior high school teachers displayed significantly more positive attitudes towards integration than did junior high school and elementary school teachers, and junior high school teachers were significantly more positive than elementary school teachers. Salvia and Munson (1986), in their review, concluded that as children's age increased, teacher attitudes became less positive to integration, and attributed that to the fact that teachers of older children tend to be concerned more about subject-matter and less about individual children's differences.

Experience of contact with children with SEN or disabled persons was mentioned by several studies as an important variable in shaping teacher attitudes towards integration. Here, the 'contact hypothesis' suggests that as teachers implement inclusive programmes and therefore get closer to students with significant disabilities, their attitudes might become more positive (Beh-Pajooh, 1992). Janney, Snell, Beers, & Raynes (1995) found that experience with low ability children was an important contributing factor to their eventual acceptance by teachers. Already wary of reforms and overloaded with work, general education teachers' initial balancing of the anticipated high cost of integration against its uncertain benefit created hesitation or resistance. Following their implementation experiences, teachers re-evaluated the balance between the cost of teachers' time and energy as compared to the benefit for students and judged the integration effort successful.

Leyser et al. (1994) found that, overall, teachers with much experience with disabled persons had significantly more favorable attitudes towards integration than those with little or no experience. Stephens and Braun (1980), for example, found no significant correlation between reported contact with students with significant disabilities and teachers' attitudes towards integrating these students into regular classrooms. Surprisingly, there is evidence in the literature that social contact could even produce unfavourable attitudes; Forlin's (1995) study, for example, indicated that there were differences between teachers who were currently involved with the policy of inclusion and those who were not. Those not involved (but who were aware of the concept of inclusion) believed that coping with a child with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and with a mainstream child was equally stressful. Those who were involved considered the stress of coping with the child with SEN to be greater than for dealing with a mainstream child. Thus, this study indicated that experience of a child with SEN might not promote favourable acceptance for inclusion, due to the stress factor.

Another factor which has attracted considerable attention is the knowledge about children with SEN gained through formal studies during pre- and in-service training. This was considered an important factor in improving teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of an inclusive policy. Without a coherent plan for teacher training in the educational needs of children with SEN, attempts to include these children in the mainstream would be difficult (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002).

The importance of training in the formation of positive attitudes towards integration was supported by the finding of Beh-Pajooch (1992), based on teachers in colleges. Both studied the attitudes of college teachers in the UK towards students with SEN and their integration into ordinary college courses. Their findings showed that college teachers

who had been trained to teach students with learning difficulties expressed more favourable attitudes and emotional reactions to students with SEN and their integration than did those who had no such training. Several other studies conducted in the USA by Van Reusen, Shoho, & Barker (2000) and in the UK by Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden, (2000) tend to reinforce the view that special education qualifications acquired from pre- or in-service courses were associated with less resistance to inclusive practices. Dickens-Smith (1995), for example, studied the attitudes of both regular and special educators towards inclusion (not integration). Her respondents were given an attitude survey before and after staff development. Both groups of respondents revealed more favourable attitudes towards inclusion after their in-service training than they did before, with regular education teachers showing the strongest positive attitude change. Dickens-Smith concluded that staff development is the key to the success of inclusion.

Recent researchers have identified another factor that influences not only teachers' reported attitudes towards inclusion, but their actual teaching styles and adaptations in heterogeneous classrooms; that is, their views about their responsibilities in dealing with the needs of students who are exceptional or at risk. For instance, Jordan, Lindsay and Stanovich (1997), found that teachers holding a 'pathognomonic' perspective, in which the teacher assumes that a disability is inherent in the individual student, differed in their teaching instruction from those closer to an 'interventionist' perspective, in which the teacher attributes student problems to an interaction between student and environment. Teachers with the most pathognomonic perspectives demonstrated the least effective interaction patterns, whereas those with interventionist perspectives engaged in many more academic interactions and persisted more in constructing student understanding.

There is considerable evidence that the school's ethos and the teachers' beliefs have a considerable impact on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion which, in turn, are translated into practice. It can be said that teachers who accept responsibility for teaching a wide diversity of students and feel confident in their instructional and management skills (because of training), can successfully implement inclusive programmes (Soodak, Podell & Lehman, 1998).

There have been a few studies of integration attitudes in relation to educators' wider personal beliefs (political outlook, socio-political views) and attitudes. Stephens & Braun (1980), in a US study, found that attitudes to integration were more positive when teachers believed that publicly funded schools should educate exceptional children.

In their comparative study of educators in Devon, England, and Arizona, USA, Thomas & Loxley (2001) found that educators with low scores on conservatism tended to have fewer negative attitudes to integration. Norwich (1994), in his comparative study of educators in rural and urban areas in Pennsylvania, USA, and Northampton shire, England, compared the relationships of integration attitudes to political outlook, socio-political views and other situational factors (contact with disability, professional position). In this study, integration attitudes were related to socio-political views only in the UK sample. Norwich concluded that while educators' socio-political or ideological beliefs and values have some relation to integration, attitudes cannot be considered as a strong predictor alone and other situational factors (provision in the two areas and cultural issues) needed to be taken into consideration.

2.6.2 Educational environment-related variables

Several studies have examined environmental factors and their influence in the formation of teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. One factor that has consistently been found to be associated with more positive attitudes is the availability of support services at the classroom and the school levels (Clough & Lindsay, 2013). Here, support could be seen as both physical (resources, teaching materials, IT equipment and restructured physical environment) and human (learning support assistants, special teachers, speech therapists).

Janney, Snell, Beers and Raynes (1995) found that the majority of teachers in their study were hesitant initially to accept children with SEN in their classes, because they anticipated a worst-case scenario where both they and the children with SEN would be left to fend for themselves. Later, these teachers were receptive towards these children after having received necessary and sufficient support. Respondents acknowledged that the support received from the relevant authorities was instrumental in allaying their apprehension that part-time integration would result in extraordinary workloads. A significant restructuring of the physical environment (making buildings accessible to students with physical disabilities) and the provision of adequate and appropriate equipment and materials were also instrumental in the development of these positive attitudes. Smaller classes (Clough & Lindsay, 1991) have also been found to generate positive attitudes towards inclusion.

Another type of support that of the continuous encouragement from the head teacher, has also been mentioned in several studies as being instrumental in the creation of positive attitudes to inclusion. In Janney, Snell, Beers and Raynes (1995), the enthusiastic support from head teachers was an attributing factor to the success of the

part-time integration programme in the schools they studied. Support from specialist resource teachers was also identified as an important factor in shaping positive teacher attitudes to inclusion (Kauffman, Lloyd and McGee, 2015). Janney, Snell, Beers and Raynes (1995) found that one of the factors cited by their respondents that had contributed to the success of the part-time integration programme they were implementing was the existence of effective support, both interpersonal and task related, provided by the school's special education teachers. Clough and Lindsay (1991) argued that special education specialist teachers are important co-workers in providing advice to subject specialist teachers on how to make a particular subject accessible to children with SEN.

The importance of support from specialist resource teachers was also highlighted in another study conducted in the USA by Minke, Bear, Deemer & Graffin (1996), which compared the attitudes towards inclusion and the perceptions of self-efficacy, competence, teaching satisfaction and judgments of the appropriateness of teaching adaptation of regular education teachers who co-taught with resource teachers in inclusive classrooms and their counterparts in traditional classrooms. Regular teachers in inclusive classrooms reported positive attitudes towards inclusion and high perceptions of self-efficacy, competence, and satisfaction. Regular teachers in traditional classrooms held fewer positive perceptions and viewed classroom adaptations as less feasible, and less frequently used, than did teachers in classrooms with the protected resource of two teachers.

Other aspects of the mainstream school environment have also been identified in the above studies as being obstacles that have to be surmounted in order for inclusive programmes to be successfully implemented; for example, more often than not, teachers

report overcrowded classrooms, insufficient pre-prepared materials (differentiated packages), insufficient time to plan with learning support team, lack of a modified/flexible timetable, inadequately available support from external specialists and lack of regular INSET (Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden, 2000).

In the Myles and Simpson (1989) investigation, for example, 48 out of 55 teachers (87.2%) reported their perceived need for 1 hour or more of daily planning time for inclusion. It could be said that mainstream teachers feel that implementing an inclusive programme would involve a considerable workload on their part, as a result of increased planning for meeting the needs of a very diverse population. In this respect, human and physical support can be seen as important factors in generating positive attitudes among mainstream teachers towards the inclusion of children with SEN.

2.7 Challenges Teachers face in Teaching of Children with Disability in Inclusive Schools

- **Lack of experience in an inclusion setting.** Some teachers have not been exposed to special needs classrooms and this can be a disadvantage. Educators need to coordinate efforts and understand the needs of the classroom in terms of developing skills and lesson plans. (Avramidis and Norwich 2002)
- **Lack of experience dealing with severe and profound disabilities.** Students with severe and profound disabilities require more adaptation and medical attention than the average student. Teachers must be skilled in handling severe disabilities and create lesson plans based on individual abilities and adhere to dietary needs of the child. Lack of experience can lead to the child not progressing with skills or cause of adverse medical incidents. (Ross-Hill, 2009)

- **Including all students in all activities.** Special needs inclusion classrooms must be able to involve its students in all classroom activities. Teachers need to address how the classroom will communicate with each other and encourage participation. If there is a lack of adaptive equipment or adaptive communication and language tools, it makes it difficult for teachers to function as a united classroom (Burke & Sutherland, 2004)
- **Educating students with less severe disabilities.** When there are children of all abilities in the classroom, both physical and academic, children in the middle can easily fall between the cracks. These children can have learning disabilities, hearing impairments, ADD or language delays to name a few. Providing the right amount of attention and adaptation can be challenging, especially if there is a higher teacher to student ratio (Forlin & Chambers, 2011).
- **Shortage of teacher aides.** Normally, inclusive classrooms have a regular educator and special needs educator. Due to the nature of the classroom and size, it is imperative that there be an appropriate number of teacher aides to assist the teachers with day-to-day activities. (Burke & Sutherland, 2004).
- **Teaching compassion to students.** Not all students have been exposed to persons with special needs and this becomes a challenge to teachers. Teachers must not tolerate insensitiveness and cruelty and teach that all students are to be treated with respect, regardless of ability (Ross-Hill, 2009).
- **Dealing with parents of “typically developing” students.** As some students are not used to dealing with persons with special needs, parents are no exception. Teachers need to convey to parents how the classroom is conducted and that all educational needs will be met (Ross-Hill, 2009).

- **Individualized lesson plans.** Because there are varying abilities in the classroom, teachers can be challenged to address individual academic needs based on ability. (Westwood & Graham, 2003)
- **Coordinating therapies.** A special needs inclusion classroom needs to be well organized and allow for students to attend therapy sessions. However, this becomes a challenge in planning day to day activities and keeping all students engaged and learning. (Westwood & Graham, 2003)

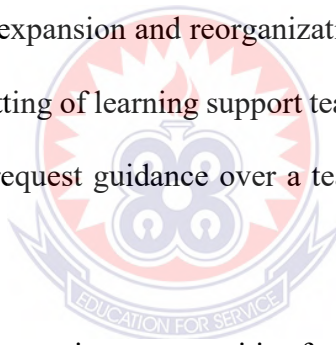
Although many schools are moving towards special needs inclusive classrooms, there are a number of issues or challenges that need to be addressed. Preparing and training a teacher is the first step in making special needs inclusive classrooms a success.

2.9 Summary of the Related Literature Review

The summary of the related literature review reveals that teachers, although positive towards the general philosophy of inclusive education, do not share a ‘total inclusion’ approach to special educational provision. Instead, they hold differing attitudes about school placements, based largely upon the nature of the students’ disabilities. Teachers are more willing to include students with mild disabilities or physical/sensory impairments than students with more complex needs. In particular, there is enough evidence to suggest that, in the case of the more severe learning needs and behavioural difficulties, teachers hold negative attitudes to the implementation of inclusion. Given the consistency of this trend both across countries and across time, governments wishing to promote inclusive education have a difficult task convincing their educators about the feasibility of the policy. Consequently, it seems imperative that if the process is carefully planned and well supported, teachers’ initial reservations or concerns can

be overcome. That would require, in turn, a careful and flexible allocation of the available resources based on the severity of needs represented in the inclusive settings.

Another conclusion of the related literature was that the evidence regarding teacher-related variables is inconsistent and none of them alone could be regarded as a strong predictor of educator attitudes. On the other hand, there is sufficient consistency regarding educational environment-related variables, which suggests that a significant restructuring in the mainstream school environment should take place before students with significant disabilities are included. Again, it seems reasonable to conclude here that with the provision of more resources and support, teachers' attitudes could become more positive. The primary implication for practice is the setting of appropriate external support systems (and the expansion and reorganization of the existing ones) operating across schools, and the setting of learning support teams within the schools, supporting individual teachers who request guidance over a teaching concern relating to special educational needs.



Further, the provision of extensive opportunities for training at the pre- and in-service levels should be seen as a top priority for the policy-makers. The assumption here is that if teachers receive assistance in mastering the skills required to implement an innovation such as 'inclusion', they will become more committed to the change (and more effective as their efforts and skills increase. In this respect, it could be concluded here that while teachers are likely to show initial resistance to any innovative policy, their attitudes might become more positive later on, as they develop the necessary expertise to implement the policy and experience the success of their efforts. This indicates the necessity of adopting a gradual approach in the implementation of

inclusion, and for this reorganization to succeed, careful planning, monitoring and review of the process is required.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter deals with the methodology of the study which includes research approach, research design, population sample and sampling procedures, instrumentation, reliability, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations.

This method is said to be employed by researchers to neutralise or minimise to some extent, the existing weaknesses associated with both the quantitative and qualitative research approaches by capitalizing on their various strengths (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

The chapter also discusses the research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentation, validity and reliability of instruments, data collection procedures, method of data analysis procedures and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Approach

The quantitative method was used in this study along with a deductive strategy. It employed the creation of quantifiable responses (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The quantitative strategy is utilised because the investigator is interested in finding out relationships and patterns among variables of interest in the study as against the qualitative approach which gives detailed and comprehensive description of phenomenon

3.3 Research Design

The design employed for the study is a cross sectional survey employing quantitative approach. This involved the collection of data to test a hypothesis or answer research questions concerning the subject of study (Creswell, 2014) through questionnaires or/

and interviews (Orodho, 2005). According to Gay (2010), cross sectional survey design studies can provide information about the naturally occurring behaviour, attitudes or other characteristics of a particular group by collecting data from members of a population for the purpose of establishing the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables.

The cross-sectional survey design was selected for this study because surveys are frequently used to collect information on attitudes and behaviours of phenomena (Polland, 2005). This method (survey) was supported by Newman (2000) who holds the belief that survey research uses a smaller group of selected people but generalizes the results to the whole group from which the small group was chosen. A cross sectional survey design was used because it is fact finding in nature. Cross-sectional studies are usually relatively inexpensive and allow researchers to collect a great deal of information quite quickly (These, 2014). Data is often obtained using self-report surveys and researchers are then able to amass large amounts of information from a large pool of participants.

3.4 Population for the Study

The population for the study comprised ninety-two (92) classroom teachers and twenty-eight (28) head teachers in twenty (20) basic schools in the Amenfi East District of the Western Region of Ghana. The estimated target population for the selected schools was 120. One of the criteria used in selecting the schools was proximity of the schools to the parents and hence potentially pupils with special needs who might not want to be able to access education due to distance. Another criteria used to arrive at the selected schools were schools that have the full complement of the basic school (i.e. Kindergarten to JHS three) and under one detached head teacher. The selected schools

included Riis Presby, Japa D/A, Amens Model, Christ leading, Nkonya D/A, Dadieso L/A, Saa M/A, Saamang D/A, Adiembra M/A, Subriso D/A and Ankonsia D/A.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size of 92 teachers was arrived at using Krejcie and Morgan's Table for sample size determination (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970) from the selected public basic schools in the Amenfi East District using a population size of 120. A sample size out the population was used because the sample size provides all the information that would have been obtained from the entire population. Again, using the entire population increases resources in terms of time and finances howbeit providing no additional information.

In this study the purposive sampling strategy (Creswell, 2012) was used by intentionally selecting individuals and sites to learn or understand the phenomenon. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) also assert that purposive sampling enables researchers to handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment and typicality. In this way, the researcher builds up a sample that is satisfactory to specific needs. The purposive sampling technique was chosen because it is less costly and less time consuming and is free from bias, and prevents unnecessary and irrelevant items or units entering into the sample per chance. Purposive sampling technique gives better results if the investigator is unbiased and has the capacity of keen observation and sound judgment while ensuring intensive study of the selected items.

Purposive sampling technique was used to sample class teachers at the primary school and subject teachers at the Junior High Schools. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for this study since the focus of this study was targeting a category of teachers who were the respondents for the study. It was deemed that no other respondents could

better provide the relevant information for this study than from those in the classroom dealing with special needs children. The kindergarten through to the Junior High School Form 3 teachers were used because the pupils at this level can complain about their disability problems to their teachers for redress. Also, the teachers can identify any form of disability signs to be managed.

3.5 Instrumentation

Semi-structured interview guide and questionnaires were used to gather the necessary data from the teachers.

An interview guide was designed to capture the major themes of the study in mind. The use of an interview guide allowed flexibility in asking follow-up questions. Secondly, the researcher by using the instrument gets the opportunity to seek clarification through probing and expanding the responses of interviewees to ascertain their feelings and experiences (Kusi, 2012). Interview affords the opportunity for feedbacks or further explanation (Babbie, 2010). Though it is time consuming, interviews can help both the researcher and the respondents to clarify issues.

The interview guide allows for consequential interaction between the researcher and participants. Their advantage is that, while they are reasonably objective, they also permit a more thorough understanding of the respondents' opinions and reasons behind them than would be possible using questionnaire (Creswell, 2009).

3.5.2 Questionnaire

According to Jack and Norman (2003) there are two forms of questionnaire: closed-ended and open-ended. The closed-ended is also known as restricted or structured and calls for short, check-mark and require the respondent to provide "yes" / "no" responses or rank alternatives provided based on how one feels about the issue. The respondent's

choices are limited to the set of opinions. However, the open-ended questionnaire which is also termed as unrestricted or unstructured calls for a free response in the respondent's own words. The respondent frames and supplies the answers to the questions raised in the questionnaire.

The types of questionnaires used for the study would be both closed-ended and open-ended types. The questions were made up of two sections; the first section consisted of the bio- data of the respondents such as sex, age, marital status, educational qualification, teaching experience, number of pupils with disabilities in class and types of disabilities. The second section focused on investigating the teachers understanding of inclusive education as well as their attitude towards inclusive education.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

The content validity of the instruments was to be granted by experts in the area of inclusive education as well as the research supervisor who were scrutinize the items for their suitability before pre-test. Face validity was done by giving the instruments to colleague students for peer review. Indeed, their comments were considered for review of the questionnaires.

To ensure reliability of the research instruments, it was pilot tested on ten (10) classroom teachers of three public basic schools selected from the Amenfi East District. One week later, the test-retest technique was used. The same 10 teachers who took part in the first pilot trial were asked to answer same questions. The two results were compared for consistency. The pilot tested instrument offered the researcher an opportunity to identify some of the problems that will occur in the main study. This provided information on the necessary corrections to be made in the questions before

the main study was carried out. The pilot study conducted on the questionnaire returned a reliability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha (α) = 0.87.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Creswell (2009) advises researchers to sought and obtain permission from the authorities in charge of the site of the study because it involves a prolonged and extensive data collection. To collect data, an introductory letter was obtained from the Head, Educational Foundations Department, University of Education, Winneba. This was used to obtain permission from the District Director of Education and head teachers of the sampled schools in the Amenfi East District.

After the permission was granted, the researcher informed the participants of the impending interview and questionnaire. The interviewees were contacted to verify the appointment before engaging them. The face-to-face interview was done personally at the various schools, and on scheduled date and time. The interviews were tape recorded and played back to them and as well transcribed, coded and edited. Notes were taken to complement the taped data. Later the questionnaires were administered and collected soon after completion. Ninety out of the ninety-two administered questionnaires administered were duly completed and returned for analysis representing a return rate of 97.8%.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

Yin (2009) stated that before interpretation takes place, data should be analysed statistically and presented. For the qualitative (interview) data, responses by the respondents to each question was categorized into themes according to research questions. Hence, the qualitative data was analyzed thematically. Thematic organization and analysis are the process that identifies analyses and reports the

occurrence of themes in the data collected from the research areas. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis follows six basic steps.

- Familiarizing with the data through thoroughly reading the transcriptions. This helps the researcher to have in mind what exactly is in the data.
- Generation of initial codes. Putting labels or descriptions on a list of ideas developed from the transcription as already read by the researcher.
- Searching for themes. Related codes are organized under different themes.
- Reviewing the themes. The themes developed are reviewed for their relevance and legitimacy of being called themes.
- Defining and naming themes developed. Defining the overall content of the themes and the message it carries in it before producing a report
- Producing a report. Researcher is already satisfied with the themes developed.

The interview data was checked and presented in relation to the research questions. In reporting the information collected, some direct quotations were used. Reporting direct statements from research participants is important, because it helps to maintain the originality of data collected (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Also, researchers' views based on the participant's answers given were backed up by literatures reviewed.

In the analyses of the quantitative data, the questionnaires were categorized under themes with respect to the research questions. Editing and coding were made, after which, the data was entered into the computer using the Statistical Package for Social Science Software (SPSS version 21). The data was analysed using descriptive statistics involving mainly frequency distribution tables and percentages, bar, and pie charts.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are pertinent to this study because of the nature of the problem, the methods of data collection and the kind of persons serving as research participants. Protection and consent of participants and their responses were assured by obtaining due permission, protecting privacy, and ensuring confidentiality. In doing this, description of the study, the purpose, the possible benefits, and risks discussed with the participants. The researcher permitted the participants to freely withdraw or leave at any time if they deem it fit.

A statement of consent was given to participants to sign as evidence of their willingness to participate in the study. Panneerselvam (2004) advises that researchers should ensure that participants are protected from any physical or psychological harm that may arise from research procedures. In line with international best practices in education, I sought informed consent from participants for their participation. As a way of preventing plagiarism, all ideas, writings, drawings and other documents or intellectual property of other people were duly acknowledged.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the data analysis and discussion of the results. The data gathered by the questionnaire was analysed using frequencies and percentages.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section discusses the demographic characteristics of the teachers involved in the study. The parameters discussed include sex, age, marital status, academic status and length of teaching experience.

Table 1: Demographic data of teacher in relation to gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	39	43.3
Female	51	56.7
Total	90	100

Source: Field work (2021)

Table 1 shows the demographic data for sex of the respondents for the study. From Table 1, 39 (43.3%) were male while 51 (56.7 %) were females indicating that female teachers were most of the respondents. Rizzo and Sirotnik, (1991) noted that female teachers had a greater tolerance level for integration and for special needs persons than male teachers. Harvey (1985) also states that there was a marginal tendency for female teachers to express more positive attitudes towards the idea of integrating children with behaviour problems than male teachers. It implies that teachers in the Amenfi East District are likely to have a more favourable perception or attitude toward inclusive education.

Table 2: Demographic data of teacher in relation to Age

Range of Ages)	Frequency	Percentage
20 – 29 years	15	16.7%
30 – 39 years	45	50%
40 – 49 years	21	23.3%
50 + years	9	10%
Total	90	100%

Source: Field work (2021)

Table 2 shows the ages of respondents for the study. 15 (16.7%) were between the ages 20 and 29 years (young age). 45 (50%) fell within 30 to 39 years; (middle age), 21 (23.3%) are between the ages 40 and 49 years (middle age) while nine 9 (10%) were also above 50 years (old age). From the data most of the teachers fall within (young and middle age). There is an upsurge in young and middle age group engagement teaching activity at the Amenfi East due to the clamp down on galamsey activities in the area (Addah, 2014). According to Clough and Lindsay, (1991) younger teachers and those with fewer years of experience have been found to be more supportive to integration and inclusion therefore this will help increase the level of inclusion in the schools in the Amenfi East District.

Table 3: Demographic data of respondents in relation to marital status

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	12	13.3
Married	36	40.0
Divorced	30	33.3
Separated	3	3.3
Widowed	9	10.0
Total	90	100

Source: Field work data (2021)

Table 3 shows the marital status of the respondent. 12 (13.3%) were single, thirty six (40%) are married while 30 (33.3%) were divorced. 3 (3.3%) were separated and 9 (10%) were widowed. It indicates that most of the respondents were either married or divorced. On the variable, teacher's marital status, Kong (2008) states that single and married teachers had higher scores than those separated and divorced in the dimensions of job engagement, especially in the dimension of vigor and dedication. According to Zhang and Fang (1999) psychological problems such as separation and divorce affect teachers' dedication to duty. For Ayeop (2000), married teachers have higher job satisfaction compared to single teachers and those in the group of others (that is, separated and divorced). He further states students of the married and single teachers achieved higher scores, than those of separated and divorced teachers. From the argument it can be concluded that generally teachers in the Amenfi East District will have a positive attitude toward inclusive education since majority of the respondents fell in the married group and that group has the qualities it takes to be more tolerant and accepting of pupils with special and diverse needs.

Table 4: Academic status of respondents

Academic status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Diploma in education	27	30.0
First Degree	36	40.0
Masters	3	3.3
Postgraduate Diploma	24	26.7
Total	90	100

Source: Field work data (2021)

Table 4 presents the academic status of the respondents for this study. It was observed that 27 (30%) held Diploma certificate, 36 (40%) had obtained Bachelor's degree, 3 (3.3%) had Masters Degree certificate and 24 (26.7%) held Postgraduate Diploma. The

data obviously indicate that the greater percentage of respondents had obtained the requisite teaching qualification. Many research findings have established that teacher's teaching qualification is positively correlated with learning outcome. Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2014) found out that teachers' qualification contributed to the acceptance of students with diverse needs thus creating a conducive environment for inclusion. Hence the higher the qualification the more probable the teacher is to have a positive attitude toward inclusion.

Table 5: Teaching Experience of Teachers

Teaching Experience (years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 – 5	24	26.7
6 – 10	39	43.3
11 – 15	18	20
16 and above	6	6.7
Total	90	100

Source: Field work data (2021)

In finding out the teaching experience of the teachers, it was realized that 24 (26.7%) have been in the teaching profession from 1 to 5 years (Table 5). 39 (43.3%) have been in the teaching profession from 6 to 10 years. 18 (20%) have had 11-15 years teaching experience and 6 (6.7%) have had 16 years and above teaching experience. Forlin's (2003) study, for example, showed that acceptance of a child with a physical disability was highest among educators with less than six years of teaching and declined with experience for those with six to ten years of teaching. The most experienced educators (greater than 11 years of teaching) were the least accepting. Leyser and Kirk. (2004) also found that, in general, teachers with 14 years or less teaching experience had a significantly higher positive score in their attitude to integration compared with those with more than 14 years. The above argument is a result of those with longer teaching

experience finding it much difficult to accept the policy on inclusion in the educational system.

From the study it was realised that over 70% of the teachers have had at least 6 years teaching experience. This is a potential for good performance. These teachers can identify student's problems and be able to change methodology to aid effective teaching and learning making them have a positive attitude toward inclusion.

4.2 Analysis of Research Questions

Research question one: What are the views of classroom teachers in the Amenfi East District towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools?

This research question was addressed by answers from Questions 9 – 15 in the questionnaire. Majority of the respondents 57 (63.2%) believe children with disability need to be given special attention by their teachers, 32 (35.6%) disagreed. 1 (1.1%) was indecisive (Table 6). Chambers and Forlin (2010) define attitudes as a “learned, evaluative response about an object or an issue and a cumulative result of personal beliefs”. They add that beliefs influenced teacher attitudes to inclusive education that in turn, influence their intentions and behaviours. 35 (38.9%) of the respondents indicated that they wish they could spend more time teaching children with disabilities in my class/school, majority of them 53 (56.6%) thought otherwise. 4 (4.4%) were also indecisive. It was also evident that 36 (39.9%) said there is nothing wrong with including children with disabilities with other children in general class setting. Majority of them 52 (57.7%) felt it is not right to include children with disabilities with other children in general class setting. 2 (2.2%) were also indecisive. It was also discovered that 49 (54.4%) suggested that if they have their way, they will avoid teaching children with disabilities whilst 28 (42.2%) did not think so while 3 (3.3%) were indecisive.

Table 6: Views of teachers in Amenfi East District towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools.

Statements	A		SA		U		D		SD	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I believe children with disability need to be given special attention by their teachers	34	37.7	23	25.5	1	1.1	23	25.6	9	10
I wish I could spend more time teaching children with disabilities in my class/school	20	22.2	15	16.7	4	4.4	32	35.5	19	21.1
There is nothing wrong with including children with disabilities with other children in general class setting	14	15.5	22	24.4	2	2.2	30	33.3	22	24.4
If I have my way, I will avoid teaching children with disabilities	29	32.2	20	22.2	3	3.3	19	21.1	9	21.1
I naturally feel excited when I see children with disabilities that wants to learn with other students	33	36.6	27	30	1	1.1	15	16.7	14	15.5
I try as much as possible to encourage co-teachers to attend to the needs of children with disabilities	18	20	18	20	0	0	32	35.6	22	24.4
I believe all children (whether disabled or able should enjoy equal right from teachers)	40	44.4	36	40	2	2.2	10	11.1	2	2.2

Key: A=agree; SA= Strongly Agree; U= Undecided; SD = Strongly Disagree; D=Disagree
Source: Field work data (2021)

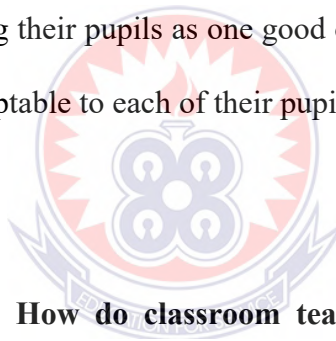
Majority of the teachers 60 (66.6%) disclosed that they naturally feel excited when they see children with disabilities that wants to learn with other students. However, 29 (32.2%) did not think same and 1 (1.1%) were indecisive. Majority of the teachers said they naturally feel excited when they see children with disabilities that want to learn with other students but at the same time most of them said that “If they have their way, they will avoid teaching children with disabilities”. Again, majority of them felt that it is not right to include children with disabilities with other children in general class setting. This may be due to lack of the training they need to handle special children in an inclusive setting. Training in special and inclusive education has consistently been found out to have influenced educators’ attitudes either in a single course or through a content-infused approach (Cook, 2001). Also, Lancaster and Bain (20019) agree that in general, there is a positive change in attitudes after undertaking an inclusive and special education unit of study and this is the case across a number of contexts and countries. They suggest that some type of formalized input is sufficient to increase the awareness of general education pre-service teachers.

However, both pre-service and in-service courses that address the skills and the attitudes of teachers towards students with disabilities are frequently deemed insufficient by teachers (Westwood & Graham, 2013).

Thirty-six (36) representing 40% of the respondents agreed that they try as much as possible to encourage co-teachers to attend to the needs of children with disabilities. Surprisingly, majority (56 comprising (60%)) of them said they do not do so; could this be indicative of poor attitude towards inclusive education? Cook (2001) notes the need for positive teacher attitudes and for teachers to create a ‘sense of belonging’ to support effective inclusive practice. 76 (84.4%) of the respondents believes that all children

(whether disabled or able should enjoy equal right from teachers). 12 respondents (13.3%) did not believe that while 2 (2.2%) remained indecisive.

Positive attitudes and beliefs combine to play a major part in support diversity in inclusive education (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Silva & Morgado, 2004). However, some research evidence demonstrate that theoretical classes and reading are not sufficient to modify teachers' and students' negative attitudes towards students with special educational needs (Gash, 2006). Finally, inclusive education can be achieved depending on teachers' positive attitudes towards teaching disabled children without exhibiting certain stereotypical patterns in students' academic behaviour (Jordan, Glen, McGhie-Richmond, 2010). In other words, teachers stereotypical and self-imposed perceptions of considering their pupils as one good or bad from the others closes their own motivation to be adaptable to each of their pupils' needs (Prater, 2010).



Research question two: How do classroom teachers' attitudes influence their teaching of special needs children in basic inclusive schools in the Amenfi East District?

Question 16 of the questionnaire sought to find out from the study participants how their attitudes influence their teaching of special needs children in inclusive schools. Respondents were therefore required to express their views on the issue. The data gathered from the questionnaires were as follows:

“Education is the right of all children, and inclusive schools aim to ensure that all children have equal access to education. I consider the needs of all the children when teaching”

“Inclusive education means giving opportunity to students with special needs to attend general or regular school to be taught by the same teachers, the way i teach is child centered because i have the needs of the pupils in the classroom at heart”

“Inclusive schools strengthens the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners and my attitude in teaching is very important for positive result”

“In the past, students with disabilities were taught in separate classrooms, and in some cases separate schools. Due to the inclusion education, students with disabilities are attending public school with typically developing peers and this has influence my methods of teaching, I make sure that all pupils are able to perform the instructional objectives of lessons taught”

“Inclusive schools places students with disabilities in classrooms with peers who do not have disabilities now I teach all pupils in a way they understand.”

“Inclusive education accommodate all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. it is education for all so the programme has really influence my method of teaching”

These comments suggest that the teachers believe their attitudes influence their teaching methodology. They seem to suggest that children with special needs have a right to education just like any other regular children as stipulated by Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) article 26. Education is a fundamental human right: Every child is entitled to it. This is in consonance with Ankutse (n.d.) who defines inclusive education is a process of increasing the participation of all students in schools including those with disabilities. According to Ankutse (n.d.), inclusive education concept focuses on those groups which, in the past, have been excluded from educational opportunities. These groups include children living in poverty, those from ethnic and linguistic minorities, girls (in some societies), children from remote areas, those with disabilities or other special educational needs, the gifted and the talented children. The latter are often the most marginalized, both within education and society in general Ankutse (n.d.). Their assertion also supports UNESCO (2005) who puts inclusive education as a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners.

The right to education is now accepted as a fundamental human right for everyone and important developments have taken place which aim at addressing the educational needs of persons with disabilities (Ali et al, 2009). The 1994 Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education Framework for Action stated that ordinary schools should accommodate all students, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other conditions (UNESCO, 1994). The framework emphasized on the education for all disabled children in an inclusive environment within the regular education system.

The Salamanca Statement has been a considerable source of influence in the formulation of local educational policies and has rekindled Ghana's commitment to improve the access, quality, and provision of equal educational opportunities for all children, including those with disabilities. In particular, the Education Strategic Plans (ESP) of 2005 to 2015 and 2010 to 2020 have decreed inclusive education as the most appropriate educational provision for students with disabilities, with the goal of achieving an inclusive education system by 2015 (Ministry of Education 2012). The recently drafted inclusive education policy of Ghana is founded on the premise that every child has the right to education. This policy therefore seeks inclusive education for all persons with mild as well as severe Special Education Needs (SEN) at all levels of education (Ministry of Education, 2012).

Research question three: What factors influence the attitudes of classroom teachers in towards inclusive education in the Amenfi East District?

Question 17 of the questionnaire sought to determine those teacher characteristics that influence their attitudes towards children with special needs. Respondents were

therefore required to express their views on the issue. The data gathered from interviews were categorized under these themes:

Training

Some of the teachers said training influence their attitude towards inclusive education. This was considered an important factor in improving teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of an inclusive policy. Without a coherent plan for teacher training in the educational needs of children with SEN, attempts to include these children in the mainstream would be very challenging.

These were captured in statements like this:

“Training is very important, I have not acquire enough special or comprehensive training on how to teach children with special needs, and that makes my attitude towards them unsatisfactory, the government and other policy makers should come to our aid”(Teacher 1).

“Inadequate knowledge, skills and training discourages me from accepting inclusive education and playing my part well. The Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service should organize regular inclusive education training for teacher for us to develop attitude towards the inclusive program.” (Teacher 2)

The above findings support to Gallagher (2004), despite the efforts of policy-makers, head teachers and teachers, many children still lack teachers who are adequately trained and supported to meet their needs.

Other interviewees made the following observations

“Those teachers who have some level of knowledge and training about inclusive education tend to and skills in handling special need children exhibit positive attitude towards inclusive education compared to those of us who have little or no training at all.” (Teachers 3)

The finding reinforces the view that special education qualifications acquired from pre- or in-service courses were associated with less resistance to inclusive practices. It will

be best to organize frequent in-service training for teachers in order to upgrade their knowledge and skills in inclusive education and assist them to carry out their roles very well. Another element that has gotten a lot of attention is the understanding about youngsters with. The findings of Beh-Pajoo (1992) and Shimman (1990), based on college professors, indicated the relevance of training in the establishment of good attitudes toward integration. Both investigated college professors' views toward students with SEN and their incorporation into regular college courses in the United Kingdom. Their findings revealed that college professors who had received training to teach students with learning disabilities had more positive attitudes and emotional reactions to students with SEN and their integration than those who had not. Dickens-Smith (2015), for example, studied the attitudes of both regular and special educators towards inclusion (not integration). Her respondents were given an attitude survey before and after staff development. Both groups of respondents revealed more favourable attitudes towards inclusion after their in-service training than they did before, with regular education teachers showing the strongest positive attitude change. Dickens-Smith concluded that staff development is the key to the success of inclusion.

Availability of educational resources

A number of studies have examined availability of resources and their influence in the formation of teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. One factor that has consistently been found to be associated with more positive attitudes is the availability of resources or support services at the classroom and the school levels (Clough & Lindsay, 2003). The study revealed availability of educational resources as one of the factors that influence the attitudes of regular teachers in the district towards inclusive education.

This reflected in statements like:

“We have not been provided with enough resources to support inclusive education, so how do you expect me to take inclusive education serious.” (Teachers 1)

“If government expects positive attitude from teachers towards inclusive education, then the Ministry of Education should be committed and provide all the necessary educational resources.” (Teachers 2)

Here, participants identified resources and support as both physical (resources, teaching materials, IT equipment, a restructured physical environment) and human (learning support assistants, special teachers, speech therapists) (Clough & Lindsay, 2003).

Janney, Snell, Beers and Raynes, (1995) found that the majority of teachers in their study were hesitant initially to accept children with SEN in their classes, because they anticipated a worst case scenario where both they and the children with SEN would be left to fend for themselves. Later, these teachers were receptive towards these children after having received necessary and sufficient support. Respondents acknowledged that the support received from the relevant authorities was instrumental in allaying their apprehension that part-time integration would result in extraordinary workloads. A significant restructuring of the physical environment (making buildings accessible to students with physical disabilities) and the provision of adequate and appropriate equipment and materials were also instrumental in the development of these positive attitudes.

Age-teaching experience

Teaching experience and age is another teacher-related variable identified by respondents as having an influence on teachers' attitudes.

Some interviewee intimated that:

“Some of the teachers especially the older ones feel reluctant to accept the children with special needs in class meanwhile they are more experienced and must have positive attitude”. (Teacher 1)

“The young teacher who have just been posted have very good attitude towards the children with special needs and always willing to assist.”
(Teachers 3)

The findings support Clough and Lindsay, (2011) who observed that younger teachers and those with fewer years of experience have been found to be more supportive to integration Forlin’s (1995) study, for example, showed that acceptance of a child with a physical disability was highest among educators with less than six years of teaching and declined with experience for those with six to ten years of teaching. The most experienced educators (greater than 11 years of teaching) were the least accepting.

Leyser and Kirk, (2014) also found that, in general, teachers with 14 years or less teaching experience had a significantly higher positive score in their attitude to integration compared with those with more than 14 years. They found no significant differences in attitudes to integration among teachers whose teaching experience was between one and four years, five and nine years and ten and 14 years (no mention was made based on individual country). Another study by Harvey (2006) compared the willingness of teacher trainees and primary teachers to accept children with SEN in their classes. His findings indicated that there was a clear reluctance on the part of the more experienced primary teachers compared to teacher trainees in their willingness to integrate such children. In this respect, it would not be unreasonable to assume that newly qualified teachers hold positive attitudes towards integration when entering the professional arena. However, although the above studies indicated that younger teachers and those with fewer years of experience are more supportive of integration, other investigators have reported that teaching experience was not significantly related to teachers’ attitudes (Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden, 2000).

Motivation and encouragement from head teachers and special needs education coordinators

Motivation and encouragement were found to generate positive attitudes towards inclusion. Other interviewees brought the following issues to bear

“Encouragement from my head teacher and the special needs education coordinators have been my source of inspiration for teaching children with special needs.” (Teacher 2)

“The special needs education coordinators have played a very vital role in shaping my attitudes towards special needs pupils. Their advice and motivation have helped me develop a good perception about special needs pupils.” (Teacher 4)

“Our headmaster has demonstrated excellent leadership by helping us develop a positive and favorable attitude towards inclusive. He is always ready to listen to our concerns and take action” (Teacher 1)

“Support and encouragements from the special needs education coordinators have been exceptional, they provide orientation for non-specially trained teachers to manage special children alongside the normal children. They also support teachers in selecting appropriate materials for teaching special children and help address educational challenges of special needs pupils. They also encourage special needs children to keep their dreams and aspirations alive, Motivate pupils with special needs to be active class participants and encourage regular pupils to do group studies and share ideas with special children without difficulties based on the advice of the special needs coordinator. This has really assisted me to be supportive of inclusion education” (Teacher 3)

The continuous encouragement from the head teacher has been mentioned in several studies as being instrumental in the creation of positive attitudes to inclusion. The views expressed by these respondents are in conformity with Janney, Snell, Beers and Raynes, (1995), who asserted that the enthusiastic support from head teachers was an attributing factor to the success of the part-time integration programme in the schools they studied. Chazan (1994), in his review of relevant literature, concluded that mainstream teachers have a greater tolerance of integration if head teachers are supportive. Similarly, Center and Ward’s (1987) study reported that mainstream teachers whose head teachers had

provided some form of support for the integration programme exhibited a more positive attitude towards its implementation than those who had not received any.

Support from specialist resource teachers was also identified as an important factor in shaping positive teacher attitudes to inclusion (Kauffman, Lloyd and McGee, 2009). Janney, Snell, Beers and Raynes, (1995) found that one of the factors cited by their respondents that had contributed to the success of the part-time integration programme they were implementing was the existence of effective support, both interpersonal and task related, provided by the school's special education teachers. Clough and Lindsay (1991) argued that special education specialist teachers are important co-workers in providing advice to subject specialist teachers on how to make a particular subject accessible to children with SEN. Center and Ward (1987) found that children with a mild sensory disability integrated in mainstream classes did not cause anxiety to mainstream teachers because of the confidence generated by the presence of itinerant teachers for these children. Their study showed that experience of working with itinerant teachers positively affected teachers' attitudes.

The importance of support from specialist resource teachers was also highlighted in another study conducted in the USA (Minke et al., 2006), which compared the attitudes towards inclusion and the perceptions of self-efficacy, competence, teaching satisfaction and judgements of the appropriateness of teaching adaptation of regular education teachers who co-taught with resource teachers in inclusive classrooms and their counterparts in traditional classrooms. Regular teachers in inclusive classrooms reported positive attitudes towards inclusion and high perceptions of self-efficacy, competence, and satisfaction. Regular teachers in traditional classrooms held less positive perceptions and viewed classroom adaptations as less feasible, and less

frequently used, than did teachers in classrooms with the protected resource of two teachers.

Past experiences

Some of the teachers recounted their past experiences as an important factor influencing their attitude towards inclusive education.

“I think in the past I have not been successful teaching in an inclusive class so it has affected my acceptance of inclusive education” (Teacher 3)

“Last year I had about two pupils with special needs in my class, I encountered some challenges during teaching because they were slow learners and portrayed some undesirable behaviours, if I had my way I will avoid teaching them” (Teacher 2)

“I took a postgraduate programme in special education last year because I felt that previously I was lacking the knowledge and experience in handling special education. Now i will fully appreciate inclusive education.” (Teacher 1)

“My previous encounter with a particular pupil with special needs in the neighboring school changed my attitude towards inclusive education totally. Now i have gained new knowledge about inclusive education and develop positive attitude towards inclusive education and will do everything possible to support it.” (Teacher 4)

From the discussions above it is very evident that respondents past or previous experiences are contributory factors influencing their attitude towards inclusive education. The findings are in consonance with Mahat (2008) who notes that in order to find out the attitudes of teachers towards students with special needs, In his view, Mahat (2008) suggests that the attitudes of mainstream teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities are influenced by past experiences (previous experience with teaching students with disabilities), previous knowledge (training in the field of inclusive education) and newly acquired knowledge (professional development or training modules).

Gender

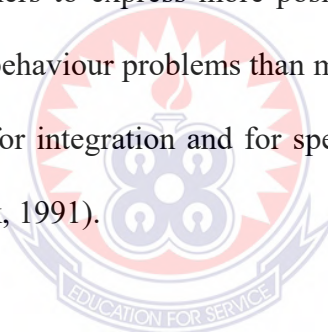
From the discussions below, gender appears to be a factor that influences the attitudes of regular teachers in the district towards inclusive education.

Some teachers shared similar views relating to the issue of gender, they contended that

“I have realized that the female teachers especially are very patients and sympathetic towards the children with special needs than the male teachers” (Teacher 1)

“The female teachers understand inclusive education better they understand the special children and handle them better. They are more responsive to their needs than the male teachers” (Teacher 2)

These findings corroborate Harvey (1985), who found that there was a marginal tendency for female teachers to express more positive attitudes towards the idea of integrating children with behaviour problems than male teachers. Female teachers had a greater tolerance level for integration and for special needs persons than did male teachers (Rizzo & Sirotnik, 1991).



Research question four: What challenges do classroom teachers face in teaching special needs children in basic inclusive schools in the Amenfi East District?

This research question was addressed by Question 18 of the questionnaire. Teachers agreed that they experience some challenges in trying to implement inclusive education. Same results were obtained from questionnaires and interviews. They include

Lack of teachers' training

In order to achieve professional skills one has to go through training. The majority of the participants showed that they are not trained in special education in preparation for inclusion in mainstream schools. But they think given an opportunity to practice the

basic classroom management techniques, they can make it. Some participants had this to say;

"I am not trained for inclusion education" (Teacher 1)

"I am not well versed about how to handle an inclusive classroom"
(Teacher 2)

"I have no knowledge of handling learners with disabilities" (Teacher 3)

This shows that in as much as the government of Ghana wish to implement the programme, it is not possible if teachers are not trained. Very few indicated that they have been trained in special education. Participants agreed that they had only attended workshops on inclusive education. However, they felt that the time allocated for workshops were insufficient because inclusive education is a programme which needs intensive training. They emphasized that workshops should be on ongoing basis until educators feel that they are well equipped to teach inclusive classrooms effectively. In service training also goes a long way on the part of an inclusive curriculum.

Lack of Competencies

One of the most important themes identified is the teacher competency. It was gathered that from the interview that participants cited a common factor called competencies they need as educators. They showed that inclusive education is stressful to them since they lack skills in dealing with disabilities. When asked if they are competent enough to teach in inclusive classrooms, most of their responses indicated *"not at all."* It goes back to training, if one is not knowledgeable and lacks skills, it becomes a problem. Hence lack of training in inclusion is a disaster to teachers or educators who teaching inclusive classrooms. Thus, the lack of training will impede the effective implementation of the programme.

Lack of teaching and learning materials

All participants said that in schools they lack proper teaching and learning materials that would help accommodate the learners with disabilities. Few participants stressed that learners need concrete materials that they can touch and feel if the learner is visually impaired. Moreover, the learner's thought processes depend on contact with concrete objects. Four teachers made similar remarks their remarks gave credence to the notion of full Inclusion when they stated;

“Unless the government of Ghana has enough funds to provide learning facilities like computers, tape recorders, Braille, hearing aids, overhead projectors the issue of inclusion will always remain on paper” (Teacher 4)

Teachers rely heavily on a diverse range of materials to support their teaching and their students' learning. These are essential to effective instruction as they assist to reinforce and supplement the instructor's communication during the presentation of the lesson. The TLMs enhances teaching and learning because pupils are able to see and often feel what the teacher teaches, and this go a long way to stimulate pupils' interest and increase understanding and retention. These are essential to effective instruction as they assist to reinforce and supplement the instructor's communication during the presentation of the lesson.

Time allocation

Participants mentioned that there is little or no progress in the classroom because one needs more time to explain concepts thoroughly. This shows the importance of creating more time for both the learners and the teacher to make inclusion successful. It also makes it difficult for the teacher to finish the syllabus and to enlarge it, meaning to do extra activities for those with learning difficulties. One participant remarked;

“It would be better if the syllabus is developed in such a way that learning difficulties are taken into consideration, making provision for time to give more attention to learners with difficulties the 40 minutes period does not allow us to help learners with disabilities” (Teacher 2)

Others shared similar views:

“Children with disability need to be given special attention by teachers. The time allocated for teaching is inadequate, this makes completing the syllabus difficult and affect pupils academic performance” (Teacher 5,7 and14)

Assessment

Giving class works and tests is a way of providing feedback about learners' knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired during instruction. Moreover, they are assessed according to what they are capable of doing their progress, abilities and their own potentials. Educators have to assess where learners have difficulty and determine if the learner needs extra help. Another sub-theme that transpired is that of examination. Respondents mentioned that the centralized education policy is an exclusively one sided policy which is the main cause of discrimination.

“The Basic Education Certificate Examination fails to accommodate learners with diverse needs. It only caters for the gifted, and does not address the needs of learners with disabilities. Mainstream schools at the moment are results oriented”. (Teacher 1)

“The Basic Education Certificate Examination does not help pupils with special needs because they don't learn at the rate at which pupils without disabilities learn”. (Teacher 5)

Swart and Pettipher (2007) say majority of teachers are faced with a difficult task in their classrooms nowadays. These challenges are brought by bringing learners with special needs to regular classrooms where teachers are expected to continue to use the existing curriculum to teach learners who were previously not in the mainstream. The implementation of inclusive education is yet not optimum because of many challenges.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of this study. This study sought to examine perceptions of teachers towards inclusive education in basic schools in Amenfi East District. Four research questions guided the study. They were to a. What are the views of classroom teachers in the Amenfi East District towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools? b. How do classroom teachers' attitudes influence their teaching of special needs children in basic inclusive schools in the Amenfi East District? c. What factors influence the attitudes of classroom teachers in towards inclusive education in the Amenfi East District? d. What challenges do classroom teachers face in teaching special needs children in basic inclusive schools in the Amenfi East District?

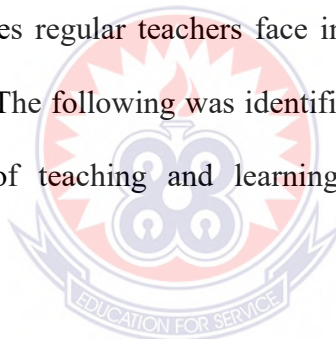
Questionnaires and interview guide were used to gather data in this study. Descriptive statistics such as simple frequency counts and percentages were used to analyse the quantitative data while thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

Assessment of the perception of classroom teachers in the Amenfi East District towards pupils with disability revealed that only few teachers wish that they could spend more time teaching children with disabilities in my class/school, majority of them thought otherwise. Majority of the respondents believe children with disability need to be given special attention by their teachers. Majority of them felt it is not right to include children with disabilities with other children in general class setting, It was also discovered that more than half of the teachers suggested that If they have their way, they will avoid

teaching children with disabilities. Again, majority of the teachers disclosed that they naturally feel excited when they see children with disabilities that want to learn with other students. Less than half of the teachers agreed that they try as much as possible to encourage co-teachers to attend to the needs of children with disabilities. Majority of them said they do not do so and finally majority of the respondents believes that all children whether disabled or able should enjoy equal right from teachers.

The study further unveiled training, availability of educational resources, age-teaching experience, motivation and encouragement from head teachers and special needs education coordinators, past experiences and gender as some of the factors that influence the attitudes of regular teachers in the district towards inclusive education. Regarding what challenges regular teachers face in the implementation of inclusive education in the district. The following was identified: lack of teachers' training, lack of competencies, lack of teaching and learning materials, time allocation and assessment.



5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made from the findings of the study:

It is recommended, among others, that teachers in the mainstream schools are provided with intensive training on teaching special needs children in an inclusive setting to enable them to handle all categories of children with disabilities in their classrooms effectively. These training can be offered both by the government through GES or in partnership with the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

Providing adequate support and resources for teachers by government and local or international NGO's would further enable them to respond effectively to the needs of all children within the class. Continued research into the benefit of professional

development and training by institutions of higher learning in the area of inclusion are recommended.

5.3 Conclusion

This study has attempted to assess teacher attitudes towards inclusion and identify the factors that influence these attitudes. The success of inclusion or organised placement of children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms largely depends on teachers' attitudes towards students with special educational needs (SEN) and their knowledge on how to properly educate them. In this study the general attitude of inclusion was not very encouraging; though teachers appear to recognise the value and benefits associated with inclusive practice in mainstream classrooms. The study did report significant barriers to successful inclusion; the most common concern being inadequate training in inclusive practice.

Overcoming this barrier requires the development of teachers' competences to better meet the needs of students with special educational needs. Thus, appropriate training and professional development are significant to the success of inclusion. Support is also required, on a regular basis to ensure successful inclusive practice within mainstream basic schools. These findings may help to highlight the importance of teacher attitudes and efficacy beliefs to successful inclusion in Ghana.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

One can conduct a study on the effect of pre-service and in service training on teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy in inclusion education.

Research into children's attitudes towards and perceptions of inclusive education would offer a more in-depth insight into how best to implement inclusive practice.

Further investigation into the challenges and concerns faced by teachers in inclusive classrooms is required.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

I am a post graduate student of the University of Education, Winneba. As part of the academic requirement, I am conducting a research on teachers' attitudes towards the education of persons with disabilities in inclusive schools within Amenfi East district. I assure you that any information provided shall be used solely for academic purposes, confidentiality is assured.

(Please tick and specify when appropriate)

Section A: Background Characteristics

1. Gender: (a) Male (b) Female
2. Age: (a) Less than 30 years (b) 30-39 years (c) 40-49 years (d) 50 & above
3. Marital status (a) Single (b) Married (c) Divorced (d) Separated (e) Widowed
4. Educational Qualification (a) Teacher certificate A (b) Diploma in education
(c) First Degree (d) Masters (e) Postgraduate Diploma (f) others.....
5. Teaching Experience (a) 1- 5years (b) 6 – 10 years. (c). 11 – 15 years
(d) 16-20yrs (e) 21years and above
6. How many pupils with disabilities do have you in your class?
7. Which types of disabilities do pupils have in your class, and which you are familiar with?
Spinal Bifida Cerebral Palsy Duchene Muscular Dystrophy

Epilepsy[] Musculoskeletal Conditions [] ADHD [] Visually Impaired [] Language Impairment [] Hard of Hearing [] Speech Impediments []

Section B: Main Research Objectives

8. What is your understanding of inclusive education?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Attitudes of regular teachers towards inclusive education.

Respond to each statement by indicating whether you SD = Strongly Disagree; D=Disagree; U=Undecided, A=agree; SA= Strongly Agree.

Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA
9. I believe children with disability need to be given special attention by their teachers					
10. I wish I could spend more time teaching children with disabilities in my class/school					
11. There is nothing wrong with including children with disabilities with other children in general class setting					
12. If I have my way, I will avoid teaching children with disabilities					
13. I naturally feel excited when I see children with disabilities that wants to learn with other students					
14. I try as much as possible to encourage co-teachers to attend to the needs of children with disabilities					
15. I believe all children (whether disabled or able should enjoy equal right from teachers)					

16. Generally how would you describe your attitude towards the education of pupils with disabilities in an inclusive classroom?

.....
.....

17. What factors influence the attitudes of regular teachers in the district towards inclusive education?

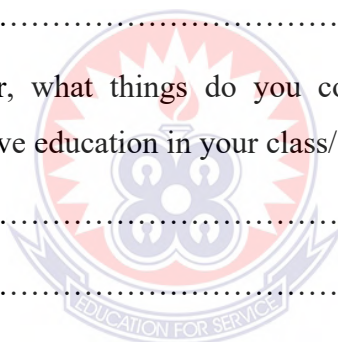
.....
.....

18. What do you think are the barriers to inclusion of children with disabilities in your class/school?

.....
.....

19. As a regular teacher, what things do you consider as the challenges to the implementation of inclusive education in your class/school?

.....
.....
.....



20. What factors can contribute to the successful inclusion of children with disabilities in Your class//school?

.....
.....
.....
.....

THANK YOU

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: What knowledge do regular classroom teachers in the Amenfi East have about inclusive education?

1. What is your understanding of inclusive education?
2. Is there something wrong with including children with disabilities with other children in general class setting
3. What do you think are the barriers to inclusion of children with disabilities in your class/school?
4. Do you believe children with disability need to be given special attention by their teachers
5. Do you wish you could spend more time teaching children with disabilities in your class/school?
6. If you had your way, will you avoid teaching children with disabilities?
7. Do you naturally feel excited when you see children with disabilities that want to learn with other students?
8. Do you try as much as possible to encourage co-teachers to attend to the needs of children with disabilities?
9. Do you believe wish you could spend more time teaching children with disabilities in your class/school?
10. Do you believe all children whether disabled or able should enjoy equal right from teachers?
11. What do you think are some of the factors that influence the attitudes of regular teachers in the district towards inclusive education?
12. As a regular teacher, what things do you consider as the challenges to the implementation of inclusive education in your class/school?

13. What factors can contribute to the successful inclusion of children with disabilities in your class/school?

THANK YOU

