

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON INCLUSION OF PUPILS WITH
SPECIAL NEEDS IN ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN BASIC SCHOOL**



MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

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SPECIAL NEEDS IN ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN BASIC SCHOOL**



**A thesis in the Department of Special Education, Faculty of
Educational Studies, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies, in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Special Education)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

JUNE, 2023

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

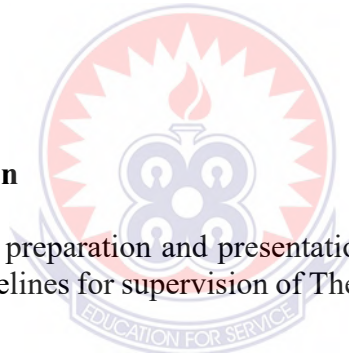
I, Ransford Samovie, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

Signature.....

Date.....

Supervisors' Declaration

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



Supervisor: Dr. Daniel Fobi

Signature.....

Date.....

DEDICATION

To my dear, caring, loving and supporting family.



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I acknowledge with appreciation, the unflagging efforts of my supervisor, Dr. Daniel Fobi of the University of Education, Winneba for the patience and time he had in examining and making valuable suggestions and corrections which made this work to meet the required standard today.

My next appreciation goes to my ever loving and caring mother, Madam Alice Samovie for her unconditional love, motivation, courage and advice throughout my education. Mummy, I thank you for everything.

I cannot end without acknowledging Mr. Samuel Tatsi for his enormous contribution towards the success of this work. Mr. Tatsi, may you reach the zenith of your aspirations.

Lastly, I wish to thank all friends, course mates and well-wishers for their support in various forms.

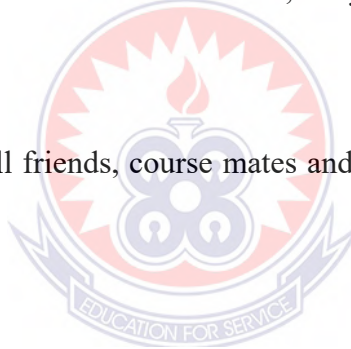
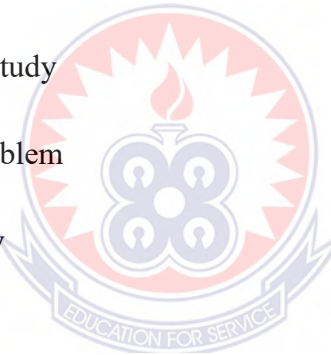


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLE	x
ABSTRACT	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	4
1.3 Purpose of the Study	6
1.4 Research Objectives	6
1.5 Research Questions	6
1.6 Significance of the Study	7
1.7 Delimitation of the Study	8
1.8 Operational Definition of Terms	9
1.9 Organization of the Study	10
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	11
1.0 Introduction	11
2.1 Theoretical Framework	11



2.1.1 Luhmann's System Theory	11
2.2 Regular School Teachers' Understanding of Inclusive Education	13
2.3 Instructional Adaption of Teachers to Meet the Children with Special Needs	21
2.4 Resources and other Support Service for Teaching Children with Special Needs	26
2.5 Challenges or Barriers Educators Experience in Implementing Inclusive Education	31
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	51
3.0 Introduction	51
3.1 Research Philosophy	51
3.2 Research Approach	53
3.3 Research Design	54
3.4 Setting	56
3.5 Population	57
3.6 Sample	58
3.7 Sampling Technique	59
3.8 Data Collection Instrument	60
3.9 Trustworthiness of the Interview	62
3.9.1 Credibility	62
3.9.2 Dependability	62
3.9.3 Transferability	63
3.9.4 Confirmability	64



3.10 Data Collection Procedure	64
3.11 Method of Data Analysis	65
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	69
4.0 Introduction	69
4.1 Section A: Demographic Data of Participants	69
4.1.1: Results of demographic data of participants	69
4.2 Section B: Thematic Analysis of Data	70
4.2.1: What understanding do regular teachers in the St. John’s Anglican Basic School have about the inclusion of children with Special needs in the regular classroom?	71
4.2.2 What instructional strategies do teachers use to meet the needs of special needs children at St. Anglican Basic School?	78
4.2.3 What resources and support services are available for teachers to meet the learning needs of children with special needs in St. John’s Anglican Basic School?	83
4.2.4 How do teachers of St. John’s Anglican Basic School mitigate challenges they face in teaching children with special needs at St. John’s Anglican Basic School?	89
4.3 Discussion of Results	95
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	101
5.0 Introduction	101
5.1 Summary of Findings	101
5.2 Limitations	102

5.3 Conclusions	102
5.4 Recommendations	103
5.5 Suggestion for Further Studies	104
REFERENCES	106
APPENDIX	118
Semi-Structured Interview Guide	118



LIST OF TABLE

Table	Page
1: Summary of the data analysis	67



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to find out the perceptions of teachers about inclusion of children with special needs in St John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba. The study was anchored on the interpretivist paradigm, which utilised the qualitative case study design. The study sampled participants which is made up of nine teachers and two (2) head teachers. Data was collected using a semi-structured interview guide and analysed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study revealed that teachers' understanding about the inclusive education include the fact that inclusive education is about creating a learning environment that values and respects the diversity of all learners and provides equal opportunities for learning and success. Also, teaching and learning materials (TLMs), resources persons and grouping of learners are some instructional strategies employed by the teachers to meet the special needs of children. Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that efforts should be made by head teachers and teachers to promote and support understanding of inclusion of children with special needs. This can be achieved through workshops, seminars, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities aim at the professional development and training for teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills in providing inclusive education.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

With regard to the educational inclusion of students with functional diversity, the World Conference on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 2017) affirmed that every child has the right to be included in a regular education system, to be supported in their learning and to participate in all aspects of school life. In line with this principle, there is now a growing tendency to include students with disabilities within the mainstream education system (Jury et al., 2021).

In keeping with the implementation of the policy of inclusion by the Ghana Education Service, all schools in Ghana are expected to admit persons with disabilities in the regular education classroom. However, teachers' attitude and challenges they encounter have a great influence on how successfully inclusive educational practices would be implemented (Goldan & Swap, 2018). One reason most teachers at some point in time find difficult in teaching children who have some degree of special needs, is the lack of teaching and learning resources. The realization that children with special needs can develop to productive individuals with effective teaching from teachers and also develop their potentials, encourage teachers to adopt instructional strategies to meet the needs of students in their classrooms. According to Goldan and Swap (2018), special needs education is developed as a unique service for students with mental, physical, emotional, and behavioural disabilities. It employs specific teaching strategies for developing the full capabilities of special needs students. To this end, a lot of specialists agree on the model of inclusion in education, which furthermore strengthens the

argument that all teachers must possess the resources to provide a supportive learning environment for special needs students.

Awareness has been created among general education teachers that exceptionality and disability are no respecter of persons and is not incapability and that special needs students are not strange human beings who require different treatment. For teachers to effectively include special needs children in their regular classroom settings, their views and perceptions, availability of resources and challenges teachers encountered about inclusion need to be surveyed.

St. John's Anglican Basic School in Winneba recognizes the importance of inclusive education and has taken steps to integrate children with special needs into their classrooms. However, the perceptions of teachers regarding inclusive education and their ability to meet the diverse needs of these children are critical factors that can influence the effectiveness of inclusive practices in the school. This has therefore called for understanding teachers' opinion on inclusion, the instructional strategies they employed, the availability of teaching and learning resources and support services, and challenges they encounter in promoting inclusion of special needs children in their classroom.

Understanding teachers' opinions on inclusion is a critical aspect of creating an inclusive educational environment. Teachers' perceptions shape their attitudes, behaviors, and instructional practices towards students with special needs (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Research by Forlin (2010) emphasizes that teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion are linked to successful implementation. Exploring teachers' opinions provides insights into the factors that influence their acceptance or resistance

to inclusive practices, thereby informing strategies to enhance their understanding and commitment to inclusive education.

The instructional strategies employed by teachers play a pivotal role in determining the effectiveness of inclusive education. Differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, and the use of assistive technologies are among the various strategies employed (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2010). Effective instructional strategies not only enhance academic achievement but also contribute to positive social interactions among students with and without special needs. Investigating these strategies provides valuable insights into the methods that facilitate a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

The availability of teaching and learning resources and support services is crucial for implementing inclusive education. Studies by Sharma and Desai (2002) highlight the significance of well-equipped classrooms, assistive technologies, and specialized support staff in creating an inclusive learning environment. Adequate resources contribute to the provision of individualized support for students with special needs, ensuring their participation and engagement in the learning process.

Challenges are inherent in promoting the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream classrooms. Research by Slee (2011) emphasizes that challenges may include inadequate teacher training, lack of administrative support, and attitudinal barriers. Identifying and understanding these challenges is essential for developing targeted interventions and support mechanisms to enhance the successful integration of children with special needs into inclusive classrooms.

Understanding of teachers about inclusive education in St. John's Anglican Basic School would provide insights into teachers' knowledge and beliefs about inclusive education, including their understanding of its principles, benefits, and challenges. Understanding the strategies employed by teachers would shed light on their pedagogical approaches, differentiation techniques, and adaptations to cater for the diverse learning needs of students with special needs. The availability of resources and support services for teachers in meeting the special needs of children also play a crucial role in meeting the needs of children with special needs. Adequate resources, such as assistive technology, specialized materials, and professional support, are crucial in facilitating effective inclusive education. It has become important to find out the challenges teachers face in providing inclusive education in St. John's Anglican Basic School. Assessing teachers' understanding, instructional strategies, availability of resources, and challenges would help identify areas that require improvement and inform the development of strategies to address these issues.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There have been some policy initiatives by successive governments on inclusion of children with special needs into the mainstream classroom and significant aspects of these reforms and policies have been that education should be for all. This aims at expanding, strengthening and making education accessible to all children of school age, including those with disabilities. However, regular education teachers have not grasped the concept of inclusive education because most especially, there is still no clear understanding of inclusive education. Researchers, policy makers, and teacher educators have diverse understandings (Van Mieghem et al., 2018), which range from the idea that special education is itself a form of inclusive education, to the observation that all children are, for the majority, learning together in an inclusive setting (Hornby,

2015; Kivirand et al., 2020). Therefore, the diverse understandings among researchers, policy makers, and teacher educators regarding special education and inclusive education reflect varying perspectives on the nature and implementation of inclusive practices.

An interaction with some teachers in St. John's Anglican Basic School indicates that, they have varied views about the practice of inclusion. Teachers' varied views can influence instructional practices, student-teacher relationships, and overall classroom dynamics (Goldan & Swap, 2018). According to Avramidis and Norwich (2022), when teachers hold negative or hesitant views towards the inclusion, it can lead to lower expectations for students, limited access to appropriate instructional strategies. This would result in unequal learning opportunities and hinder the academic and social development of special needs children (Artiles & Dyson, 2005).

Despite effect of teacher negative perception, the perception of inclusive education of regular teachers at St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba is yet to be known. Previous studies support the idea that teachers perceive students with behavioural or emotional disorders as being more difficult to work with in the classroom than the other children with different disabilities (Chhabra et al., 2010). There are many mainstream teachers who believe that children considered "different" are not their responsibility, which revealed the fact that there are many schools where the medical pathological model still dominates the educational activity (Angelides et al., 2006). Haug (2017) posited that teachers' capability of adapting instructions to meet the special needs of these children also pose a challenge to them. In addition, teacher's resources and other support services are not available for teachers to meet the learning needs of children with special needs in the various classrooms (Kivirand et al., 2020).

This study, sought to fill this knowledge and literature gaps by investigating teachers' perception about inclusion of children with special needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba. This would help to identify and address potential barriers that may impact the successful implementation of inclusion of children with special needs in the classrooms.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out the perceptions of teachers about inclusion of children with special needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School in Winneba.

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives were to:

1. Find out the understanding of teachers about inclusive education in St. John's Anglican Basic School.
2. Examine the instructional strategies teachers use to meet the needs of children with special needs.
3. Examine the availability of resources and other support services for teachers to meet the needs of children with special needs.
4. Determine how teachers mitigate challenges they face in providing inclusive education in St. John's Anglican Basic School.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What understanding do regular teachers in the St. John's Anglican Basic School have about the inclusion of children with Special needs in the regular classroom?

2. What instructional strategies do teachers use to meet the needs of special needs children at St. Anglican Basic School?
3. What resources and support services are available for teachers to meet the learning needs of children with special needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School?
4. How do teachers of St. John's Anglican Basic School mitigate challenges they face in teaching children with special needs at St. John's Anglican Basic School?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would help bring out teachers' views, perceptions and understanding of the concept of inclusion of children with special needs in selected basic schools since inclusion is an emerging trend in the Ghanaian education policy, this study would provide some additional literature on the subject (inclusion). It would also bring into light and serve as a reading material or a resource to readers and also serve as a body of knowledge to educational entities.

The findings of the study would reveal the instructional strategies used by teachers to meet the needs of children with special needs. This is significant as it sheds light on the teaching approaches, adaptations, and accommodations employed to support the learning and development of these students. Identifying effective instructional strategies can inform best practices and contribute to the improvement of teaching methods for inclusive classrooms.

The findings would expose educational stakeholders to the availability of resources and support services for teachers to meet the needs of children with special needs is crucial in determining the level of support provided by the school and education system. This

examination helps identify any gaps or areas where additional resources, such as assistive technologies, specialized materials, or professional support, may be needed. It also provides insights into the overall infrastructure and support systems required to create an inclusive learning environment.

The findings of the study would contribute to understanding the challenges faced by teachers in providing inclusive education at St. John's Anglican Basic School is essential for addressing barriers to inclusive practices. Identifying these challenges, such as lack of training, limited resources, or inadequate support, appropriate measures can be implemented to mitigate these challenges. This would involve targeted professional development, resource allocation, policy changes, or collaborative efforts to improve the overall conditions for inclusive education.

Generally, the findings of this study has significant implications for the advancement of inclusive education practices in St. John's Anglican Basic School. These findings would inform policy decisions, professional development programmes, and resource allocation to enhance teachers' understanding, instructional strategies, and support systems, ultimately improving the educational experiences and outcomes for children with special needs in the school.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

Although some studies have been carried out in other parts of the country (Ghana) on inclusion and teacher perception, this study focused on the perception of teachers about the inclusion of children with special educational needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School. This is because, inclusion has been adopted into educational policies in Ghana.

This study is delimited to St. John's Anglican Basic School in Ghana to offer a localized and context-specific examination of the inclusion of children with special educational needs. The focus on teacher perception is deliberate, recognizing their pivotal role in successful inclusive education implementation. Furthermore, the study's emphasis on St. John's Anglican Basic School aligns with the adoption of inclusion in educational policies in Ghana, allowing for a detailed examination of how these policies manifest at the school level. Finally, the study hones in on children with special educational needs to address their unique challenges, recognizing that their inclusion requires specialized strategies that may not be fully captured in more generalized studies.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Perception: Views, or what teachers think or understand about the concept of inclusion. It also deals with the relevant knowledge teachers have about the inclusion of children with special needs in regular basic schools.

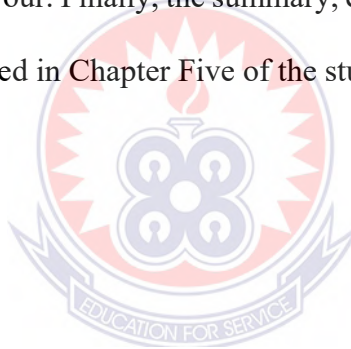
Inclusive Education: Inclusive Education means that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional linguistic or other conditions including disabled and gifted children, children from cultural minority, streets and those from disadvantaged and marginalized areas or groups.

Children with Special Needs: These are children who have peculiar needs that have to be met, supported or improved than that of their "normal" peers. These children have handicapping conditions which interferes with their educational and social integration.

Regular Basic Schools: These are schools structured for learning where "normal" children receive instruction from teachers to acquire basic knowledge, skills and attitudes to improve upon their lives.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study has been organized into five chapters. The Chapter One focuses on the introduction of the study. This involves the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, definition of terms and the organization of the study. Chapter Two of the study involves the review of literature related to the study. It presents the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study. Chapter Three focuses on the methodology for the study. This chapter describes the research design, settings, the population, the sample and sampling procedures, instruments and procedures involved in the collection and analysis. The presentation and discussion of the results of the study was reported in Chapter Four. Finally, the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study were discussed in Chapter Five of the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.0 Introduction

The concept of inclusive education has caught the attention of many, including educationists, researchers, professionals and scholars. It is in this direction that this part of the work tries to review what researchers and scholars have written related to the perceptions of teachers about inclusion of children with special needs. The literature review covered the following sub-headings:

- a. Theoretical Framework
- b. Regular school teachers understanding of inclusive education.
- c. Instructional adaption of teachers to meet the special needs children
- d. Resources and other support services available for teaching children with special needs.
- e. Challenges of teachers in inclusion of children with special needs.
- f. Strategies for mitigating challenges of teachers in inclusive education

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Luhmann's System Theory

The theoretical framework of this study is the Luhmann's System Theory (1995). Luhmann's System Theory, developed by German sociologist Niklas Luhmann, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and analyzing social systems and their dynamics (Luhmann, 1995). This theory emphasizes the self-referential nature of social systems and their ability to autonomously reproduce and maintain their structures through communication (Luhmann, 1984). At the core of Luhmann's theory is the concept of autopoiesis, which refers to the self-making and self-maintaining

nature of social systems (Luhmann, 1995). Social systems, such as organizations and institutions, are characterized by their functional differentiation into specialized subsystems that perform specific functions (Luhmann, 1984). These subsystems rely on communication as the primary means of coordination and interaction (Luhmann, 1995). Luhmann's System Theory offers insights into the functioning and dynamics of social systems, highlighting their self-referential nature, functional differentiation, reduction of complexity, and interaction with the environment. It provides a valuable framework for analyzing various aspects of social systems, including communication processes, adaptation to complexity, and the interplay between systems and their environment.

In the context of this study, Luhmann's System Theory was applied to understand how teachers perceive and interpret inclusive education within the context of St. John's Anglican Basic School. The theory emphasizes the interconnectedness of different social systems and the role of communication in shaping individuals' understanding. Through the lens of Luhmann's theory, the study can explore how teachers' understanding of inclusive education is influenced by their interactions with the school system, colleagues, students, and external factors.

Luhmann's System Theory was applied to analyze the instructional strategies employed by teachers to meet the special needs of children. The theory highlights the importance of communication and information processing within social systems. By examining the communication processes and patterns of information exchange between teachers, students, and other stakeholders, the study can gain insights into how instructional strategies are developed, implemented, and adapted to address the unique needs of children in an inclusive setting.

Luhmann's System Theory was utilized to understand the availability and utilization of resources and support services for teachers in meeting the special needs of children. The theory emphasizes the role of communication and information flow in the functioning of social systems. By analyzing the communication channels and processes through which teachers access resources and support services, the study can assess the effectiveness of the school system in providing adequate support for inclusive education.

Luhmann's System Theory helped to identify and analyze the challenges faced by teachers in providing inclusive education at St. John's Anglican Basic School. The theory emphasizes the dynamic nature of social systems and the interdependence of different subsystems. By examining the communication patterns and interactions between teachers, students, administrators, and external stakeholders, the study can identify the systemic barriers and constraints that hinder the successful implementation of inclusive education. This can include issues related to policy, resource allocation, collaboration, and support systems within the school and wider social context.

Applying Luhmann's System Theory to this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and complexities of inclusive education in St. John's Anglican Basic School can be achieved. The theory's emphasis on communication, information processing, and interdependence provides a framework for analyzing the various components and interactions within the system, thereby informing strategies for improving inclusive practices and addressing the challenges faced by teachers.

2.2 Regular School Teachers' Understanding of Inclusive Education

According to O'Rourke and Houghton (2008), the most often voiced concerns regarding the implementation of inclusive education were the perceived lack of

teaching expertise, the constrained amount of preparation time, and a lack of resources. It is important to address the perceived needs of teachers who are seen to meet a variety of student demands in regular sessions.

According to several research, primary and high school teachers have comparable opinions about inclusive education, both favourable and negative (Barco, 2007; Ross-Hill, 2009). Recent studies have shown that little has changed over the past decade regarding high school teachers' perceptions of inclusive education. According to Sharma, Ee, and Desai's findings from 2003, pre-service teachers' worries about inclusive education seemed to decrease after receiving special education training. In a similar vein, Subban and Sharma (2001) showed that instructors who reported receiving special education training had more favourable views of implementing inclusive education. According to Loreman et al. (2007), data indicated that teachers' attitudes of inclusive education were adversely affected by their special/inclusive education training, or lack thereof.

Ali et al. (2006) discovered, in contrast, that teachers generally had favourable sentiments regarding inclusive education. The teachers believed that inclusive education improved social interaction and inclusion among the children, eliminating negative stereotypes about special needs pupils, in accordance with the findings of their study. No matter how long their history in education goes back, inclusive education poses a very difficult issue for educational systems from all over the world. This method entails not only including students with disabilities in regular classrooms, but also modifying curricula to meet the needs of every student, regardless of his or her degree of psychological or physical development, social or ethnic background, or family. In order to meet all of the educational needs of children, it is additionally required to

change the organizational and managerial structure of educational institutions as well as the scope of the function and significance of schools.

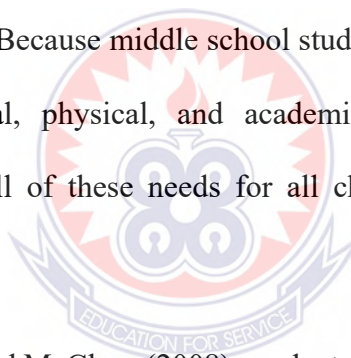
Labeling children and separating them into "special needs" and "mainstream" schools prevents equal access to social and academic possibilities (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 2009; UNESCO, 2017). Hence, for more than 20 years, worldwide legislation has pushed the inclusion of kids with disabilities and special needs in regular classrooms. Yet, due to conflicting results and a dearth of well-designed studies in this field, it is uncertain whether inclusive education is beneficial in generating favourable educational and social outcomes (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1995; Kavale & Forness, 2000; Lindsay, 2007).

Successful inclusive methods may be hampered by mainstream instructor attitudes, which may operate as a barrier (Avramidis, et al, 2000; Bender et al, 1995; De Boer et al, 2010). Although they generally support the idea of inclusion, teachers often find it difficult to put the concept into practice (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Yet, it has been claimed that teacher perspectives may be more accurately described as neutral or even unfavourable attitudes toward inclusion (De Boer et al., 2010). Teachers in regular schools were, in fact, less optimistic than special school teachers regarding the potential of students with learning difficulties. There is conflicting evidence about the effects of in-service training (INSET), support, and experience on teachers' attitudes (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Cagran & Schmidt, 2011).

Ryndak et al. (2000) found that teachers believed inclusion students should be placed in general education settings surrounded by general education students of approximately the same age. They stated that inclusion should occur on a regular basis for the majority of the school day as if the inclusion students did not have a disability.

The experts indicated that students with disabilities should be included in both academic and non-academic settings to maximize experiences interacting with students without disabilities.

The penultimate proponents of inclusion, according to the experts in Ryndak and colleagues (2000) study, discussed the pervasive nature of inclusion. The experts reported that inclusion must be established throughout the entire school system, not just in individual classrooms or schools. These expert educators also purported that inclusion was a complete integration of general and special education to meet the specific educational, physical, and emotional needs of each child. Other researchers concurred that inclusion needs to be integrated school wide (Matzen et al., 2010; Wehmeyer et al., 2003). Because middle school students are experiencing upheaval of them in socio-emotional, physical, and academic lives, educators must accept responsibility to meet all of these needs for all children (National Middle School Association, 2010).



Santoli, Sachs, Romey and McClurg (2008) conducted research among educators in the Southeastern U.S. regarding their attitudes toward inclusion. They found that despite the fact that almost all teachers interviewed (98.2%) were willing to make necessary accommodations for students with disabilities, the majority of those teachers (76.8%) felt that students with disabilities should not be educated in general classrooms no matter what the simplicity or severity of the disability, especially students with behavioural disorders and/or intellectual disability. Overwhelmingly, the teachers had a positive attitude toward inclusion, and believed that, with enough training and administrative support, the additional burden of the adaptations and the extra classroom time needed for special education students was feasible.

On the other hand, research revealed that some teachers in inclusive classrooms recognized the positive social benefits for both special and general education students (Downing & Peckham-Hardin, 2007; Fisher & Meyer, 2002; Matzen et al., 2010). General education teachers expressed concern, however, over the limited amount of time students with disabilities spend in the general classroom. Various issues, such as throwing tantrums and aggressive behaviours like hitting, biting, and spitting result in student removal from the classroom limiting their exposure and opportunity to be engaged in the curriculum. Hence, general educators felt unsure about the amount of core curriculum students with disabilities were actually mastering and how to assess what students with disabilities are learning.

Both general and special educators expressed frustration over the lack of time to collaborate with special education teachers regarding appropriate interventions and modifications that could grant further exposure to the general education curriculum. A common complaint for general educators was a feeling that they had little to no input on the instructional activities and content that students with disabilities should participate in while in the general education classroom. General education teachers believed that students with disabilities would master a greater amount of general curriculum content if the general education teachers had more direct input into the instructional methods used with and content taught to special needs students (Downing & Peckham-Hardin, 2007; Matzen et al., 2010).

Despite the continued movement toward inclusive practices however, recent studies (Dupoux, Wolman, & Estrada, 2005; Loreman, Forlin & Sharma, 2007; Barco, 2007; RossHill, 2009) have found that many teachers have less than positive attitudes towards students with disabilities and their inclusion in general education classrooms. Several

studies have shown that primary and high school teachers share similar perceptions regarding inclusive education; some negative, and some positive as well (Dupoux, Wolman, & Estrada, 2005; Barco, 2007; Ross-Hill, 2009). Wiggins (2012) found a significant relationship between high school teachers' perceptions of inclusion and classroom setting. This researcher concluded that teachers with experience in teaching within inclusive classrooms held more favourable perceptions toward inclusive education than those teachers who did not teach in inclusive classrooms. Recent studies have shown that much hasn't changed over the past decade regarding high school teachers' perceptions of inclusive education; in a study which investigated the perceptions of general education in grades K-12, Dev (1996) revealed that overall, teachers expressed more positive attitudes toward mainstreaming than inclusion.

Sharma, Ee and Desai (2003) found that training in special education appeared to lessen pre-service teacher's concerns regarding inclusive education. Similarly, Subban and Sharma (2001) revealed that teachers who reported having undertaken training in special education were found to hold more positive perceptions about implementing inclusive education. Loreman, Forlin and Sharma (2007) reported similar findings which showed that teachers' perceptions of inclusive education were negatively impacted by their training, or lack thereof, in special/inclusive education. In contrast, Ali, Mustapha, and Jelas (2006) found that in general, teachers held positive attitudes towards inclusive education. According to the results of their study, the teachers agreed that inclusive education enhanced social interaction and inclusion among the students and thus minimizing negative stereotypes on special needs students.

The importance of teachers understanding and competency in any educational endeavor cannot be over emphasized. Teachers' understanding of inclusive education is reflected

in the knowledge and skills they possess. Many regular teachers feel that they have little or no understanding of the concept of inclusive education to handle individuals with special educational needs even though some have attended seminars and workshops and have read some articles and papers on the inclusive philosophy, their understanding of meeting the required needs of children with special educational needs still borders their minds as to how they can handle and manage them in real classroom situations. Regular teachers who understand the principles of inclusion are more willing to be part of the inclusive team. This explains the importance of the study of the discipline of special education by general education teachers.

Hayford (1999) in a study of "student- teacher's perception on inclusive education in Ghana found out that teachers who have been exposed to special needs education tend to understand the concept and have positive attitudes towards children with special needs. They tend to look for better if not the best service for them. This understanding and knowledge puts them in a better position to attend to the educational needs of children with special needs. To improve upon the regular teacher's understanding on the concept of inclusive education, teachers need better qualifications. Suggested topics, parent-teacher co-operation, curriculum adaption, Individual Education Plans (IEPs), classroom management and adaptation of materials should be tailored to meet their competence.

Furthermore, several studies have highlighted that teachers' knowledge and awareness of inclusive education play a crucial role in its successful implementation. Research by Avramidis and Kalyva (2012) found that teachers who have a good understanding of inclusive practices are more likely to create supportive and inclusive learning

environments for students with special needs. Conversely, teachers with limited knowledge may struggle to address the diverse needs of their students effectively. Teachers' attitudes and beliefs about inclusive education can significantly influence their willingness to accommodate students with special needs in regular classrooms. Positive attitudes toward inclusion have been associated with a greater commitment to providing appropriate support and modifications for diverse learners (Soodak, Podell, & Lehman, 1998). On the other hand, negative attitudes or misconceptions about inclusive education can hinder the successful integration of students with disabilities (Avramidis et al., 2000). Studies have emphasized the importance of continuous professional development for teachers to enhance their understanding of inclusive education. Research by Sailor et al. (2009) suggested that teachers who participated in comprehensive and sustained professional development programmes were more likely to adopt inclusive practices and support the learning needs of all students.

Understanding the specific instructional strategies and accommodations required to meet the needs of diverse learners is vital for teachers in inclusive classrooms. Studies have shown that when teachers are equipped with effective instructional techniques, such as differentiation and individualized instruction, they can better cater for the diverse learning needs of their students (Tomlinson, 1999).

In conclusion, the understanding of teachers about inclusion of learners with special needs is a complex and multifaceted topic that has been extensively studied in previous research. Teachers' knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, professional development opportunities, classroom practices, collaboration, and the challenges they face all play significant roles in shaping the inclusiveness of their educational environments. By

addressing these factors, educational stakeholders can work towards creating more inclusive and supportive learning environments for all students.

2.3 Instructional Adaption of Teachers to Meet the Children with Special Needs

Studies have explored various instructional adaptation strategies employed by teachers to meet the special needs of children. These strategies include differentiated instruction, individualized education plans (IEPs), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), assistive technologies, peer-assisted learning, and continuous professional development.

Previous research has explored various instructional adaptation strategies employed by teachers to meet the diverse needs of special needs children. For example, Tomlinson (2001) emphasized the importance of differentiated instruction, which involves tailoring instructional methods, materials, and assessments to meet individual students' needs. Differentiation strategies include providing additional support, modifying assignments, and utilizing assistive technologies. Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) have been widely studied as a means of adapting instruction for special needs children. IEPs are personalized plans that outline specific goals, accommodations, and support services for each student with a disability. Studies have shown that effective IEPs, when collaboratively developed with input from parents, students, and educators, can guide instructional adaptation and promote positive learning outcomes (Dunn, 2010).

Rose and Meyer (2002) investigated the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) for promoting inclusive education. The findings of the study revealed that the concept of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) has gained prominence in recent years. UDL promotes the design of instruction that caters for the diverse learning needs of all students, including those with special needs. UDL principles emphasize providing

multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to enhance accessibility and engagement in the learning process.

Also, the integration of assistive technologies in instruction has been explored as a way to adapt teaching methods for special needs children. A study by Hasselbring and Bausch (2005) revealed that assistive technologies such as speech-to-text software, augmentative and alternative communication devices, and adaptive learning platforms can provide support and facilitate access to the curriculum for students with disabilities. Peer-assisted learning strategies have been investigated as a means of instructional adaptation for special needs children. Peer tutoring, cooperative learning, and inclusive group activities allow for peer support and interaction, which can enhance learning experiences and outcomes for students with disabilities (Sapon-Shevin, 2000). Previous studies have emphasized the significance of ongoing professional development for teachers to effectively adapt instruction for special needs children. Professional development programmes that focus on inclusive practices, specific disabilities, and evidence-based instructional strategies have been found to positively impact teachers' knowledge and skills (Cook & Schirmer, 2003).

It is true that general education teachers are concerned with academic results and they are not experts in curriculum development. Adaptation here does not mean creating a new curriculum, but to give the child what his or her needs demands for successful functioning. The task must be "watered down" to the level of the children. This is also a form of differentiation that targets the child with specific learning needs and in functional curriculum. With the move to inclusive, regular classroom teachers need to adapt instructions since teaching special needs children is not the same as teaching "normal" students. Literature has shown that the successes of inclusion largely hinges

on the instructional adaption of teachers and make accommodations for individuals with special needs (skills (Cook & Schirmer, 2003).

Adapting instructions refers to the selection of appropriate instructional strategies, methods and skills for all students. Regular teachers should plan instructional practices with every child in mind so that every student has an opportunity to learn and benefit from the experiences.

The regular classroom teacher would have to adapt the;

- a. Whole class in the same manner (direct instructions, group work, etc).
- b. Small group with similar needs, abilities and interest for the purpose of enrichment, extension, reinforcement or differential teaching.
- c. One-to —one instruction or independent study.
- d. Co-operation instructions which involves two or more teachers to meet the special needs of every single child.
- e. Peer tutoring and cross-age tutoring where children tutor each other by task given by the regular classroom teacher. Children are individuals; they have distinct thinking patterns, diverse modes of processing information and different methods of finding the needed solution to problems.

The use of different learning and teaching styles, strategies, methods, skills, curriculum modifications and technology are ways of instructional adaption for inclusion to work. Accommodating a child with specific needs is a continual process that involves each child's collaborative team. Teaching staff can create an inclusive environment for children with special needs by implementing the following adaptations. The activities and materials used in most early childhood classrooms are designed to meet the needs of many children with or without disabilities. When they do not meet the specific needs

of a child, they can be adapted or expanded to accommodate that child's individual needs. The purpose of an adaptation is to assist children in compensating for intellectual, physical, or behavioural challenges. They allow children to use their current skills while promoting the acquisition of new skills (Dunn, 2010).

Adaptations can make the difference between a child merely being present in the class and a child being actively involved. Developing adaptations and accommodations for a child with special needs is a continuous process that involves each child's collaborative team. The first step is to assess the child's abilities and the environment where the child would be spending time. Once the goals and objectives are identified and expectations for the child's participation in that environment are established, the team selects or creates adaptations and accommodations that address those needs (Dunn, 2010).

Once implemented, their effectiveness should be assessed on an ongoing basis and revised, as needed. To meet the specific needs of a child, changes may need to be made in one or more of the following instructional conditions. Remember, when the child can participate in an activity, as it is, no changes need to be made.

- a. Instructional groupings or arrangements: For any given activity there are a number of instructional arrangements from which to choose: large groups, small groups, cooperative learning groups, peer partners, one-to-one instruction, and/or independent tasks.
- b. Lesson format - The format of a lesson may be altered to meet the needs of a child by including more opportunities for whole class discussions, games, role playing, activity based lessons, experiential lessons, demonstrations, and/or thematic lesson organization.

- c. Teaching strategies - A change in teaching strategies can influence a child's ability to participate.
- d. Examples include: simplifying directions, addition of visual information, use of concrete materials/examples, sequencing learning tasks from easy to hard, repeated opportunities to practice skills, changes in the schedule of reinforcement, elaboration or shaping of responses, verbal prompts and/or direct physical assistance.
- e. Curricular goals and learning outcomes: To match the needs of a child within the context of an activity, it may be appropriate to individualize the learning objectives. This can often be accomplished using the same activities and materials. If children are working on a classification concept by sorting blocks, a child with a disability could participate in the same activity but focus of reaching, grasping, and releasing skills.

Adaptations to the method for responding: Sometimes children may understand a concept yet need an adaptation in the way they demonstrate that knowledge. Use of augmentative communication systems, eye gaze, and demonstrations may better allow a child to demonstrate his/her skills (Dunn, 2010).

Environmental conditions - The environmental arrangement is an important aspect of any early childhood setting. Changes in lighting, noise level, visual and auditory input, physical arrangement of the room or equipment, and accessibility of materials are important considerations.

Modification of instructional materials - It is sometimes necessary to physically adapt instructional or play materials to facilitate a child's participation. Materials can be physically adapted by increasing: stability (Dycem™ or Velcro™ on materials), ease

of handling (adding handles, making materials larger), accessibility (developing a hand splint to hold materials, attaching an elastic cord or string to objects so they can be easily moved or retrieved), visual clarity or distinctiveness (adding contrast or specialized lighting), or size.

Level of personal assistance - A child's need for assistance may range from periodic spot checks to close continuous supervision. Assistance may vary from day to day and be provided by adults or peers.

An alternative activity - This curricular adaptation should be used as a last choice when the above conditions cannot be used to meet a child's needs (Dunn, 2010).

2.4 Resources and other Support Service for Teaching Children with Special

Needs

Teaching Learning Materials are physical or digital resources used to support instruction. Inclusive classrooms often require a range of TLMs to accommodate the diverse learning needs of children with special needs. These may include visual aids, manipulatives, assistive technologies, and adaptive tools. Research by Sharma and Desai (2002) highlighted the importance of appropriate TLMs in promoting active engagement and learning for students with special needs.

Special education experts or resource persons provide specialized knowledge and guidance to teachers working with children with special needs. These professionals can offer insights into individualized instruction, behaviour management techniques, and appropriate interventions. Collaborating with special education experts has been found to enhance teachers' capacity to meet the needs of students with disabilities (Schumm & Vaughn, 1995).

Educational institutions, such as universities, education services, or municipal directorates, often provide support systems to assist teachers in meeting the special needs of children. This may include access to professional development workshops, training programmes, and consultation services. Research by Gorian and Fraenkel (2017) highlighted the positive impact of support systems in enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills in inclusive education.

Supportive policies and legislation play a crucial role in promoting inclusive education and providing necessary resources. These policies may focus on funding allocation, personnel training, and ensuring accessibility. Research by Stainback and Stainback (1990) emphasized the significance of inclusive education policies in creating an inclusive culture within educational systems.

Collaborating with support staff, such as special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and therapists, can greatly enhance the support available for teaching children with special needs. These professionals offer expertise in specific areas and can provide additional support within the classroom. Research by Giangreco et al. (2001) emphasized the importance of collaboration between regular and special education teachers in meeting the diverse needs of students with disabilities.

Parents play a critical role in supporting the education of children with special needs. Collaboration between teachers and parents can ensure a consistent approach to support and reinforce learning strategies at home. Research by Turnbull et al. (2007) highlighted the positive impact of parental involvement in promoting the success of inclusive education.

Children with special educational needs may be in ordinary classes in mainstream primary schools or in special classes in these schools. They may get additional

educational support from learning support and resource teachers and care support from special needs assistants (SNAs). The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) has published an information booklet for parents, children with special educational needs.

A learning support teacher service is generally available to all primary schools. The Learning Support Guidelines published by the Department of Education and Skills explain the aims and activities of learning support programmes. They include the procedures for identifying and selecting children who might have difficulty with reading or mathematics, learning difficulties or special educational needs and who need supplemental teaching. It is the learning support teachers who provide this extra teaching. A learning support teacher service is generally available to all primary schools. Further psychological assessment does not occur until the learning support teacher and the class teacher have tried to address the child's problems. Children who continue to have difficulty coping with the curriculum can be psychologically assessed by the National Educational Psychological Service and may be eligible for resource teacher support.

Primary schools get a general allocation to meet the needs of children with high incidence or less severe, more commonly occurring special needs. This includes specific learning disabilities such as dyslexia and borderline and mild general learning disabilities. Learning support/resource teachers are appointed to provide support under the general allocation of additional teaching resources to help schools to make suitable provision for:

- a. Pupils who are eligible for learning-support teaching
- b. Pupils with learning difficulties

- c. Pupils who have special educational needs arising from high incidence disabilities (borderline-mild general learning disability and specific learning disability) (Turnbull et al., 2007).

Learning difficulties includes pupils with mild speech and language difficulties, mild social or emotional difficulties and mild co-ordination or attention control difficulties associated with identified conditions such as dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder (ADD), and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Pupils with these conditions who have been assessed as being in the low incidence category get individual support. Each school decides how the resources for high incidence support are used and how they are divided among the students who need such support. The additional teaching may be provided in the classroom or in small separate groups and some pupils may need additional one-to-one teaching for a specified period.

A resource is a source of aid (human, capital) or support that may be drawn upon when needed to facilitate effective work output. Resources in education are those personnel, facilities or equipment that aid effective teaching and learning. A teaching resource is what the teacher prepares or uses to make teaching and learning easier than it would have been without it. Similarly, a learning resource is that which the children or learners prepares themselves or uses to make learning easier. This helps to make teaching and learning more beneficial. Qualified teachers make differences in children's academic performance. The use of instructional materials or resources in teaching and learning cannot be over emphasized. These resources together with support services play a crucial role for effective teaching and learning. When applied to inclusion, the needs for these resources and support services become more determinative. According to Turnbull et al. (2007), teachers who have experienced negative situations, report higher

discrepancy between the number and type of resources they need to participate in inclusion and the availability of those resources.

Research have shown that the continue denial of education to children with special needs in regular schools is mainly due to lack of resources and support networks for the concept of inclusion. Teachers who receive adequate on-going support, resources and progressive training feel positive about inclusion. One factor that affect teachers towards inclusion include pre-prepared teaching materials, inflexible timetable, and inadequate time for planning and inadequate specialist support. On support, Tash identifies some prerequisites. These are;

- a. provision of all necessary and appropriate support and services to provide all children with opportunities for success;
- b. A broad range of personal support services (e.g., speech, reading, occupational therapy) which are closely coordinated with the general education classroom's goals and activities and which are provided in general education settings.
- c. Instructional and assistive technologies that foster self-determination, participation and choice;
- d. The use of positive behavioural supports that are based on functional assessment of problem behaviour (Engelbrecht et al., 2003).

Planning and implementing Individualized Education Programmes (IEPs), working closely with multi-disciplinary specialized personnel such as, audiologist, speech therapist, psychologists, itinerant teachers, special education coordinators, parents and governmental supports goes a long way to provide good resources and support services needed for meeting the needs of special children in regular basic schools.

In conclusion, the literature review suggests that resources and support services play a crucial role in facilitating inclusive education for children with special needs. Teaching Learning Materials, collaboration with special education experts, support systems from educational institutions, inclusive education policies, collaboration with support staff, and parental involvement are all important resources and services that can enhance teachers' ability to meet the special needs of children in inclusive classrooms.

2.5 Challenges or Barriers Educators Experience in Implementing Inclusive Education

Inability to address the needs and concerns of the educators may make it more difficult to implement inclusive education and increase educator stress. The goal of inclusive education is to remove any obstacles to learning that are built into the system, such as obstacles to physical access, obstacles in the curriculum, or obstacles brought on by the atmosphere in the classroom, to mention a few (Engelbrecht et al., 2001).

2.5.1 Educator Stress

The best way to characterize educator stress is as a complicated process including interaction between the teacher and the environment, which includes stressors and responses (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). Unpleasant feelings including tension, irritation, worry, rage, and depression are believed to be involved (Engelbrecht et al., 2003; Moolla, 2005). According to their occupation, educators are known to endure four different types of stress. They include issues with students, scheduling constraints, a weak staff culture, and unfavourable working conditions (Engelbrecht et al., 2003; Engelbrecht, 2006; Moolla, 2005). It is possible that implementing inclusive education may put more demands on teachers, possibly leading to stress. It is assumed that educator stress would be reduced if there are minimal discrepancies between educators'

perceptions of the availability of resources and support and their perceived need for those resources and support that are seen to be used in an inclusive educational environment (Engelbrecht et al., 2003).

2.5.2 Curriculum related issues

The curriculum within a school reflects the economic, social and cultural conditions of the community and gives all members of society a voice (Chappell, 2008). However, this is not always that easy to achieve. Educators were expected to shift their teaching to outcomes based education (OBE), this resulted in many educators feeling overwhelmed, frustrated and helpless due to the changes that occurred (Engelbrecht et al., 2001). OBE is inclusive by nature and focuses on students learning at their own pace, and takes into consideration the barriers to learning found in the classroom (Hays, 2009; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). Educators became concerned and worried about meeting governmental standards that the Educational Department emphasised and then also meeting the individualised goals for each special needs student (Cushing et al., 2005).

The governmental standards educators need to involves the adapting of the Government Curriculum as well as their teaching styles in order for inclusion to become successful (Burke & Sutherland, 2004; Engelbrecht et al., 1999). Research has indicated that educators are generally too inexperienced to be able to handle the demands of the new curriculum and this could result in educators being reluctant to introduce new concepts and approaches to their teaching (Hays, 2009).

Recently, curriculum has changed and this may require educators to once again adapt themselves to further changes. This is due to many educators perceiving themselves as incapable of managing diverse classrooms (Hays, 2009). The curriculum is classified

as an inflexible standard, which results in the lack of relevance of subject content to all students. This could result in high levels of failures and drop outs (Department of Education, 2001; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). The curriculum is seen to be an external barrier to learning and it therefore obliges educators to use different teaching methods to address these concerns (Hays, 2009). Therefore, curriculum differentiation is a vitally important aspect to assist in the effective implementation of inclusive education (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). Ghesquiere, Moors, Maes and Vanddenberghe (2002) indicated that educators differentiated teaching methods in the hope of differentiating the curriculum; however, the educators in their study did not adapt the goals, content and evaluation methods to each individual need. Avramidis et al. (2000) reported that educators perceived material resources as vital components in adapting the curriculum to students with different barriers to learning.

Changes to existing educational aids are fundamental to enable students to participate in classroom activities and routines (Hays, 2009; Wylde, 2007). O'Rourke and Houghton (2008) and Moolla (2005) mentioned mechanisms or skills that are effective in the implementation of inclusive education, these being co-operative learning, explicit and individualised instruction, peer support, curriculum differentiation and instructional strategies as well as teacher collaboration. Shongwe (2005) reported the following effective strategies for teaching in an inclusive classroom, namely group work, which provides support for students with barriers to learning from their educators and their peers in the classroom. Group work may also create a better understanding of cooperative learning and is beneficial to effective classroom management (Shongwe, 2005). Fox (2003) stated that if educators used a structured teaching style, and appropriate support was provided, then the successful inclusion of students, irrespective of the type or severity of their barrier to learning is possible.

2.5.3 Training Issues

The dispersion of teacher education has resulted in significant differences in its time and quality (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). A lot of educators are perceived as being at a disadvantage because of the inadequate quality of their professional training (Engelbrecht et al., 2003). According to research, the effective development of inclusive practices depends on professional development, including initial teacher training and ongoing professional development (Avramidis et al., 2000; Pearson & Chambers, 2005).

In the past, universities, teacher training schools, and non-governmental or private organizations were the main providers of in-service training (Logan, 2002). The majority of these lacked clear overall policy guidelines that had been developed by government education ministries (Logan, 2002). Because to this, educators developed their own professional development plans to ensure they have the skills and information needed (Logan, 2002). The issues with these in-service training programmes were that they were primarily out of reach for many South African educators due to their cost, admittance requirements, requirements for educators' language proficiency, travel expenses, and workload (Logan, 2002). All of the aforementioned considerations generated obstacles that kept educators from taking advantage of these training programmes.

2.5.4 Class size

Class size is frequently cited as a hindrance to successful learning in inclusive settings (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Shongwe, 2005; Wylde, 2007). Less time is allotted to the other students in a class when there are more children who have learning difficulties since the majority of special education students require more one-on-one time from the

teachers (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). According to Avramidis et al. (2000), educators concurred that classes should be kept to a maximum of 20 pupils in order to effectively implement inclusive education. If the disciplinary and behaviour problems worsen, educators can also encounter problems with an overwhelming number of pupils.

Many of the learning obstacles stated above are related to the fact that teachers are not given enough time to fully implement inclusive education techniques, including time to plan the following day and time to modify the curriculum to address the children who have learning obstacles (Avramidis, et al., 2000). It is clear from the aforementioned learning hurdles that while establishing inclusive educational programmes, it is crucial to consider the particular environment of the school (Engelbrecht, 2006).

2.6 Strategies to Mitigate the Challenges that Teachers Face in Promoting Inclusive Education

According to Smith and Johnson (2019), several strategies have been identified in the literature to mitigate the challenges that teachers face in promoting inclusive education. These strategies include:

2.6.1 Professional development and training

Professional development programmes focused on inclusive education have been found to be effective in equipping teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills (Ruijs & Peetsma, 2017). Training workshops and courses provide opportunities for teachers to learn about inclusive practices and effective instructional strategies. Professional development and training is a crucial aspect of promoting inclusive education, but it is not without its challenges. One challenge is the availability and accessibility of relevant

training programmes. Not all teachers have equal access to professional development opportunities, especially those working in remote or resource-constrained areas. Limited funding and logistical constraints may restrict the availability of training workshops and courses, making it difficult for teachers to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills in inclusive education (Loreman et al., 2014).

According to Loreman et al. (2014), inclusive education is a complex and evolving field, and teachers need continuous support and learning opportunities to stay updated with the latest research, practices, and strategies. One-off training sessions may not be sufficient to address the diverse and dynamic needs of students with special needs. It is important to establish a culture of continuous learning and provide follow-up support to ensure that teachers can effectively implement inclusive practices in their classrooms.

Furthermore, the challenge lies in ensuring the relevance and effectiveness of the training programmes. Not all professional development programmes may align with the specific context and needs of teachers and students in a particular school or region. Training should be tailored to address the unique challenges and characteristics of the local educational setting. Additionally, the content and delivery methods of training should be evidence-based and grounded in research to ensure their effectiveness in improving teachers' knowledge and skills in inclusive education. Time constraints can also pose a challenge to professional development. Teachers have demanding workloads and multiple responsibilities, which can make it challenging to allocate dedicated time for training and development activities. It is important to consider flexible and innovative approaches, such as online courses or blended learning, to accommodate teachers' schedules and facilitate their participation in professional

development initiatives. Teachers may face resistance or lack of support from colleagues, administrators, or even students' families when trying to implement inclusive practices. It is crucial to create a supportive school culture that values and promotes inclusive education, providing ongoing mentoring, coaching, and collaborative opportunities for teachers to apply and refine their skills (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002).

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and systemic approach that involves collaboration among policymakers, school leaders, teacher educators, and teachers themselves. By recognizing and addressing the challenges related to professional development and training, stakeholders can work together to ensure that teachers are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to promote inclusive education

2.6.2 Collaborative and team-based approaches

Collaboration among teachers, specialists, and support staff has been shown to enhance inclusive practices (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Collaborative team meetings and co-teaching models allow for the sharing of expertise and resources (Friend and Cook, 2016). Collaborative and team-based approaches play a vital role in mitigating the challenges faced by teachers in promoting inclusive education. By working together and fostering collaboration among teachers, specialists, and support staff, schools can create a supportive and inclusive environment that benefits all students, including those with special needs. One key advantage of collaborative approaches according to Friend and Cook (2016), is the opportunity for sharing expertise and resources. Collaborative team meetings provide a platform for teachers to discuss and exchange ideas, strategies, and best practices related to inclusive education. These meetings allow teachers to draw

on each other's knowledge and experiences, benefiting from a collective pool of expertise. By tapping into the diverse perspectives and skills of team members, teachers can access a wider range of strategies and interventions to meet the needs of students with special needs effectively.

Co-teaching models are another collaborative approach that has gained prominence in inclusive education. Co-teaching involves two or more teachers working together in the same classroom, sharing the responsibility for planning, instruction, and assessment. This collaborative approach allows for the seamless integration of students with special needs into the general education setting. Co-teachers can combine their knowledge and skills to differentiate instruction, provide individualized support, and create inclusive learning environments that address the diverse needs of all students. Collaborative approaches also facilitate a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of students' needs. By involving specialists and support staff, such as special education teachers, speech therapists, or occupational therapists, in collaborative teams, teachers can access specialized knowledge and resources to support students with specific needs. These specialists can provide valuable insights and recommendations, helping teachers to tailor their instructional strategies and accommodations to meet the individual needs of students. Furthermore, collaboration fosters a sense of collective responsibility and shared accountability. When teachers collaborate, they develop a shared vision and common goals for inclusive education. This shared commitment helps to create a supportive culture where teachers feel empowered and supported in implementing inclusive practices. Collaborative approaches also enhance communication and coordination among team members, leading to more effective planning, implementation, and evaluation of inclusive strategies (Engelbrecht et al., 2003).

However, successful collaboration requires effective communication, trust, and respect among team members. It is important to establish clear roles and responsibilities, promote open dialogue, and provide opportunities for professional development and learning together. Building a collaborative culture takes time and effort, but the benefits in terms of improved student outcomes and a more inclusive learning environment are significant. Collaborative and team-based approaches are instrumental in addressing the challenges faced by teachers in promoting inclusive education. Through collaboration, teachers can share expertise, resources, and strategies, leading to enhanced instructional practices and improved outcomes for students with special needs. Collaborative approaches also foster a sense of collective responsibility and create a supportive culture that promotes inclusive values and practices (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2013). By embracing collaborative approaches, schools can create inclusive learning environments where all students can thrive.

2.6.3 Individualized instruction and differentiated learning

Tomlinson et al. (2003) opine that differentiated instructional strategies cater to the diverse needs of students. Individualized education plans (IEPs) and targeted interventions can provide customized support (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2013). Individualized instruction and differentiated learning strategies are essential in addressing the diverse needs of students in inclusive education settings. These approaches recognize that students have varying abilities, learning styles, and preferences, and aim to tailor instruction to meet their individual needs. Differentiated instructional strategies, as proposed by Tomlinson et al. (2003), involve modifying the content, process, and products of learning to accommodate different student abilities and interests. Teachers employ a variety of instructional methods, materials, and

assessments to ensure that all students can access and engage with the curriculum effectively. For example, in a mixed-ability classroom, teachers may provide different reading materials at varying levels of difficulty, offer alternative assignments or projects, or provide additional support or challenge based on individual student needs. This approach allows students to progress at their own pace and maximizes their learning potential.

Individualized education plans (IEPs) are another important tool in promoting individualized instruction. IEPs are tailored plans that outline specific goals, accommodations, and interventions for students with special needs. Scruggs and Mastropieri (2013) emphasize the significance of IEPs in providing customized support to address students' unique learning needs. These plans involve collaborative efforts among teachers, parents, and specialists to identify students' strengths, weaknesses, and specific learning goals. By individualizing instruction through IEPs, teachers can design targeted interventions and accommodations that support students' academic, social, and emotional development. According to Harry and Klingner (2014), implementing individualized instruction and differentiated learning strategies requires teachers to have a deep understanding of their students' abilities, interests, and learning profiles. They need to gather ongoing assessment data, including formal and informal assessments, to inform their instructional decisions and identify areas of individual need. With this information, teachers can adjust their teaching methods, provide additional support or enrichment opportunities, and offer appropriate scaffolding to ensure that all students can actively participate and make progress in their learning.

2.6.4 Use of Assistive Technologies and Inclusive Resources

Assistive technologies and inclusive resources play a crucial role in promoting accessibility and supporting students with special needs in inclusive education settings. These technologies and resources provide additional support, accommodations, and adaptations to help students overcome barriers and actively participate in their learning experiences. Hetzroni and Shrieber (2004) highlight the importance of assistive technologies in inclusive education. These technologies encompass a wide range of tools and devices designed to assist individuals with disabilities in various aspects of their lives, including education. In the context of inclusive education, assistive technologies can provide support for students with visual impairments, hearing impairments, physical disabilities, learning disabilities, and other special needs.

One example of assistive technology is text-to-speech software, which converts written text into spoken words. This technology enables students with visual impairments or reading difficulties to access written information more easily. By using text-to-speech software, students can listen to text-based materials such as textbooks, articles, or websites, thus facilitating their comprehension and engagement with the content (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2013)

Another example is alternative communication devices, such as augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems. These tools assist students with speech or language impairments in expressing their thoughts, ideas, and needs. AAC systems can range from simple picture communication boards to sophisticated electronic devices that generate spoken words based on user input. By using AAC systems, students with communication difficulties can actively participate in classroom discussions, interact with peers, and communicate their ideas effectively (Harry & Klingner, 2014).

Inclusive resources are also important in supporting students with special needs. These resources include adapted materials, modified curriculum, and specially designed learning materials that address individual student requirements. For instance, teachers may provide simplified texts or graphic organizers to support students with reading comprehension difficulties. They may also modify assignments or assessments to align with students' abilities and learning styles. Inclusive resources ensure that students with special needs have equal access to educational content and opportunities for meaningful learning.

It is important for teachers to receive training and support in using assistive technologies and implementing inclusive resources effectively. Professional development programmes and workshops can equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to integrate these tools and resources into their instructional practices. Collaboration with specialists, such as special education teachers, speech therapists, and technology experts, can also enhance teachers' ability to select and implement appropriate assistive technologies and inclusive resources.

2.6.5 Collaborative partnerships with families and the community

Involving families and the community promotes a supportive environment (Turnbull et al., 2015). Engaging in regular communication and involving families in decision-making processes can strengthen the home-school partnership (Harry & Klingner, 2014). Supportive policies and legislation play a critical role in promoting and sustaining inclusive education practices in any education system. These policies provide a legal framework and guidelines for schools and educational institutions to ensure that all students, including those with special needs, receive equal access to quality education.

Mitchell (2014) emphasizes the significance of supportive policies and legislation in fostering inclusive education. Inclusive education policies typically aim to eliminate discrimination, promote diversity, and ensure that all students have the right to access education in mainstream schools. Such policies may mandate that schools provide reasonable accommodations and support services to students with disabilities, ensuring they can fully participate in educational activities.

Inclusive education policies also advocate for the development of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for students with special needs. IEPs are personalized plans that outline the specific educational goals, accommodations, and support services tailored to meet each student's unique needs. These plans help to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment that caters for individual learning styles and abilities (Mitchell, 2014).

Furthermore, supportive policies ensure that educators receive adequate training and professional development to effectively implement inclusive education practices. By providing resources and funding for training programmes, policies enable teachers to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to accommodate diverse learners and create inclusive classrooms (Booth & Ainscow, 2018).

Booth and Ainscow (2018) highlight the importance of allocating sufficient resources, funding, and personnel to support inclusive education. The successful implementation of inclusive practices requires financial investment to provide necessary accommodations, specialized equipment, and assistive technologies. Moreover, hiring additional personnel, such as special education teachers, paraprofessionals, or therapists, can help cater for the diverse needs of students with disabilities. Supportive policies and legislation also address issues related to physical accessibility and

infrastructure. Schools may need to make physical modifications, such as ramps, elevators, or accessible washrooms, to ensure that students with physical disabilities can navigate the school environment without barriers. In addition to funding and resources, supportive policies encourage collaboration and partnerships between regular and special education teachers, school administrators, parents, and community members. Collaboration among stakeholders fosters a shared responsibility for the success of inclusive education and promotes a holistic approach to supporting students with special needs (Booth & Ainscow, 2018).

It is crucial for policymakers to regularly review and update inclusive education policies to reflect evolving needs and best practices. As research on inclusive education advances, policies must adapt to incorporate evidence-based strategies and innovative approaches. Supportive policies and legislation are fundamental pillars of inclusive education. They provide the legal framework, guidelines, and financial resources necessary to ensure equal access to quality education for all students. By fostering a collaborative and inclusive learning environment and addressing the unique needs of individual students, these policies contribute to creating a more equitable and inclusive education system.

2.6.6 Policy and systemic support

Supportive policies and legislation play a crucial role in promoting and facilitating inclusive education. Mitchell (2014) emphasizes the significance of having policies and legislation that explicitly support inclusive practices in schools. These policies provide a framework that ensures equal access to education for all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. They aim to create an inclusive environment that values diversity and supports the participation and achievement of every learner.

Supportive policies and legislation provide guidance and direction to education systems, schools, and educators in implementing inclusive practices. They promote the adoption of inclusive policies, procedures, and practices that eliminate barriers to learning and accommodate the diverse needs of students. These policies may address issues such as curriculum adaptation, individualized support, teacher training, and the provision of assistive technologies and resources.

Booth and Ainscow (2018) highlight the importance of adequate allocation of resources, funding, and personnel for the successful implementation of inclusive education. Inclusive practices require additional support, specialized services, and assistive technologies to meet the diverse needs of students. Adequate resources and funding enable schools to provide necessary accommodations, adapt learning materials, and provide professional development opportunities for educators.

Furthermore, personnel play a critical role in inclusive education. Teachers, support staff, and specialists need appropriate training and professional development to effectively implement inclusive practices and provide individualized support to students with special needs. Adequate staffing levels ensure that students receive the necessary attention and support in inclusive classrooms. Supportive policies and legislation provide a foundation for inclusive education by promoting inclusive practices and eliminating barriers to learning. Adequate allocation of resources, funding, and personnel is crucial for schools to implement these practices effectively. Combining supportive policies with sufficient resources and personnel can create an inclusive environment that values and supports the learning and development of all students.

2.6.7 Continuous assessment and monitoring

Regular assessment and monitoring are vital components of inclusive education as they inform instructional strategies and support students' progress. Through ongoing assessment, teachers gather valuable data about students' learning needs, strengths, and areas for improvement. This data-driven approach enables educators to tailor their instruction and interventions to meet the diverse needs of students with special needs.

Wiliam and Thompson (2008) emphasize the importance of regular assessment in their work on formative assessment. Formative assessment involves gathering evidence of student learning throughout the instructional process to provide timely feedback and adjust teaching strategies accordingly. This feedback loop allows teachers to monitor students' progress, identify any gaps in understanding, and provide targeted support to ensure optimal learning outcomes. Additionally, Black and Wiliam (1998) highlight the benefits of data-driven decision-making in supporting students with diverse needs. By using assessment data to inform instructional decisions, educators can identify areas where students may be struggling or require additional support. This approach allows for the implementation of targeted interventions and differentiated instruction that address individual students' learning needs. Regular assessment and monitoring also contribute to inclusive education by promoting accountability and tracking student progress over time. By documenting students' achievements and growth, educators can monitor their development and make informed decisions about appropriate instructional strategies and interventions. This process ensures that students receive the necessary support and adjustments to their educational plans as their needs evolve. These strategies, when implemented collectively and tailored to the specific context, can help mitigate the challenges faced by teachers in promoting inclusive education.

2.6.8 Creating Awareness in Inclusive Education

The Report of Global Campaign for Education (2015) has identified seven different strategies which could be used to create awareness about inclusive education. These strategies were:

- a. Create appropriate legislative frameworks, and set out ambitious national plans for inclusion.
- b. Provide the capacity, resources and leadership to implement ambitious national plans on inclusion.
- c. Improve data on disability and education, and build accountability for action.
- d. Make schools and classrooms accessible and relevant for all.
- e. Ensure there are enough appropriately trained teachers for all.
- f. Challenge attitudes which reinforce and sustain discrimination; and
- g. Create an enabling environment to support inclusive education, including thorough cross-sectoral policies and strategies that reduce exclusion.

The greatest way to create access for children in Ghana to get their education without any problem is laid out in a policy paper from the Ministry of Education from 2003 that outlines some strategic plans for inclusive education from 2003 to 2015. The policy's mission is to improve access to, and involvement in, education and training, as well as the related policy objective (Equitable Access). The strategies identified to meet this goal included training all teachers in special education, redesigning school facilities to make room for students with special needs, holding awareness-raising workshops for parents and guardians of children with special needs, incorporating special education training into all teacher training college courses, and establishing special education assessment centers across all districts.

In accordance with UDL and the CFS model, the strategic objective of the strategy is to restructure the provision and administration of educational services in order to address the various requirements of all students and children within the framework of universal design for learning. The strategy focus includes increasing equal access to high-quality education for all students with varying educational requirements, providing the necessary teaching and learning resources, building the ability of qualified teachers and management, and enhancing the supply of education services (Opoku-Agyemang, 2013).

2.7.9 Educators' knowledge, abilities, and competences

Hay (2003) asserts that educators' knowledge, abilities, and competences directly affect their capacity to carry out inclusive education in a successful manner. Research on the development of teachers have revealed that education is a complex socialization process (Carrington, Deppeler, & Moss, 2010; Proweller & Mitchener, 2004). The conflict between the teaching philosophy, which is supported by the teachers' values, beliefs, and behaviours and determines what is taught, the policy, and curriculum, and the institutional restraints of school ethos adds to this complexity (Goodson, 1992; Helms, 1998). The interplay between personal experience, professional knowledge, and understanding of the teaching environment, students, curriculum, and school culture shapes teacher training, development, and transformation (Proweller & Mitchener, 2004).

2.3 Summary of Literature Review

The literature review provides insights into the understanding of teachers about inclusive education, the instructional strategies they employ, the availability of

resources and support services, and how teachers effectively mitigate challenges in the pursuit of inclusive education.

The literature highlights the significance of teachers' understanding of inclusive education, emphasizing the need for a positive attitude and awareness of the principles and benefits of inclusive practices. Studies underscore the role of professional development and training programs in shaping teachers' perceptions and competence in implementing inclusive education. Challenges related to misconceptions, lack of awareness, and the importance of a supportive school culture are also discussed.

The literature reveals a diverse array of instructional strategies employed by teachers to cater to the needs of children with special educational needs. Differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, and the use of assistive technologies emerge as effective approaches. The importance of flexibility, individualized planning, and ongoing assessment to adapt teaching methods is emphasized. Successful instructional strategies often involve a combination of teacher creativity and a supportive school environment.

Research indicates that the availability of resources and support services significantly influences teachers' ability to meet the needs of children with special needs. Adequate training materials, assistive technologies, and a well-equipped learning environment contribute to effective inclusive education. The literature highlights the importance of administrative support, professional collaboration, and the role of specialized support staff in facilitating a conducive learning environment for both teachers and students.

The literature underscores the multifaceted challenges faced by teachers in providing inclusive education. Strategies employed by teachers to mitigate these challenges include building a supportive classroom culture, fostering peer relationships, and

seeking continuous professional development. Collaboration with special education professionals, effective communication with parents, and leveraging community resources are identified as crucial components in overcoming challenges associated with inclusive education.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research philosophy, research approach, research design, setting, sample and sampling technique, and the procedure for collecting data. Other issues discussed in the chapter are the research instruments for data collection, pre-testing of instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure, and ethical issues about the research.

3.1 Research Philosophy

For the purpose of this study, I considered the interpretivist paradigm more relevant. The study employed the interpretivist paradigm which is based on understanding the real construction of concepts and meanings within actual settings used by social actors (Gephart, 2004). This was motivated by my desire to define the perception of teachers about inclusion of learners with special needs by trying to describe and understand participants' situations through their verbal and non-verbal actions and to obtain rich in-depth knowledge from participants. Using the interpretive approach, I conducted the study using an interview guide to obtain the qualitative data.

Interpretive paradigm is based on the notion that social reality is created and sustained through the subjective experience of people involved in communication (Morgan, 1980). The interpretive paradigm helps researches with deep understanding of situations or behaviour from the perspectives of the people being studied rather than explaining behaviour through cause and effect (Grbich, 2007).

Interpretive paradigm argues that social reality is created jointly through meaningful interaction between the researcher and the researched on agreement and also acknowledges the feelings, experiences and viewpoints of researchers. Ting-Toomey (2008) points out three characteristics of qualitative inquiry. I believe that reality consist of people's subjective experiences of the external world; thus, they may adopt an inter-subjective epistemology and the ontological belief that reality is socially constructed. Myers (2009) argues that the premise of interpretive researchers is that access to reality (whether given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness and shared meanings. Interpretive paradigm is underpinned by observation and interpretation, thus to observe is to collect information about events, while to interpret is to make meaning of that information by drawing inferences or by judging the match between the information and some abstract pattern (Aikenhead, 1997).

Reeves and Hedberg (2003, p. 32) note that the "interpretivist" paradigm stresses the need to put analysis in context. The interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from subjective experiences of individuals. They use meaning (versus measurement) oriented methodologies, such as interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects. Interpretive research does not predefine dependent and independent variables, but focuses on the full complexity of human sense making as the situation emerges (Kaplan & Maxwell, 1994). The study was anchored in the interpretivist paradigm because the paradigm helped me to get deeper understanding of teachers' perception about inclusion of learners with special needs.

3.2 Research Approach

This study employed the qualitative approach. The qualitative approach was used to enable me to get direct explanations and views of teachers on their perceptions about inclusion of children with special needs. Since qualitative approach allows me to ask questions that comes in textual form to understand human experience, it was needful employing this approach for the study. In the view of Kusi (2012), qualitative researchers aim to understand ‘depth’ rather than ‘breadth’ or explore a phenomenon in detail. They are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The qualitative method was used due to the nature of teachers’ perception about inclusion of learners with special needs and my theoretical lens (Howcroft & Trauth, 2005). Qualitative research is a type of social science research that collects and works with non-numerical data that seeks to interpret meaning from these data that help us to understand social life through the study of targeted populations or places (Punch, 2013). It is the observations and interpretations of people’s perception of different events, and it takes the snapshot of the people’s perception in a natural setting (Gentles et al., 2015). It focuses on words rather than numbers, this type of research observes the world in its natural setting, interpreting situations to understand the meanings that people make from day to day life (Walia, 2015).

According to Cropley (2019), the task of qualitative research is to gain insights into constructions of reality, i.e., to tease out the nature of the world as it is experienced, structured and interpreted by people in the course of their everyday lives. Kombo and Tromp (2006) clarify that qualitative research is a form of research that involves description to the data obtained. It seeks to describe and analyse the behaviour of groups

from the point of view of those being studied. Also, this approach enables a researcher to relate particular aspects of behaviour to the wider context.

3.3 Research Design

The case study design ensured that in-depth views of participants were obtained. This design did not only help to describe the data in a real-life environment but also reflected their perspectives which helped to explain their teachers' perceptions about inclusion of children with special needs. Thus, the design was considered appropriate to ascertain the perceptions of teachers about inclusion of children with special needs. Case study research involves a detailed and intensive analysis of a particular event, situation, organization, or social unit. Typically, a case has a defined space and time frame: "a phenomenon of some sort in a bounded context" (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 28).

The first major strength of the case study approach is that it can capture and explore the complexity of a phenomenon for better understanding. This is what large-scale quantitative studies including a survey fail to achieve because, in most cases, they collect superficial information about a phenomenon for generalization (Kusi, 2012). Secondly, the case study approach is action-centered and, therefore, the findings are useful for improving practice (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2003). Notwithstanding these strengths, the case study approach has been critiqued in diverse ways, this includes the fact that the findings are difficult to generalise. This is because such studies often concentrate on an instance or a few instances of a phenomenon and involve a relatively small sample size. Given the fact that the advantages of using the case study approach in this study outweigh the disadvantages, the case study approach was considered more appropriate for the study. In terms of the outcome, the case study

provided a comprehensive understanding of teachers' perception about inclusion of learners with special needs.

The specific type of case study design used was descriptive. A descriptive case study design can be an effective approach to explore and understand teachers' perceptions of the inclusion of children with special needs (Punch, 2013). This design allows researchers to investigate a specific phenomenon within its real-life context, providing a detailed description and analysis of the situation. In this study, I focused on a specific case or a small number of cases to gain in-depth insights into the experiences, perspectives, and behaviours of individuals or groups involved. In the context of studying teachers' perception of the inclusion of children with special needs, a case study design can provide valuable information about how teachers understand and interpret inclusive practices, their attitudes towards inclusion, and the challenges they face in implementing inclusive strategies.

I selected a specific school or a group of teachers who have experience with inclusive education. The research would involve collecting data through various methods such as interviews, observations, document analysis, and possibly surveys or questionnaires. Through interviews, researchers can engage in open-ended discussions with teachers to explore their perspectives, beliefs, and experiences related to inclusive education. The interview allowed me to gain a broader understanding of the context and its impact on teachers' perceptions.

One of the strengths of a descriptive case study design is its ability to provide rich and detailed insights into the perceptions and experiences of teachers in a specific context. It allows for a nuanced understanding of the factors that influence teachers' attitudes and practices regarding the inclusion of children with special needs (Kusi, 2012). The

descriptive case study design is a valuable approach to exploring teachers' perceptions of the inclusion of children with special needs, shedding light on their beliefs, practices, and challenges because the findings can inform the development of effective strategies, interventions, and policies.

3.4 Setting

The study was conducted in the Effutu Municipality of the Central Region of Ghana. Effutu Municipal is one of the twenty-two districts in Central Region, Ghana. Originally it was formerly part of the then-larger Awutu/Effutu/Senya District in 1988, until the southwest part of the district was split off by a decree of President John Agyekum Kufuor on 29 February 2008 to create Awutu Senya District; thus the remaining part was elevated to municipal district assembly status to become Effutu Municipal District on that same year. The municipality is in the southeast part of Central Region and has Winneba as its capital town.

According to the 2010 population and housing census, more than three quarters (80.7%) of the population aged 11 years and older in the Municipality are literate. Of the literate population, majority (63.6%) are literate in English and Ghanaian language. Close to 30 percent (29.2%) of the literate population are literate in English language only. Males have a higher proportion (87.5%) of literate persons than females (74.8%). About third (33.8%) of the population currently in school are in primary school with 13.3 percent at the junior high school (JHS) level. Less than one tenth (6.9%) of the population currently in school are in senior high school (SHS). Close to 28 (27.8%) are at the tertiary level. The high proportion recorded for tertiary level could be due to the location of the University of Education in the Municipality. Apart from the tertiary level where the proportion of males is higher than that of females, at each of the subsequent

levels, the proportion of females is higher than that of males. A higher proportion of females (36.3%) than males (31.6%) are enrolled at the primary level. Similar patterns are observed for females who constitute 13 percent and males 12.9 percent at the junior high and senior high school (SHS) levels.

In terms of occupation of the employed population, majority (31.4%) are engaged in craft and related trades, followed by service and sales (24.9%). About 27 percent of the male population are into agriculture, with a higher percentage of females (37.3%) in service and sales than males (9.0%). Manufacturing is the predominant industry (21.6%) in the Municipality, followed by retail services (19.9%) and agriculture, forestry and fishing (16.1%). A higher percentage of females (28.2%) are engaged in manufacturing than males (13.0%). Close to 13 percent (12.7%) of households in the Municipality are engaged in agriculture. A higher proportion of urban households in the municipality are engaged in livestock rearing (59.7%) while 49.4 percent grow crops.

3.5 Population

The target population of the study was 23 teachers of St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba. This was made up of 9 females and 14 males. According to Agyedu, Donkor and Obeng (2011), population in research is the complete set of individuals (subjects), objects or events with common observable features for which a researcher is interested in studying. It is also regarded as the larger group from which individuals are selected to participate in a study. A population is also defined as a group of individuals or people with the same characteristics and in whom the researcher is interested (Blanche, 1999). Kusi (2012, p. 80) defines target population as "a group of individuals that the researcher generalizes his/her findings".

3.6 Sample

I sampled nine (9) teachers and two (2) headteachers in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba to represent the sample for the study. This number was achieved from data saturation point of view. A sample can be defined as a group of relatively smaller number of people selected from a population for investigation purpose (Alvi, 2016, p.12). In investigation, it is impossible to assess every single element of a population so a group of people (smaller in number than the population) is selected for the assessment. On the basis of information obtained from the sample, the inferences are drawn for the population. The more the sample is representative of the population, the higher is the accuracy of the inferences and better are the results generalizable. A sample is said to be representative when the characteristics of elements selected are similar to that of entire target population. The results are said to be generalizable when the findings obtained from the sample are equally true for the entire target population (Alvi, 2016).

Kwabia (2006) describes a good sample as one that is representative of the population from which it was selected. Sample size determination for qualitative research has varied approaches. However, some scholars on the determination of appropriate sample size for qualitative study have proposed varied approaches. For example, Glaser and Strauss (1971) propose the concept of saturation as very relevant in determining sample size for qualitative study. Saturation here implies a situation where data obtained from any additional respondent or sample would not provide any new information to what has already been obtained from research participants. Mason (2010) and Charmaz (2006) recommend the need for researchers to consider availability of resources, time and study objectives in determining the appropriate sample size for qualitative study.

3.7 Sampling Technique

The purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample that enabled me to explore teachers' perception about inclusion for better understanding. The purposive sampling was used because I wanted to get or sample respondents who have ideas, knowledge and expertise and experience about inclusive education. The purposive sampling technique seeks to select participants in a strategic way because of their experience or knowledge relevant to the research questions that are posed. The purposive sampling was used to select teachers and headteachers of St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba for the study since their experience and knowledge are relevant in answering the research questions. To be included in the study, one must be a teacher or headteacher in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba and should be willing to participant in the study. According to Rees (1997), inclusion criteria are the characteristics researchers want those in their sample to possess. Creswell (2012) argues that selecting a large number of interviewees in a qualitative case study could result in a superficial perspective and the overall ability of a researcher to provide an in-depth picture diminishes with the addition of each new individual or site. Purposive or judgmental sampling is a strategy in which particular settings, persons or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be obtained from other choices (Maxwell, 1996). In qualitative study, Taherdoost (2016) opines that researchers include cases or participants in the sample because he believes that they deserve inclusion. Purposive sampling technique, according to Patton (2002), is a sampling technique in which researcher relies on his or her own judgment when choosing members of population to participate in the study. Choosing the purposive sample is fundamental to the quality of data gathered; thus, reliability and competence of the informant must be ensured.

The specific type of purposive sampling technique I employed was the Criterion sampling. It is a non-probability sampling technique used in qualitative research which involves selecting participants based on specific criteria that are relevant to the research questions or objectives (Alvi, 2016). The goal of criterion sampling is to include individuals or cases that possess unique and relevant characteristics or experiences that are important for the study. The criteria was based on various factors; expertise, knowledge level and teaching experiences related to the research question. According to Creswell (2012), the criterion sampling technique is particularly useful when the researcher wants to gain in-depth insights into specific characteristics, experiences, or perspectives that are essential to understanding the research topic. By selecting participants who possess the desired criteria, I was able to collect rich and relevant data that are aligned with the research objectives. This enabled me to purposefully select teachers who have direct experience and insights into inclusive education and the challenges and benefits associated with including children with special needs in mainstream classrooms. These teachers provided valuable perspectives on their perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs regarding inclusion, as well as their experiences in implementing inclusive practices and strategies.

3.8 Data Collection Instrument

The instrument for data collection was semi-structured interview guide. The interview guide was self-created from relevant literature and was based on the research questions. Using a self-created semi-structured interview guide based on relevant literature helped to ensure that the interview captures comprehensive and meaningful data. It allows for flexibility, alignment with the research focus, and consistency while still accommodating the individual experiences and perspectives of the participants. The semi –structured interview guide offers an effective method for data collection of

qualitative, open-ended data; explore participant thoughts, feelings and beliefs about inclusive education. The kind of interview done on the field was the face-to-face interview. In interviewing is typically done in a face-to-face encounter (Marvasti, 2004, Rubin & Babbie, 2005). The interview guide had items that addressed all the research questions that guided the study. The semi-structured interview guide offered participants the chance to speak out on their perception about inclusion of learners with special needs. I conducted a face-to-face semi-structured interview to collect data on the perception of teachers about inclusion of learners with special needs. The interview guide consisted of a formally prepared set of questions and all the participants answered the same questions. The questions served as a guide to the participants and me.

Interview as a method of collecting data involves presentation of oral or verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses. This method can be used through personal interviews and if possible, through telephone interview (Prakashan, 2003). An interview involves the oral or vocal questioning technique or discussion. Through this interaction the required data on teachers' perception about inclusion of learners with special needs were collected for the aim of fulfilling the study objectives. According to Borg and Gall (2003), an interview as a research instrument involves the collection of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals. Its principal strength is its adaptability to any given situation. In semi-structured interviews, a researcher employs a detailed but not rigid interview guide. This involves a predetermined sequence and wording of the same set of questions to be asked of each respondent to minimise the possibility of bias on the part of the researcher/interviewer (Borg & Gall, 2003).

3.9 Trustworthiness of the Interview

To ensure trustworthiness in this study I adhered to the constructs proposed by Guba (1989), namely credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability, which some authors (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Shenton, 2004; Morrow, 2005) opined correspond to internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity respectively, in quantitative research. These steps taken to ensure trustworthiness of the interview are as follows:

3.9.1 Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research deals with the extent to which the findings from the study measure reality (Morrow, 2005). Aside member checks and peer debriefing, I became familiar with the participants by building a rapport with the participants at the beginning of each interview session and presented to them an informed consent form which explained in detail the essence of the study and their right to voluntary participation and withdrawal. I also included direct quotations from the text in the presentation of the findings, which according to Graneheim and Lundman (2004) also reflected the credibility of a study. Also, throughout the period of the study there were regular discussions between me and my research supervisor, and during these sessions, we deliberated on the best approach and methodology for the study as well as the instruments for data collection. At the end of the transcription process, data were also presented to the research supervisor for him to add his expert knowledge to it.

3.9.2 Dependability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), dependability “seeks means for taking into account both factors of instability and factors of phenomenal or design induced changes; this means taking note of the changes in data and those made by the researcher

during the process of data analysis” (p. 299). I ensured that he puts aside his opinion in the analysis of the data by reading the transcripts over and over again, such that the researcher became familiar with the ideas therein, which was evident in the description of the data analysis process, which was presented in the report. Also, I provided a justification for the methodology used for the study by referencing appropriate authors and gave a clear description of the manner in which the data were collected and analyzed, such that the reader finds it easy to decide on the acceptability of the findings.

3.9.3 Transferability

According to Morrow (2005), transferability implied the extent to which the findings from a particular study can be applied to wider situations. However, Shenton (2004) contended that since qualitative studies consider only a small population, it is difficult to say that their findings can be applied to wider situations. Bassey (1981) posited that the findings can only be applied when the situations and populations are considered to be similar to those used in the study. To determine this, Firestone (1993) suggested that the researcher provided adequate information on the general design and approach of the research, so as to guide readers to make informed decisions on its transference.

To ensure transferability, I provided a detailed description of the circumstances or scenario and participants to be applied to others’ situations. Methods and time periods for data collection in the study, as well as the entire course of the field investigation, were fully detailed. “By providing thick descriptions of the participants’ demographic data, election criteria and the context of the study to enable readers to understand the demographics of the participants”(Fobi, 2023, p. 100). The participants who were sampled had the relevant experience and were able to provide the needed data on inclusive education. .

3.9.4 Confirmability

Confirmability means ensuring that the findings reflect the experiences of the participants and not the prejudices or bias of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). To ensure confirmability in this study, I kept detailed record of the research activities (Fobi, 2023). Further, I provided an audit trail that details each step of data analysis and shows that findings are not coloured by conscious or unconscious bias but accurately portray the participants' responses. Confirmability of qualitative data was assured by checking and rechecking data throughout data collection and analysis to ensure that results would likely be repeatable by others. This was documented by a clear coding schema that identifies the codes and patterns identified in analyses.

3.10 Data Collection Procedure

An introductory letter from the Department of Special Education was sent to the Effutu Educational Directorate to introduce me. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants. I had a general plan for interviewing based on the research questions, but the general plan did not prevent me from asking further questions during the actual process of interviewing. In other words, the issue of adaptability being a strength of the interview method was explored, having in mind that, my goal is to help respondents express their views of a phenomenon on their terms. I secured the participants' prior consent to record the interviews. The audio recording, in part, facilitated my review and analysis of the research data.

I made initial visits to the schools to schedule dates and times the participants would be ready for the interview and to enable me to plan for the days to conduct interviews in the schools. I spent two (2) weeks to collect data for the research questions. Within the two weeks, six (6) visits were made to the school in the process of gathering the data

from the participants. The interview was conducted on teachers and headteachers of St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba. In all eleven (11) participants were involved in the interview. I personally visited the participants and interviewed them with the aid of a semi-structured interview guide. The participants were interviewed on one-on-one basis to prevent any external influences. The one-on-one interview section was aimed at gathering responses from the participants on their understanding of inclusive education, the instructional strategies they employ for special needs children, availability of resource and other support services and challenges they face in providing inclusive education.

3.11 Method of Data Analysis

Glesne (2016) defines data analysis as the effort of researchers to manage and make sense of their data to transform it from its acquired form into a form that communicates the promise of a study's findings. It is a transformation process (from organisation to meaning) that involves a three-tier approach: description, analysis, and interpretation.

In the description, I stayed close to the data that was originally collected. Where, I departed from the data that was originally collected and made inferences to complete otherwise important but incomplete statements, or to use language and grammar appropriate for a dissertation. A transcript of recorded interviews was prepared for the analysis, using descriptive language. According to Glesne (2016), descriptive language portrays the contexts in which events transpired.

In the analysis, key issues about the study were identified by listening to the interviews over and over again. The transcriptions from the interviews were also read over several times to make interpretations.

In the interpretation, I transcended factual data and probed into what was to be made of the data. Data were put under themes for analysis, based on the research questions. Following the advice of Tesch (1990), I constantly sought for configurations in the data that suggested that certain pieces of data belonged together. I also looked for common properties in coding to derive analytical conclusions. Through this process, I was able to identify emerging issues. This emerging issues served as themes for the analysis. Table 1 provides a summary of the data analysis.



Table 1: Summary of the Data Analysis

Research Question	Themes	Sub-themes	Participants
Q1: What understanding do regular teachers in the St. John's Anglican Basic School have about the inclusion of children with special needs in the classroom?	Theme 1: Teachers' Understanding of Inclusion	a. Learner Inclusivity b. Attention to Special Needs Children c. Addressing diverse learning needs d. Promoting inclusive education	11
Q2: What instructional strategies do teachers make to meet the needs special needs children	Theme 2: Instructional strategies to meet the special needs of learners.	a. Teaching Learning Materials b. Groupings	9
Q3: What resources and support services are available for teachers to meet the learning needs of children with special needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School?	Theme 3: Availability of resources and other support services	a. Resources b. Support Services	
Q4: What challenges do teachers of St. John's Anglican Basic School face in teaching special needs children?	Theme 4: Challenges teachers face in providing inclusive education	a. Lack of Materials and resources b. Limited Time c. Lack of Cooperation from learners	

3.12 Ethical Consideration

Halai (2006) opined that there are laid down principles and guidelines for conducting

studies in an ethically appropriate manner which require researchers to obtain approval from gatekeepers and from the participants. Ethics refers to questions of right and wrong. A researcher must ask if it is right or wrong to conduct a certain study or investigate a certain question. Ethical matters are important in carrying out a research work. In this study, I considered all research directives, which included maintaining confidentiality, honesty, openness, responsibility, as well as seeking permission from the required offices and officers. This helped to avoid unnecessary pain or distress, fear and harm among respondents and enabled me to build trust among the participants on the field.

I make sure that all identifying personal information gathered from students in the study was erased from the final report to ensure the ethics of confidentiality throughout the field data collecting. In addition, when audio recordings were collected from the participants, the audio files were kept on my laptop as password-protected files, preventing outsiders from reading or editing the transcribed data.

Furthermore, the informants who were questioned were coded to safeguard their anonymity. In order to avoid plagiarism, secondary information from books, journals, newspapers, and online theses that supplied significant literature on the topic were properly credited.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discusses the findings of the study. The results are discussed in relation with relevant literature. The study sought to examine the perceptions of teachers about inclusion of children with special needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba. The results are presented and analyzed in two sections namely Section A and Section B. Section A deals with the demographic data while the Section B concerns the main data.

4.1 Section A: Demographic Data of Participants

This section shows the socio-demographic data on respondents' gender, age bracket highest academic qualification, and years of teaching experience.

4.1.1: Results of demographic data of participants

The results indicated that 7 (63.6%) of the respondents were males, while the remaining 4 (36.4%) were females. It suggests that majority of the respondents who participated in the study were male teachers.

The results showed that 2 (18.2%) of the respondents were below 30 years, 7 (63.6%) were within the age range of 31-40 years while the remaining 2 (18.2%) of them were within 41-50 years. This means that most of the teachers teaching had reasonable years before retirement indicating a lot of hope for the future for the practice of inclusive education in the school. In other words, if the necessary efforts are made to motivate and support them, it would inure to the benefit of inclusive education in the school.

The results on the academic qualification of respondents revealed that 3 (27.3%) of them were diploma holders, 6 (54.5%) of the respondents were degree holders, and the remaining 2 (18.2%) were master's degree holders. This means that the academic qualification of majority of the respondents was degree. This suggests that the majority of the respondents have the needed content and pedagogical knowledge to provide and promote inclusive education.

Result on years of teaching experience of the respondents indicated that 2 (18.2%) of them had below 6 years teaching experience, 3 (27.3%) had 6-10 years teaching experience and 6 (54.5%) of them had 11-20 years of teaching experience. The means that, majority of the respondents had 6-10 years of teaching experience. This is a good news since the teaching experiences of these respondents would provide reach information on their perception about inclusive education which would contribute significantly towards the study.

4.2 Section B: Thematic Analysis of Data

This section provides the experiences of some respondents used for the survey. The interview results aimed at presenting the voice of the participants in the study, and to ensure a thorough assessment of the perceptions of teachers about inclusion of children with special needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba. In the process of presentation, the stories of the participants are interspersed with essential quotations to expound their personal views to the extent as their behaviour is concerned. It is worthy of note that only vital responses are provided for the analysis and all names provided in the analysis are participants' pseudonyms and not their real names. The data had been analyzed based on themes (thematic analysis). The analysis was based on the research questions for the study. What characterizes the data is the widespread agreement of the

respondents on the issues. There was absolute unanimity in the responses to several of the questions or items, and this degree of unanimity gave much power to the results. The views of participants on the four research questions were classified into four major themes. These themes included:

1. Understanding of teachers about learner inclusivity
2. Instructional strategies to meet the special needs of learners.
3. Availability of resources and other support services
4. Challenges teachers face in providing inclusive education

4.2.1: What understanding do regular teachers in the St. John's Anglican Basic School have about the inclusion of children with Special needs in the regular classroom?

Inclusive education policy provides the set of guidelines, principles, and laws that govern the provision of education to all learners, regardless of their background, abilities, or disabilities. The goal of inclusive education policy is to ensure that all learners have equal access to quality education that meets their individual needs and supports their social, emotional, and academic growth. This research question sought to ascertain the understanding regular teachers in the St. John's Anglican Basic School have about the inclusion of children with special needs in the regular classroom.

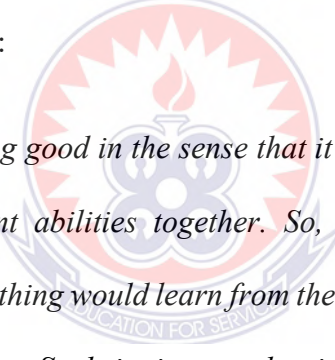
Theme 1: Teachers' Understanding of Inclusion

Teachers' understanding of inclusive education is critically important for the successful implementation of inclusive practices in the classroom. It requires teachers to have a deep understanding of the individual needs and preferences of their students and to be able to provide appropriate support and accommodations to meet those needs. One thing that stood out in the views of the participants on their opinion or understanding of the

inclusive education policy is its ability to promote learning of students from diverse backgrounds regardless of their disabilities. The analysis of the results revealed that the understanding of regular teachers include, learner inclusivity, giving attention to children with special needs in the classroom, addressing diverse learning needs.

Sub-theme 1: Learner Inclusivity

Learner inclusivity in the classroom is a means of creating a learning environment that values and respects the diversity of all students and provides equal opportunities for learning and success. Inclusive classrooms promote equity and diversity, and they recognize and respond to the unique learning needs and preferences of individual students. On what the participants think about the inclusive education policy, most of them shared the following:



I think it is something good in the sense that it tries to bring a whole lot of people with different abilities together. So, I believe those with weak background or something would learn from the other, so they wouldn't look down upon themselves. So, bringing people with different abilities together. I believe they would get strength from each other to do whatever they want to do [Head teacher 1]

I think that, it's a policy that include children from all walks of life being it physical or mentally challenged [Teacher 1]

I think is a good policy where people or learners with special needs would also be given that special attention as far as their academic lives are concerned [Teacher 2]

I think it's a good policy but overall, I think that it hasn't been well implemented. Yes, that is how far I can go but it's a good policy and if it is implemented to its ultimate it would serve a good purpose [Teacher 3]

As far as GES is concerned, we're moving to inclusion so the policy would help us and bring on board the individuals with differential or individual with differences needs in terms of the ability in the class room [Teacher 4]

Sub-theme 2: Attention to Special Needs Children

The views of participants on their understanding of special needs children as part of efforts to promote inclusion are seen in the excerpts below.

I think that they are learners or they are children who need particular attention or special attention, individual attention. So, I think that in whatever you do generally you need to see to this people or this category of people individually or differently. They need special attention in everything [Head teacher 2]

They are children who in one way or the other needs some kind of education which is not accessible to all children in every category. We have some children who needs eyes to see and to read but if the child is blind then that child becomes a special child among the colleagues [Teacher 1]

They are people with exceptionalities. They have people with low IQ. I'll term this people as special needs children because they need special

attention unlike normal children that you can just leave them to do whatever they want to do [Teacher 2].

These people are the individuals who needs extra hands in terms of their learning ability in the class as compared to their other counterparts in the class [Teacher 3]

The participants shared their understanding they hadgh about the inclusion of children with special needs in classroom. For most of them, inclusion of children with special needs means addressing the diverse learning needs. The following excerpts supports this claim:

Sub-theme 3: Addressing diverse learning needs

Oh, my understanding is that every child is entitled to education, so where we have other children who don't have any disability, there's also a need for us to have these individuals who have these disabilities to be merged in the class so that we'll teach them alongside. Thus, bringing individuals with diversity in terms of ability in the class together [Head teacher 2]

Personally, I would say it trying to bring as I said earlier bringing a whole lot of people with different diversity, different ability in the classrooms for me to handle them [Teacher 1]

My understanding is that I need to put all of them together not separating them and then teach them as well. Inclusion mean that all of them are inside, everybody matters in that class [Teacher 2]

From my experience I think that some of them think that, they become a burden on them or they waste their time, because of the special attention you give them, when you focus on other people you have to come back to them and it feels for some of them it feels that no it's too much of a burden or it's a waste of time [Teacher 3].

I think that including them making it an inclusion or making them an inclusion is the best so that they can also see the other part or see the other part of life and see the other part of learning or they can mingle with others, that they wouldn't be in their own shells, they can come out of their shells and do whatever they want to do [Teacher 4].

Sub theme: Promoting inclusive education

Teachers play a crucial role in promoting inclusive education in the classroom. Inclusive education is about creating a learning environment that values and respects the diversity of all learners and provides equal opportunities for learning and success. As part of probing the participants further on their understanding of inclusion of special needs children in the classroom, I asked them how they promote inclusion of children with special needs in their classroom. Here are some of the views shared by them:

Yeah. I make sure the TLMs I use are real one so that the blind child for example, would touch and realize that this is an animal. So, the TLMs I use are mostly the real one [Teacher 1]

I make the other students understand that these are children or learners who have special or needs special attention so when I'm focusing on them and it looks like I'm leaving the others, they wouldn't have any

issue. Aside that erm, I use other materials, like teaching and learning resources to help them to grasp whatever we are teaching so it its way of promoting and they would, so that they feel comfortable [Teacher 2]

I bring resources that would help to retain them in the class because when they come to the class and they are sort of sideline, the use of teaching resources tend to bring them together and also stay in the class and learn [Teacher 3]

I give the same task to these individuals without disability and individuals with disability in the class for them to have the same idea, understand and collaborate. With this, there's going to be an acceptance of these individuals with disability with those without disability to learn as a group [Teacher 5]

Having special attention to each and every one. Then also trying to understand each individual and what they can do and have time for them [Teacher 6].

From the comments so far on the understanding of regular teachers about the inclusion of children with special needs in the classroom suggest that the participants had knowledge about the inclusive education policy and undoubtedly made frantic efforts to meet the diverse learning needs of children in their classroom. This is good news as teachers who have a strong understanding of inclusive education can identify and address the diverse learning needs of all students, including those with disabilities and from diverse cultural background to promote inclusive learning.

The fact that the participants demonstrate knowledge about the inclusive education policy is a positive sign. Inclusive education is a philosophy and approach that seeks to provide equal educational opportunities for all students, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, or backgrounds. Teachers who are aware of and understand the principles and objectives of inclusive education are better equipped to create an inclusive learning environment in their classrooms. The teachers' comments indicate that they are making earnest efforts for cater to the diverse learning needs of children in their classrooms. Inclusive education recognizes that students have unique learning styles, strengths, and challenges. Teachers who proactively adapt their instructional strategies, materials, and classroom environment to accommodate diverse learners can create a more inclusive and supportive learning space for all students.

Teachers with a strong understanding of inclusive education can effectively identify and address the needs of students with disabilities and those from diverse cultural backgrounds. They are better able to recognize individual strengths and areas of improvement, and design instruction and support accordingly. This personalized approach can lead to improved learning outcomes and overall well-being for all students. By actively engaging in efforts to meet the diverse needs of their students, teachers play a crucial role in promoting inclusive learning. An inclusive learning environment fosters collaboration, respect, and empathy among students, and it prepares them for participation in an inclusive society. When students with special needs feel included and supported in the regular classroom, it enhances their self-esteem and confidence, leading to better academic and social outcomes.

While the positive comments are encouraging, it is essential to acknowledge that promoting inclusive education can also pose challenges. Some of the challenges

teachers might face include lack of resources, large class sizes, limited training in inclusive practices, and administrative support. However, recognizing these challenges presents an opportunity for further professional development, collaboration with specialists, and advocacy for improved resources and support services. The teachers' understanding of inclusive education and their commitment to meeting diverse learning needs are critical factors in creating an inclusive learning environment. As teachers continue to enhance their knowledge and skills in inclusive practices, they can positively impact the academic and social development of all students, fostering a more inclusive and equitable society.

4.2.2 What instructional strategies do teachers use to meet the needs of special needs children at St. Anglican Basic School?

This research question sought to ascertain the instructional strategies teachers make to meet the needs special needs children.

Theme 2: Instructional strategies to meet the special needs of learners

Instructional strategies are critically important for teachers to meet the needs of students with special needs. Students with special needs have unique learning needs, preferences, and challenges, and teachers need to use effective instructional strategies to support their learning and development.

Sub-theme 1: Teaching Learning Materials

One strategy is that the use of the TLM and sitting arrangements. Those who are hard of hearing I position them close to me so that they can hear me. So, my sitting arrangement also matters. I also provide the sign language for those who are deaf [Teacher 2]

Yeah, my instructional strategies comes in a diverse way depending on what we're doing at a specific time. So, I am teaching mathematics for instance, where there's a need for us to do some shapes, I bring some of the shapes to the classroom and show it to the student who are deaf in class whilst mentioning their names [Teacher 3]

I use audio-visuals materials to teach them and that help deaf because they are moved by what they see [Teacher 4]

Sub-theme 2: Groupings

I structure my lesson in such a way that it would meet the need of the people because some are slow learners. So I don't try to pair them with those who are fast learners. I believe that the instructional strategies should be such that it would meet individual needs [Teacher 3].

There are times I put them into smaller groups so that I get their attention and they also get my attention [Teacher 3].

The fundamental roles of instructional strategies for children with special needs to promote their active participation and understanding without discrimination. For all the participants, the use of such instructional strategies sustains interest and promotes understanding. The participants indicated their views on how their instructional strategies takes care special needs children.

I think that the use of the visuals per say helps them because of they can see. The visuals help them to arouse and sustain their interest in the lesson that is being taught [Teacher 1]

My strategies enable special needs children to understand lessons and sometimes be able to perform better than those without disability [Teacher 2]

I would say that my strategies take care of them because at the end of the day when assessment conducted, you would see that they are also on the same level with other peers in the class. This means they understood the lesson [Teacher 3]

The participants therefore recommend to special educators the following instructional strategies to meet the learning needs of all learners regardless of their diversity. Among these strategies are the use of resource person, tolerance and patience and grouping of learners. Supporting this claim, the participants made the following comments:

If the person is a deaf student, then sign language is more important and also teachers should take their time with learners with special needs. People who have the interpreting skills should be invited to help special needs children [Teacher 6]

I recommend more of resource persons in the class alongside with regular teacher in the class so that they can aid in teaching, that is one strategy and there should be strict adherence to the inclusion of special needs children in the mainstream classrooms so that they teacher do not segregate them [Teacher 7]

Teachers should be patience with the learners with special needs, taking into cognizance the negative consequence of their actions on learners' academic achievement [Teacher 3]

Teachers should be taken through how to take care of special needs children in their classrooms. This would help them to attend to the children with special needs. , If a teacher is taken through training he /she would be able to appreciate and promote diverse learning in class [Teacher 1]

I think that the smaller groups would be helpful because it would make teachers give special needs learners the needed attention [Teacher 2]

Special groups would make them get that individual attention and the use of multimedia or visuals aides. It would help us a lot because we understand that they are moved by what they see because they are deaf [Teacher 5]

The comments made by the participants provide evidence to suggest that teaching and learning materials and grouping of learners were some instructional strategies employed by the participants. The participants' comments indicate that they utilize various teaching and learning materials to support inclusive education. Inclusive education recognizes the importance of using diverse instructional materials to cater to the different learning styles, abilities, and interests of students. Teachers may employ a wide range of materials such as textbooks, visual aids, multimedia resources, manipulatives, and assistive technologies. These materials can enhance student engagement, understanding, and participation in the learning process.

The participants' comments also suggest that they employed different grouping strategies in their classrooms. Grouping students strategically can facilitate inclusive education by promoting collaboration, peer support, and individualized instruction. Teachers may use various grouping methods, such as whole-class instruction, small-group activities, cooperative learning, or individualized instruction. Grouping strategies can help create a supportive and inclusive learning environment where students can learn from each other, develop social skills, and receive targeted instruction based on their specific needs.

Utilizing a range of teaching and learning materials can address the diverse learning needs and preferences of students. Different materials can present information in various formats, accommodate different learning styles, and provide multiple entry points for understanding and engagement. For example, visual aids can support visual learners, while hands-on activities can benefit children with special needs. Similarly, employing various grouping strategies allows teachers to differentiate instruction and provide targeted support. Collaborative learning in small groups enables students to share ideas, support one another, and develop social skills. It also allows the teacher to focus on individual needs within each group. On the other hand, whole-class instruction provides opportunities for shared experiences and discussions, fostering a sense of belonging and community among students. The utilization of teaching and learning materials and the careful grouping of learners are essential instructional strategies employed by teachers in inclusive education. These strategies promote active engagement, cater for diverse learning needs, foster collaboration, and create a supportive learning environment for all students.

4.2.3 What resources and support services are available for teachers to meet the learning needs of children with special needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School?

The availability of resources and support services is crucial for teachers in inclusive classrooms to create a supportive learning environment that meets the diverse needs of all students, including those with special needs. This research question sought to determine resources and support systems available for teachers to meet the learning needs of children with special needs.

Theme 3: Availability of resources and other support services

There are various resources and support services available for teachers to meet the learning needs of children with special needs.

Sub-theme 1: Resources

We have a lot of resources like brail and stuffs that is used by the special teachers [Teacher 6]

The use of manila cards with pictures on it [Teacher 1]

I have TLMs but I realize that they are not adequate. What I have is that, I have pictures for especially the deaf since they can see, I show them the pictures for them to see what I'm talking about [Teacher 5]

We have some of these TLMs that we use in the class [Teacher 2]

We have a resource person who is a sign language interpreter who in the class alongside while the teacher is teaching, she also tries to interpret for these children [Teacher 3].

Sub-theme 2: Support Services

We have support services from the university UEW. The students normally they come around to orient us to how to take care of them. Every year we receive support services from UEW but we are yet to receive this year [Teacher 1]

Officers from the GES office who come day in day out to check on this student how their learning is going so there is support but in terms of material it's hard to come by [Teacher 3]

Apart from the TLMs and the colleagues in the other field coming to assist, staff of Educational directorate also support [Teacher 4]

We have special education unit at the GES who are in charge. They come to this school regularly to check on how the learners are going on with the learning in the classroom and how teachers are also coping [Teacher 6]

The head teacher sometimes bring resource persons to train us small and then you would come back to the class. That's all. We don't really have much [Teacher 7]

Probing further, the participants outlined the resources and support services provided by themselves in the bid to meet the learning needs of children with special needs. These resources and support services are espoused below.

For me what I do is, because they don't go at the same speed level with their peers, I have extra time for them when we're done with teaching in the class [Teacher 1]

I have that one-on -one interaction with them after the class to see their understanding level of whatever that is been taught in the class [Teacher 2]

I bring a resource person to help me since I cannot work alone in isolation [Head teacher 1].

I provide a plant to the class you see that planting tree to help combat the climate change so I provide that one as the TLM [Teacher 3]

I use the internet to gather more information on how to meet up with the trend, as far as teaching special learners are concerned. I read about the current trends as far as these learners are concerned. Also, I get more information from my head teacher who is an expert in special education when I encounter challenges [Teacher 5].

The participants were asked to recommend on resources and support services to promote inclusion of special needs children. Resources and support services can enhance the training of teachers, equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively support students with disabilities or special needs. The views of participants on their recommendation of resources and support services to be provided immediately and why they think so is explained below.

We need a resource center. I've been in this school for close to five years we have written letters to various organizations to build or put up a

resource center where we'll have the machines or assistive technologies to help especially the hearing-impaired learners. To help them, I mean give them that aide to hear something at least [Head teacher 1]

We need resource persons, persons with skills in sign language because we have deaf students in all levels. So it would be advisable if we get sign language interpreters in each class so that they would be supporting the regular teacher [Teacher 5]

There is a need for collaboration with the stakeholders to bring in more resource persons and I think when we have these individuals these children could also come out with their best [Teacher 1]

I believe the support services is about taking teacher through how to handle these children, I think it's very important and when teachers are taken through it would help us to know best how we can handle these children with special needs [Teacher 2]

I think we need many real object and the pictures. Printing pictures is costly so if the external body could be printing this pictures that would help special needs children to learn and understand [Teacher 3]

Teachers need access to teaching materials, resources and support services, such as assistive technology, educational materials, and trained support staff, to help support students with special needs. Access to these resources can also help teachers build their capacity to provide inclusive education [Teacher 5]

Collaboration with other teachers, support staff, and families can help teachers provide a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to meeting the needs of students with special needs. This can also help teachers identify and address any barriers to learning [Teacher 6]

Resources and support services can facilitate collaboration and communication among teachers, parents, and support staff to ensure that all stakeholders are working together to support students with special needs [Teacher 7].

The comments from the interviewees suggest that the availability of resources and support services is crucial for teachers to effectively meet the special needs of children in an inclusive classroom. Some of the available resources and support services are Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs), Special Education Experts or Resource Persons, and Support Systems from Educational Institutions.

Teaching Learning Materials refer to a wide range of instructional materials that teachers can use to support student learning. In the context of meeting the special needs of children, TLMs such as manila cards, picture descriptions, tactile materials, and visual aids can be particularly helpful. These materials can enhance understanding, engagement, and participation among students with diverse learning needs. For example, manila cards with visual representations can assist children with visual impairments, while picture descriptions can support language development and comprehension for students with speech and language difficulties.

Collaborating with special education experts or resource persons can provide valuable support to teachers in meeting the special needs of children. These experts can offer specialized knowledge, strategies, and guidance on how to create inclusive learning

environments and individualize instruction. They can provide insights into specific disabilities or learning difficulties and suggest appropriate interventions and accommodations. Collaborating with special education experts can enhance teachers' understanding of diverse learning needs and improve their ability to meet these needs effectively.

Educational institutions, such as the University of Education, Ghana Education Service, or the Effutu Municipal directorate, can provide support systems for teachers. These support systems may include training programmes, workshops, or seminars focused on inclusive education and special needs. Through these initiatives, teachers can acquire new knowledge, skills, and strategies for effectively meeting the special needs of children. Training programmes can cover topics such as inclusive instructional strategies, behaviour management techniques, and individualized education planning. Support from educational institutions can empower teachers with the necessary tools and confidence to address the diverse needs of their students.

It is important to note that the availability and accessibility of these resources and support services may vary depending on the context and location. However, leveraging existing resources and establishing partnerships between educational institutions, schools, and local communities can enhance the availability of resources and support services. Having access to teaching learning materials, collaborating with special education experts or resource persons, and benefiting from support systems provided by educational institutions, teachers become better equipped to meet the special needs of children in their classrooms. These resources and support services contribute to creating inclusive learning environments where all students have equitable opportunities to succeed and thrive.

4.2.4 How do teachers of St. John’s Anglican Basic School mitigate challenges they face in teaching children with special needs at St. John’s Anglican Basic School?

This research question sought to find out the challenges teachers face in teaching special needs children.

Theme 4: Challenges teachers face in providing inclusive education

Teachers play a critical role in creating a welcoming and inclusive learning environment where all students feel valued, respected, and supported in their learning. However, teachers face several challenges in providing inclusive education. These challenges include a lack of training and support, limited resources and materials, limited collaboration and limited time.

Sub-theme 1: Inadequate Materials and resources

A whole lot, cause the resources are not available, that has become the major challenge that we face. Basic materials for teaching special needs children are not available [Teacher 2].

We have limited resources and materials to provide the necessary accommodations and support for students with special needs. This include a lack of assistive technology, specialized materials, or support staff [Teacher 3].

Sub-theme 2: Limited Time

We are not able to move fast because moving fast would make learners grab the lesson. After explaining concepts to learners without disability, you’d have to sign for the person who cannot hear you. This takes a lot

of time and sometimes it makes the class boring. When it happens that way this who are talking or those who can talk make a lot of noise when you're trying to explain to the one who cannot hear [Teacher 3]

More time is needed because of their level of understanding. We do not have the resource or TLMs to supplement our effort to digest concepts to the understanding of special needs children. In fact, it is time consuming and they need more one on one attention which makes it very difficult [Teacher 7]

We have limited time and resources for planning and preparation, which can make it difficult to create inclusive lessons and activities that meet the diverse learning needs of all students [Teacher 5]

Sub-theme: Lack of Cooperation from learners

Sometimes you know especially the deaf student easily get angry and sometimes it's quite difficult to control them and teach them at the same time. Thus, their personal trait sometimes affects teaching and learning [Teacher 1]

The challenges face several in providing inclusive education would affect teaching and learning of children with special needs. Therefore, the participants were asked to tell how the challenges they have mentioned hinder their ability to meet the learning needs of special needs children. Here are some of the common challenges highlighted by the participants.

Some of them are also provocative, when they get you angry, you can't teach in an angry mood, so it delays the time [Teacher 3]

I think for us to be able to communicate with these children we need resources, we need tools, we need materials for them to understand but since these materials are unavailable it has been difficult dealing with them or communicating with them [Teacher 5]

Yeah, it hinders because when I'm supposed to use a period of 60 minute or let us say an hour on a subject, because they are few in class and the abled learners are more than them, I try to focus much on these non-disabled children as compared to them since they need special attention [Teacher 4]

The participants were further asked how they mitigate these challenges. The participants shared their thoughts in the excerpts.

I develop my own way of communicating and truly at the end of it you'd realize that not all of them might have gotten all that I communicated but the few who have gotten it we moves along [Teacher 5]

Sometimes we have to set a rule that would control this kind of negative behaviour that makes the classroom so boring [Teacher 2]

What it means it that because of the regular experiences you have to always brace yourself up to face some of these things because you know that they'll happen. So I usually would not focus on what they are doing

to me personally but I focus on what they would get from me academically [Teacher 3]

Using resource person in sign language while the teaching is going on to focus on children with special needs so we move alongside. That would be one of the major measure that would reduce the challenges [Teacher 1]

The question, “what should be done to meet the learning needs of special needs children?”, the participants proposed the following.

The government should come in by providing the needed materials and resources to communicate with special needs children. Also, structures are not friendly and this makes the movement of special needs children difficult. The movement, how the chairs should be because some of them cannot walk and a whole lot [Teacher 4]

Real object and pictures that would make them understand the concept easy and also teachers should be trained on basic sign languages and brail [Teacher 7]

Well, so more resources should be provided and more inclusive schools should be brought up in the communities because there are a lot of communities that have special needs children who needs special attention [Teacher 3]

One of the things that could be done is that the government should help the school, bring in more persons who have the skills in the area to aid the teacher and help speed up the teaching [Teacher 1]

The challenges that teachers face in promoting inclusive education can have significant negative effects on special needs children, underscoring the need for ongoing training and support for teachers to create an inclusive learning environment that supports the needs of all students.

One of the key challenges teachers face is a lack of knowledge and skills in implementing inclusive practices. Teachers may not have received adequate training on inclusive education strategies, including how to address the diverse learning needs of students with disabilities. Without the necessary knowledge and skills, teachers may struggle to create an inclusive classroom environment that supports the academic, social, and emotional development of all students.

Teachers often encounter challenges related to limited resources and support for implementing inclusive education. This can include a lack of appropriate teaching materials, assistive technologies, and specialized support personnel. Without access to these resources, teachers may find it difficult to provide the necessary accommodations and modifications to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities.

Teachers often have heavy workloads and face time constraints, which can make it challenging to adequately address the needs of all students in an inclusive classroom. Planning and implementing differentiated instruction, individualized education plans, and collaborative activities require additional time and effort. Without sufficient time,

teachers may struggle to provide the necessary support and attention to students with special needs.

Teachers may encounter attitudinal and social barriers from both students and other stakeholders. Attitudes of stigma, bias, or lack of acceptance towards students with disabilities can create barriers to inclusion. Peer acceptance, support, and cooperation are crucial for fostering an inclusive environment. Teachers may face challenges in promoting understanding, empathy, and positive attitudes among students and creating a welcoming and accepting classroom culture.

To address these challenges, ongoing training and support for teachers are essential. Professional development programmes can provide teachers with the knowledge, skills, and strategies needed to effectively implement inclusive practices. Training sessions, workshops, and mentoring programmes can equip teachers with the necessary tools to create inclusive learning environments and support the needs of students with disabilities. Furthermore, ongoing support from school administrators, colleagues, and specialized professionals can help teachers overcome challenges and navigate complex situations. Collaborative team meetings, coaching, and access to resources and assistive technologies can enhance teachers' ability to provide appropriate accommodations and modifications for students with special needs. This would create an inclusive learning environment that supports the needs of all students, fosters their academic and social development, and promotes a sense of belonging and equity within the school community.

4.3 Discussion of Results

The study is to find out the perceptions of teachers about inclusion of children with special needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba. This section discusses the results of the study in relation to relevant literature.

Understanding of teachers about inclusive education in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba

This research objective sought to examine the understanding of teachers about inclusive education. Inclusive education is about creating a learning environment that values and respects the diversity of all learners and provides equal opportunities for learning and success. The goal of inclusive education policy is to ensure that all learners have equal access to quality education that meets their individual needs and supports their social, emotional, and academic growth. The results suggest that the participants have knowledge about the inclusive education policy and undoubtedly making frantic efforts to meet the diverse learning needs of children in their classroom. This is good news as teachers who have a strong understanding of inclusive education can identify and address the diverse learning needs of all students, including those with disabilities and from diverse cultural background to promote inclusive learning. The findings corroborates with the assertion of Barton, Armstrong and Hodge (2018), Barco (2007) and Ross-Hill (2009), that teachers have comparable opinions about inclusive education, both favourable and negative. Wiggins (2012) asserts that teachers expressed more positive attitudes toward mainstreaming than inclusion.

The findings confirm the views of King (2003) and Rogers and Gallagher (2014) that teachers understand inclusion as involving students attending the same schools as siblings and neighbours, being members in general education classrooms with

chronological age-appropriate classmates, having individualized and relevant learning objectives, and being provided with the support necessary to learn (e.g., special education and related services). Ryndak et al. (2000) found that teachers believed inclusion of students should be placed in general education settings surrounded by general education students of approximately the same age. They stated that inclusion should occur on a regular basis for the majority of the school day as if the inclusion students did not have a disability. The experts indicated that students with disabilities should be included in both academic and non-academic settings to maximize experiences interacting with students without disabilities.

Instructional strategies teachers use to meet the special needs of children in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba

The purpose of this research objective is to find out the instructional strategies teachers use to meet the special needs of children. The results provide evidence to suggest that teaching and learning materials, and grouping of learners are some instructional strategies employed by the participants. Teaching and learning materials are essential components of inclusive classrooms. According to National Council for Special Education (2017), teaching and learning materials can accommodate different learning styles of students with special needs. Students with visual impairments, for example, may require materials in braille or large print, while students with hearing impairments may require captioning or sign language interpretation. It enhances engagement and participation of students with special needs. For example, visual aids such as pictures, diagrams, and videos can help students understand complex concepts and information. Group work is important for students with special needs who may have difficulty with social interaction and communication. Group work promotes active learning and engages students in the learning process. Students are encouraged to participate actively

in discussions, share ideas, and work together to solve problems. It allows for a variety of learning styles to be accommodated. Students with special needs may learn better in group settings, where they can receive more personalized attention and support. Resource persons can include professionals such as special education teachers, therapists, and other specialists who have expertise in working with students with special needs (Barton, Armstrong, & Hodge, 2018). Resource persons play a critical role in supporting teachers in inclusive classrooms. According to Mastropieri and Scruggs (2010), resource persons can provide valuable assistance to teachers in addressing the diverse learning needs of students with disabilities. This can help create a more coordinated and comprehensive approach to addressing the diverse learning needs of students with disabilities. This can help teachers effectively support the diverse learning needs of all students, including those with disabilities.

The findings confirm the assertions of many previous studies. For example, Kokko, Kärnä and Voeten (2020) investigated the effects of peer-assisted learning and teacher-led instruction on student outcomes and teacher practices in inclusive classrooms. The results showed that peer-assisted learning was associated with improved academic outcomes for students with special needs, while teacher-led instruction was associated with increased social interaction and engagement for all students. Kim and Lee (2019) also examined the effects of teacher support and peer group work on the academic achievement and social interaction of students with learning disabilities in inclusive classrooms. The results showed that both teacher support and peer group work were associated with improved academic outcomes and increased social interaction for students with learning disabilities. Rogers and Gallagher (2014) investigated the effects of a classroom intervention, which included resource persons and group work, on the social skills of students with learning disabilities in inclusive settings. The results

showed that the intervention (resource persons and group work) was associated with significant improvements in social skills for students with learning disabilities. Overall, these studies suggest that resource persons and group work can be effective strategies for supporting the academic and social needs of students with special needs in inclusive classrooms.

Availability of resources and support services for teachers to meet the special needs of children in St. John Anglican Basic School, Winneba

The purpose of this objective is to find out the resources and support services available to teachers to meet the special needs of their learners. Adapting instructions refers to the selection of appropriate instructional strategies, methods and skills for all students. Regular teachers should plan instructional practices with every child in mind so that every student has an opportunity to learn and benefit from the experiences. The results suggest that TLMs like manila cards, picture descriptions and special education experts or resources persons are very few. The support services available to teachers as revealed by the results of this study include supports from the University of Education, Ghana Education Service or the Effutu Municipal directorate and training.

Even though many studies highlighted the importance of support services for promoting inclusive education and the positive impact they can have on teachers' implementation of inclusive practices, it appears very little is done for the participants. The findings of Gash and Horowitz (2016) for example suggest that support services, such as professional development, coaching, and collaboration with special education teachers, can positively influence teachers' implementation of inclusive practices. Ryndak, Jackson and Morrison (2011) also found that teachers require support services such as instructional materials, teacher training, and ongoing support from special education

teachers and paraprofessionals to effectively meet the needs of students with disabilities in their classrooms but hardly do they receive same.

Challenges teachers face in providing inclusive education in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba

This objective sought to determine challenges teachers face in providing inclusive education in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba. Inclusive education has been recognized as a crucial approach to provide equal educational opportunities to students with diverse needs. However, it poses numerous challenges to teachers, especially those who lack the necessary skills and support systems. The results revealed that lack of training and support, limited resources and materials, limited collaboration and limited time are some challenges teachers face in providing inclusive education in St. John's Anglican Basic School. The findings confirm the views of Lifshitz, Glaubman and Issawi (2004) which suggest that education professionals have identified a number of challenges that limit the successful inclusion of all students in the classroom, including class size, a lack of resources, and inadequate teacher preparation (Lifshitz, Glaubman & Issawi, 2004). Supporting this, a study by Arsal and Akram (2015) identified several challenges, including inadequate training, lack of resources, negative attitudes, and resistance from parents.

The findings also corroborates with the assertion of Esen and Altinay (2017) that teachers face several challenges, including a lack of resources and support, inadequate training, negative attitudes towards inclusion, and resistance from parents. The authors suggest that teacher education programmes should provide comprehensive training on inclusive practices, and schools should provide adequate resources and support systems. According to Korkmaz and Korkmaz (2019), lack of support from school

administration, inadequate training, and insufficient resources are some challenges teacher face in promoting inclusion in their classrooms. The authors suggest that school administrators should provide more support to teachers, and teacher education programmes should focus on preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms. It can be concluded that teachers face numerous challenges in promoting inclusion in their classrooms, including a lack of training, inadequate resources, negative attitudes towards inclusion, and resistance from parents. However, comprehensive teacher education programmes and adequate support systems can help teachers overcome these challenges and promote inclusive education for all students.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of the summary of the study, key findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to find out the perceptions of teachers about inclusion of children with special needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba. The findings of the study revealed that:

1. Teachers' understanding about the inclusive education includes the fact that inclusive education is about creating a learning environment that values and respects the diversity of all learners and provides equal opportunities for learning and success. They demonstrated understanding that inclusive education ensures that all learners have equal access to quality education that meets their individual needs and supports their social, emotional, and academic growth.
2. Teaching and learning materials (TLMs), resources persons and grouping of learners are some instructional strategies employed by the teachers to meet the special needs of children.
3. Available resources and other support services for teachers to meet the special needs of children include teaching learning materials (TLMs) like manila cards, picture descriptions and the use of special education experts or resources persons. Supports from the University of Education, Ghana Education Service or the Effutu Municipal directorate and training are the support services available to teachers to meet the special needs of children.

4. Challenges teachers face in providing inclusive education are lack of training and support, limited resources and materials, limited collaboration and limited time are some challenges teachers face in providing inclusive education in St. John's Anglican Basic School.

5.2 Limitations

1. The study was conducted in a single school in a specific location, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other schools.
2. The study relied on teachers' perceptions and understanding of inclusive education, which may be influenced by personal beliefs and biases.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

The findings suggest that teachers have a good understanding of what inclusive education means and its importance in creating a learning environment that values diversity and provides equal opportunities for all learners. Teachers have demonstrated their commitment to ensuring that all learners have equal access to quality education that meets their individual needs and supports their social, emotional, and academic growth. This understanding and commitment by teachers is a positive step towards promoting inclusive education and creating a more equitable and inclusive learning environment for all learners.

Instructional strategies being used by teachers to meet the special needs of children are woefully inadequate. However, teaching and learning materials (TLMs), resource persons, and grouping of learners are effective instructional strategies that teachers employ to meet the special needs of children in inclusive classrooms. These strategies

enable teachers to create a supportive learning environment that fosters the academic and social development of all learners, including those with special needs. By leveraging these resources, teachers can provide individualized and differentiated instruction to meet the diverse learning needs of their students.

It is evident that teachers require adequate support and resources to provide quality inclusive education to children. There is still a need for further investment and improvement in the availability and accessibility of resources and support systems to enable teachers to provide an inclusive learning environment for all children.

The provision of inclusive education is a noble but challenging undertaking for teachers, especially in resource-limited settings like St. John's Anglican Basic School. This review has highlighted some of the significant challenges that teachers face in providing inclusive education, including a lack of training and support, limited resources and materials, limited collaboration, and limited time. These challenges are substantial and require urgent attention from education policymakers and stakeholders to support teachers in their critical role of providing inclusive education.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Based on the finding that teachers have a good understanding of inclusive education, it is recommended that efforts should be made by head teachers and teachers to promote and support this understanding. This can be achieved through workshops, seminars, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities aim at the

professional development and training for teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills in providing inclusive education.

2. Teachers continue to utilize instructional strategies in their teaching practices. Furthermore, training and support should also be provided to teachers on how to effectively use these materials and strategies to cater for the diverse needs of all learners. Additionally, teachers should be encouraged to collaborate and share their experiences with one another, as this can lead to the development of new and innovative instructional strategies that can better meet the needs of all learners.
3. Resources and support systems should be put in place to assist teachers in meeting the diverse needs of their students. This can include access to materials, resources persons and collaborative efforts with experts in special education to ensure that all students have access to quality education and opportunities for success.
4. Effutu Municipal Education Directorate should allocate adequate resources and materials to schools to support the implementation of inclusive education. This can include assistive technology, learning materials, and other resources that can aid in the learning of children with special needs. Head teachers should encourage collaboration among teachers, parents, and other stakeholders in the education system to support the provision of inclusive education. This can include regular meetings, open communication channels, and joint planning and implementation of strategies to support inclusive education.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Studies

Based on the findings of the study on the perceptions of teachers about inclusion of children with special needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba, there are

several areas that could be explored further to enhance inclusive education in Ghana.

The following are three potential topics for further studies:

1. Experiences of students with special needs in inclusive education settings.
2. Effectiveness of different teaching strategies in meeting the individual needs of students with special needs in inclusive classrooms.
3. Role of parental involvement in supporting the education of children with special needs in inclusive schools.



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APPENDIX

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

The purpose of this interview is to gather information on the perceptions of teachers about inclusion of children with special needs in St. John's Anglican Basic School, Winneba. Your contributions to this work would bring enormous improvement in meeting the learning needs of special needs children. This research is purely for academic purpose and any information provided would be treated with the maximum confidentiality it deserves. You are also assured that their identity would not be associated with any aspect of the research report.

Thank you in anticipation of your maximum support.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. **Sex:**

Male Female

2. **Age Bracket :**

Below 30 years 31-40 years 41-50 years Above 50 years

3. **Academic Qualification:**

Certificate

Diploma

Degree

Masters

PHD

4. **Years of Teaching Experience:**

Below 6 years

6-10 years []

11-20 years []

Above 20 years []

SECTION B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Research Question 1: What understanding do regular teachers in the St. John's Anglican Basic School have about the inclusion of children with Special needs in classroom?

5. What do you think about the inclusive education policy?
6. Who are special needs children?
7. What understanding do regular teachers have about the inclusion of children with Special needs in classroom?
8. How do you promote inclusion of children with Special needs in your classroom?

Research Question 2: What instructional strategies do teachers make to meet the needs special needs children?

9. Have you receive any form of training on the use of appropriate instructional strategies to meet the learning needs of special needs children?
10. What instructional strategies do teachers make to meet the needs special needs children?
11. How do your instructional strategies take care of the learning needs of special needs children?

12. With your experience in dealing with special needs children, which instructional strategies(s) would you recommend to special educators? How useful are these instructional strategies?

Research Question 3: What resources and support services are available for teachers to meet the learning needs of children with special needs?

13. What resources are available for teachers to meet the learning needs of children with special needs?
14. What support services are available for teachers to meet the learning needs of children with special needs?
15. What resources and support services do you provide yourself in the bid to meet the learning needs of children with special needs?
16. How frequent or regular do you receive resources and support services to meet the learning needs of children with special needs?
17. Which resources and support services do you think should be provided immediately? Why?
18. Do you think more can be done to meet the learning needs of special needs children?

Research Question 4: What challenges do teachers at St. John's Anglican Basic School face in teaching special needs children?

19. What challenges do you face in teaching special needs children?
20. How do these challenges hinder your ability to meet the learning needs of special needs children?
21. How do you mitigate these challenges?

22. What do you think should be done to meet the learning needs of special needs children?

Thank you very much!

