UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WITHIN ADA EAST DISTRICT IN THE GREATER ACCRA REGION OF GHANA

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

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

Signature: ……..……..…….

Date: ……..……..……..

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Name of Supervisor: DR. E. Y. YEKPLE

Signature: ……..……..…….

Date: ……..……..……..

DEDICATION

I wholeheartedly dedicate this work to my husband and children. It is also dedicated to Dr. Eric D. Ananga and Ms. Patricia Appiah-Boateng

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincerest gratitude goes to the Almighty God for the protection and blessings in the course of carrying out this study. I would also like to extent my profound gratitude to Dr. Eric D. Ananga and Ms. Patricia Appiah-Boateng for their impact on my education and career. Besides, I thank my mother Mrs. Florence Ananga, and my lovely husband Mac-George Alayi and children Stephanie, Aretha, Mac-Anthony, Selma, for their daily prayers. Finally, I would like to acknowledge my supervisor; Dr. E. Y. Yekple, a senior lecturer in the Department of Special Education and other lectures for their input in the study. I am grateful to them all.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate teachers‟ attitudes towards persons with disabilities in inclusive schools within Ada East District. The study adopted a mixed research approach, which utilized cross sectional survey as a design with semi-structured interview and questionnaire as data collection instruments. A sample of 90 participants (39 males and 51 females) were conveniently sampled. Quantitative data for the study were analysed using descriptive statistics and percentages, while thematic approach was used to analyse the qualitative data. Findings from the study on attitudes of regular teachers in the district towards inclusive education revealed that teachers believed children with disabilities need to be given special attention by their teachers in inclusive education. Also, they wished they could spend more time teaching children with disabilities. The participants argued that there is nothing wrong with including children with disabilities with other children in general classroom setting. Also, teachers naturally felt excited when to see children with disabilities that want to learn with other students. The study further unveiled training, availability of educational resources, past experiences, and gender as some of the factors that influence attitudes of regular teachers in the district towards inclusive education. Lastly, lack of regular training, lack of competencies and inadequate of teaching and learning materials impede the implementation of inclusive education. The study recommended, among others, that teachers in mainstream schools be provided with intensive training on teaching children with disabilities in inclusive settings to enable them to effectively handle all categories of children with disabilities in their classrooms. Also, the GES should endeavour to supply appropriate and adequate teaching and materials to enhance the work of teachers. In addition, teachers should be encouraged to develop positive attitudes toward students with disabilities so as to help enhance inclusive education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

The inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream education has been a major cause of concern for many governments around the world. It is a national and international development that is supported in national legislation and in statements and reports that have been issued by international bodies such as the United Nations and Council of Europe. The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO 1994) advocated that children with special educational needs (SEN) should have access to mainstream education so as to provide a basis to combat discriminating attitudes. The statement is therefore conceived as forming the basis for inclusion and a shift from segregation by creating a welcoming community, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all.

Inclusion in education means" full inclusion of children with diverse abilities in all aspects of schooling that others are able to access and enjoy" (Loreman, Deppeler & Harvey, 2005, p.2). The government of Ghana has since attaining independence from the British in 1957, has regarded education as a fundamental human right for its citizens, and it has enshrined this right in the legal framework of education. The 1961 Act is the principal legislation concerning the right to education for all children in Ghana which states that:

Every child who has attained the school going age as determined by the minister shall attend a course of instruction as laid down by the minister in a school recognized for the purpose by the minister. (Ghana Education Service GES, 2004, p.2)

This statement gives a legislative backing for every child to be in school. The concept

of inclusive education is aligned with the 10-year Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) programme in 1996, which is a policy framework that increases access, retention and participation of all students of school going age in education.

Inclusion is a widely accepted programme, according to United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2005). Gadagbui (2008) opined that inclusive education ensures the participation of all students in school and involves restructuring the culture, policies and practices in schools so that they can respond to the diverse needs of students in their localities. The goal of inclusive education is to break down barriers that separate general and special education and make the included students feel liked, and become members of the general education classroom. This inclusive system provides individual students with disabilities opportunities and confidence in learning independently concepts, skills and strategies that their counterparts without disabilities are exposed to. The fundamental principle of inclusive education is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of difficulties or differences they may have. As such, inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different learning needs, pace and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnership with their communities.

The Act 715 of the Republic of Ghana, entitled Disability Act, 2006, emphasizes inclusive education for children with disabilities. Section 20 of the Act states that; A person responsible for admission into a school or other institution of learning shall no refuse to give admission to a person with disability on account of the disability unless the person has been assessed by the Ministry responsible for education in collaboration

with the Ministries responsible for health and social welfare to be in a special school for children or persons with disability (Disability Act, 2006, p. 2).

Children with disabilities deserve proper education; and they have a right to it, so those who are able to work in the normal classroom environment should be included. As teachers who are willing to teach these children would face many challenges and issues, they may need specialised training, and develop personal attributes such as patience to deal with these children. To achieve this, teachers need to work with children disabilities and develop awareness of inherent challenges and changes it could lead to (Coles, 2009).

Many researchers emphasize teachers‟ attitudes as a decisive component in ensuring the successful inclusion of students with special education needs (De Boer et al., 2011; Dulčić & Bakota, 2008). Simply put, attitudes of teachers can enhance or impede the implementation of inclusion. Teachers who personally support inclusive practice and accept the concept of inclusion can more readily adapt the learning environment to the diverse needs of students and use a variety of approaches and teaching strategies (Ryan, 2009). In addition to general attitudes towards inclusion, researchers most frequently study factors that have an impact on teacher attitudes, such as their gender, age, experience, professional training and education, as well as the types and level of impairments that children have (Forlin, 2005; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2006). Other factors that influence teachers‟ attitudes towards inclusion have also been studied, such as the implementation of inclusion at school, sources of support and the distribution of resources, support from the school administration and colleagues, organization framework (Jerlinder, Danermark, & Gill, 2010; Morley, Bailey, & Tan, J., 2005). The statement means that persons with disabilities have the right to be in regular

schools and no head of the learning institution should deny them admission. It also means that, the implementation of inclusive education is now mandatory and, therefore, teachers, parents, and all stakeholders should unite to make it a reality. Beliefs about disability, ethnicity and teachers‟ attitudes can influence the practice of inclusive education, the quality of educational materials and instruction students receive (Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001; Sharma & Desai, 2002).

Many regular education teachers who feel unprepared and fearful to work with learners with disabilities in regular classes display frustration, anger and negative attitudes. Additionally, access to resources and specialist support affects teachers‟ confidence and attitudes towards inclusive education (Wolery, Anthony, Snyder, Werts, & Katzenmeyer, 1999).

Avramidis, Buylis, and Burden (2000) argued that when teachers gain extensive professional knowledge needed to implement inclusive education, they may succumb to it. Similarly, Cook, Tankersely, Cook, and Landrum (200) reported that as teachers have experience with students, specifically those with disabilities, their confidence to each of them is likely to grow, which could alter their negative attitudes.

General classroom teachers need to be willing and able to teach children with disabilities in their classrooms. If these teachers are unwilling to teach children with disabilities or have unrealistically low expectations of themselves when considering teaching children with disabilities, mainstreaming will not be successful. Therefore, the researcher wanted to investigate the attitudes of regular or general education teachers towards inclusion of children with special educational needs in inclusive basic schools within the Ada East District.

Teachers‟ attitudes are influenced by the nature and severity of the disabling condition

presented to them (child-related variables) and less by teacher-related variables (Avoke, 2008). Furthermore, educational environment-related variables, such as the availability of physical and human support are associated with attitudes to inclusion. Therefore, there is the assumption that the successful implementation of any inclusive policy is largely dependent on educators being positive about it.

In the Ada East District, for instance, there are few special education resource teachers attached to selected regular schools that work hand in hand with general education teachers and are responsible for teaching and meeting the learning needs of children with disabilities in classrooms. Special education resource teachers are trained to operate in inclusive schools, where they serve children with their specific categories of disabilities whilst regular classroom teachers are trained to operate in regular education classrooms. Gadagbui (2008) was of the view that, "…unless all teachers are fully prepared, inclusive education will not be realized" (p. 2). This suggests that teachers" attitudes are critical in ensuring the success of inclusive practices since teachers" acceptance of the policy of inclusion is likely to affect their commitment to implementing it.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Every child has the right to education as stipulated in the Convention of the Rights of the Child. That universal principle applies to children with disabilities too (UNESCO, 2009). The Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities affirms the rights of persons with disabilities to education and specifically outlines that persons with disabilities should not be excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability (UNESCO, 2009). However, a number of children with disabilities remain excluded from the education system due partly to school factors. For instance, as many

as one-third of 58 million children of primary school-age, currently estimated to be out of school, are children with disabilities.

A failure to address inequalities, stigmatization and discrimination linked to wealth, gender, ethnicity, language, location and disability is holding back progress towards quality education for all. Disability is strongly linked to poverty and marginalization (UNESCO, 2009).

According to Sayed et al (2000), education for pupils with disabilities in Ghana had been bedevilled by problems of availability, accessibility, adaptability and acceptability. Additionally, the Ghana Education Service (2004), state that the challenges of inclusive education in Ghana is perceptual, architectural, curricula and the training of teachers.

The Disability Act (Act 715) was passed in 2006 by the Republic of Ghana, which makes inclusive education mandatory. Therefore, attitudes of teachers should be examined to determine whether they are ready to embrace its implementation or not.

To understand teachers‟ attitude towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools, the Government of Ghana has made various attempts to implement inclusive education, but teachers have different understanding and perceptions towards including students with disabilities into the main classroom. Certain factors underpin teachers‟ attitude towards inclusive education. The success of inclusive education depends on the attitude of teachers on many factors and on the quality of instruction they give to their students (Leyser & Tappendor, 2001).

Elliot (2008) examined the relationship between teachers‟ attitudes toward the inclusion of children with mild to moderate mental disabilities in physical education settings and the amount of practice attempts performed and the levels of success

attained by these students compared to their peers without disabilities. The findings suggested a relationship between teacher attitude toward inclusion and teacher effectiveness. Teachers with a positive attitude toward inclusion provided all of their students with significantly more practice attempts, at a higher level of success.

In a study carried out by Mba (2001) on the attitude of teachers towards the inclusion of hard-of-hearing students in general education classroom, it was revealed that the attitude of teachers indicated hesitancy of the teachers to accept the hard-of-hearing unless the communication barrier was obviated.

Again, researchers have attempted to discover the factors associated with the successful inclusion of students with disabilities. The role of teachers‟ attitudes has been studied. The majority of these studies in physical education have assumed that a positive attitude towards inclusion was necessary for the successful inclusion of children with disabilities into physical education (Rizzo & Vispoel, 2002; Tripp & Sherrill, 2001).

From the above, it is that inclusive education which is considered as human right-based approach to education, is very crucial in educating children with diverse needs and therefore, the right attitude of the teachers towards including children with disabilities enable successful inclusion of children with disabilities. However, it appears that this is not the case with children with disabilities in Ada East, in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. This is probably because the attitude and concerns of teachers towards inclusive education is generally not positive.

Also, it seems regular education teachers do not send children with disabilities on errands during break time because they presume that it is unpleasant to send them. In the classrooms, regular teachers hardly put such children in the same group with their

non-disabled peers during group work. In the nutshell, attitudes of regular education teachers towards children with disabilities remain a problem for successful implementation of inclusive education. As a result of negative attitudes of regular education teachers towards inclusive education, many children with disabilities do not attend school regularly, and they usually do not stay at school until closing time.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the attitudes of regular or general education teachers towards inclusion of children with disabilities educational needs in inclusive basic schools within the Ada East District.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the study were:

1 Find out regular classroom teachers" attitudes towards inclusive education, and children with disabilities in inclusive schools in the Ada East District.

2 Explore the factors that influence the attitudes of regular classroom teachers in the district towards inclusive education.

3 Find how attitudes of regular education teachers in the Ada East District influence how they teach children with disabilities in inclusive schools.

4 Investigate any inherent challenges that regular classroom teachers face in teaching children with disabilities in inclusive schools.

1.5 Research Questions

The current study was guided by the following research questions:

1 What attitudes do regular classroom teachers in the Ada East have towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools?

2 What factors influence the attitudes of regular classroom teachers in the district towards inclusive education?

3 In what ways do regular classroom teachers attitudes influence their teaching of children with disabilities in inclusive schools?

4 What inherent challenges do regular classroom teachers face in teaching of children with disabilities in inclusive schools?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study would help to find out regular classroom teachers‟ attitudes towards inclusive education and children with disabilities in inclusive schools within in the Ada East District. This would enable the school to find suitable means of including all children in the teaching and learning process. In addition, the results of the study would reveal how attitudes of regular teachers in the district influence their teaching of children with disabilities in inclusive schools. Besides, the findings will enable teachers to explore factors that influence their attitudes in the district towards inclusive education. It will also enable teachers to investigate any inherent challenges which they face in teaching children with disabilities in inclusive schools.

The findings would also enable the teachers to find ways of eliminating any inherent challenges which they face in teaching children with disabilities in inclusive schools. In conclusion, the study would help school administrators to develop appropriate ways of encouraging general education teachers towards inclusion of children with special

educational needs in inclusive basic schools within the Ada East District. This thesis would form the basis for further studies, and would also serve as a vital document for future research about attitudes of regular or general education teachers towards inclusion of children with disabilities. Finally, it is anticipated that this study would generate additional interest in other researchers to undertake similar studies in other districts.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to teachers in inclusive schools in Ada East District of Greater Accra Region. The study was also delimited to only 6 selected inclusive public basic schools in the Ada East District of the Greater Accra Region in Ghana. Besides, the study was delimited to the attitudes of general education teachers towards inclusive education in the Ada East District. The study was delimited to those schools because they were the only schools practising inclusive education in the district.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

There was difficulty in conducting interviews and distributing questionnaire to participants in the study, as a result of interruptions in the school calendar. Even though, this limitation was overcome, it affected the period of submission of the thesis, in the long run.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

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

Inclusive education

Inclusion according to UNESCO (2005) is associated with commitment to the term "Education for all" by identifying the requirement and urgency of providing education for all children, youth and adults with disabilities. In the context of this study inclusion is the action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure.

Children with disabilities: It refers to a wide range of disabilities and conditions that place limitations on children's learning of school tasks. These children include those with hearing problem, children with intellectual disabilities and children with intellectual disabilities.

1.10 Organization of the Study

In this presentation, chapter one will be devoted to the introduction: background of the study, statement of problem, purpose and objectives of the study, research questions, and hypotheses. It also covers significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study as well as organisation of the various chapters of the work. Chapter two presents the literature review. Chapter three, which is methodology, looks at the population, sample, sampling techniques and procedures as well as research instruments. It will also cover validity and reliability of instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations. Chapter four is the results and

discussion. Chapter five is the summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further research findings.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

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

- Theoretical framework.
- The concepts of inclusive education
- Inclusive education in Ghana
- Benefits of Inclusive Education
- Attitudes of teachers towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools.
- The influence of teachers‟ attitude towards teaching of children with disability in inclusive schools
- The factors that influence teachers attitude towards inclusive education
- The challenges teachers face in teaching of children with disability in inclusive schools
- Summary of literature review.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is the self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan (1985). Self-determination theory is an empirically derived theory of human motivation and personality in social context that differentiates motivation in terms of being autonomous and controlled (Van Lange, Kruglanski, & Higgins, 2012). Deci and

Ryan (2000) proposed a self-determination continuum to describe motivational variables with different degrees of self-determination. In explaining the concept of self-determination, Deci and Ryan identified three types of motivation; namely, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation. Intrinsically motivated behaviours are those that are engaged for their own sake; in other words, for the pleasure and satisfaction derived from performing them (Deci, 1975). Extrinsic motivation refers to activities that are carried out as a means to an end and not for their own sake. Deci and Ryan (2000) further proposed a self-determination continuum to describe different forms of extrinsic motivation that vary in their relative autonomy or self-determination. From the least autonomous to the most autonomous, they are external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation.

The first two types of extrinsic motivation fall into the category of controlled (non-autonomous) motivation, whereas the latter two, along with intrinsic motivation, fall into the group of autonomous motivation. Both external and introjected regulations are controlled types of motivation since, in both cases, individuals do not identify with the value of a behaviour for their own self-selected goals (Deci & Ryan 2000). When a person engages in a behaviour because he or she finds it interesting (intrinsic motivation) or personally meaningful (identified and integrated regulation), then he or she is motivated by autonomous types of motivation. In contrast, if a person engages in a behaviour because he or she feels pressured by an external force, whether it is other people‟s demand or threat, an imposed reward contingency (external regulation), or his or her own sense of guilt, anxiety or ego-involvement (introjected regulation), then he or she is motivated by controlled types of motivation (Guo, 2007).

Based on White‟s (1959) conceptualization, individuals are intrinsically motivated if they perform a certain activity for its own sake, and the pleasure and satisfaction derived from engaging in the activity. On the other hand, they are extrinsically motivated if they act in order to achieve some objective that is separable from this activity. The theory asserts that the effect of rewards on intrinsic motivation depends on how the recipients cognitively interpret the rewards. Specifically, every reward has both a controlling aspect (i.e., the reward contingency separating desired from undesired action) and an informational aspect (i.e., the feedback conveying information about the actor‟s competence). Its controlling aspect is believed to thwart individuals‟ need for autonomy, thus undermining intrinsic motivation, whereas its informational aspect (assuming the reward is obtained) is believed to increase their perceived competence, thus enhancing intrinsic motivation. Therefore, the relative salience of these two aspects will determine whether a reward undermines or enhances intrinsic motivation.

Motivation, according to Ryan and Deci (2000), results from perceptions of helplessness or lack of self-efficacy, competence or valuation of the activity. According to Ryan and Deci, people have not only different amounts, but also different kinds of motivation. That is, different people have different orientations of motivation – intrinsic or extrinsic – as well as different levels of motivation. In context of this study, regular teachers are not motivated to teach special education needs children in inclusive schools because of limited knowledge on inclusion, resource constraints, and other challenges. Hence, they have poor attitudes towards inclusion.

2.2 The concepts of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education means that everyone should take part in society on an equal basis- academically, socially and culturally. According to the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (2008), Inclusion is both a process and a goal, where the educational institution should accommodate the individual‟s aptitudes and needs in the best possible manner. This requires diversity and adaptation in the educational program to enable each individual to participate more and receive more benefits from being an active member of community. (p. 3).

UNESCO (2005) elaborates on how an inclusive education system should be by stating that: An „inclusive education system can only be formed if normal schools become more inclusive. This means that, if schools improve at educating all children in their communities. The Conference proclaimed that: „regular schools with an inclusive direction are the most active means of fighting discriminatory attitudes, building welcoming societies, establishing an inclusive society and attaining education for all. Moreover, they provide an effective education to many children and improve competence and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the whole education system.

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

education and I the wider society.

Mmbaga (2002) argued that inclusive education needs to be part of the whole school equal opportunity policy; and in this case, children with learning difficulties, girls‟ and boys‟ learning needs would be incorporated into the curriculum and the school learning environment. According to Ainscow and Miles (2008), inclusion means that students with disabilities attend general school programmes and are enrolled in age-appropriate classes for 100% of their schooling. UNESCO (2005) described inclusive education as a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners.

Mmbaga (2002) gives some of the elements of inclusive education. Customary education was always being inculcated in the process of socialization, child rearing, formal, informal, and non-formal learning facilitated by parents, siblings, peers, elders, community leaders, artists, artisans, and experts in such areas as language and oratory, arbitrary and legal issues, health, plants, metallurgy, astronomy and military science in fact by any adult. The process was non-discriminatory, functional and took place in and was relevant to the local community. These are also the current indicators of inclusive education. According to Ocloo and Subbey (2008), an inclusive school should have the following characteristics: (a) the use of adaptation of teaching and learning materials, (b) flexible curriculum, (c) supportive methodologies to students with learning barriers, (d) proper organization of the classes, (e) examination system, and (f) friendly physical environment and infrastructure. Furthermore, the authors stressed some factors to be fixed in inclusive education including (a) education needs to be non-discriminatory in terms of disability, culture and gender; (b) education should involve all in the community with no exceptions, (c) students should have equal rights to access the

culturally valued curriculum as full time appropriate regular classroom, and (d) there should be an emphasis on diversity rather than assimilation.

Kauffman, Lloyd, and McGee (2009) opined that education is a fundamental right of every child. Some children experience difficulties in school, ranging from problems with concentration, learning, language, and perception to problems with behavior and/or making and keeping friends. Regular education is designed to meet the needs of average learners. Children with disabilities may not profit fully from the regular classroom experiences. Due to the inclusion movement in education, students with disabilities are attending public school with typically developing peers. These students are also attending general education classes together. In the past, students with disabilities were taught in separate classrooms, and in some cases separate schools. The transition to inclusive education has not been easy for these two diverse groups of students, both academically and socially. For many reasons, students with disabilities have socialization issues. Many have behaviour problems or act inappropriately in social situations which calls for effective behavioural management strategies by teachers. These types of behaviours are disconcerting to typically developing children who do not have experience interacting with individuals with disabilities.

This can make having peers with disabilities in the classroom an uncomfortable experience for many students without disabilities. The experience can be equally uncomfortable for students with disabilities who are lonely and depressed because they are unable to make friends in their classes. Many students with disabilities may not understand why they are unable to socialize. Unfortunately, they do understand what it feels like to be rejected. The emotional pain from rejection and friendlessness can have damaging consequences on the psychosocial development of children (Bandy & Boyer,

2004). These consequences can perpetuate throughout adolescence and into adulthood. In view of this, the study seeks to investigate teachers‟ behavioural management strategies that are useful for learners with intellectual disability.

However, due to increasing demands on teachers to raise achievement scores on state-wide testing, little time remains to provide social skills instruction. Life skills and social skills training programs have been placed on the backburner in special education and have been replaced with an emphasis on raising test scores. While student academic achievement is a crucial component of special education, behavioural management, life skills and social skills training are areas that are necessary to promote a healthy and successful life after the school years are over (Westwood & Graham, 2003).

Inclusion provides opportunities for the development of appropriate attitudes towards people with a range of disabilities. Exposure to students of all types on a daily basis allows typical students to see that, just like themselves, students with disabilities have strengths and weakness, and good days and bad days (Westwood & Graham, 2003). Research has long established that changing attitudes towards people with disabilities requires, both, information about these disabilities and experience with people with disabilities (Bandy & Boyer, 2004). Inclusion facilitates both of these requirements. With the appropriate supports in place, students with intellectual disabilities can achieve a high quality of life in many different aspects. Curriculum and instruction must be carefully modified to help these students reach their potential in both academics and other functional areas such as independent living. While these students will have limitations in much adaptive behaviour, these limitations will co-exist alongside strengths in other areas within the individual. Independence and self-reliance should always be primary goals of all instructional strategies employed with

students with intellectual disabilities.

Students with disabilities have a wide range of needs and most exhibit behavioural problems. Training them to overcome the limitations in adaptive behaviour is the primary aim of any individual who is working for persons with Intellectual disability. A few of them also have problem behavioural posing challenges to the educator. A problem or a challenging behaviour in the individual interferes with his acquiring new skills, or strengthening old skills or it interferes in someone else"s activities. The behaviour may be harmful to him or may causes harm or disrespect to others. If the problem behaviour occurs more frequently or for longer period of time or is very severe in nature, then those do require management. It is important to manage problem behaviours in children because problem behaviours may interfere with learning, social acceptance, harm the child or others and at severe level they contribute to the burden of care-giving and also institutionalisation. To be successful in inclusive settings intellectually disabled students need to demonstrate classroom behaviours that are consistent with teacher"s demands and expectations and that promote socializations with peers (Kauffman et al., 2009).

Appropriate social and behavioural skills will allow students with intellectual disabilities to fully integrate into the social and behavioural skills, which will in turn, allow them to fully integrate into their school and community. Unfortunately, due to internal and external factors existing in general education classrooms, students with intellectual disabilities may exhibit behaviours that interfere with their learning and socialization and disrupt the learning environment (Alberto & Troutman, 2000). Therefore, teachers may need to employ a variety of strategies to increase appropriate and decrease inappropriate social and behaviour skills. So the inclusive education

programme should focus on establishing and maintaining positive peer relationship of the children with intellectual disability.

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

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Therefore, teachers may need to employ a variety of strategies to increase appropriate and decrease inappropriate social and behaviour skills. So the inclusive education programme should focuses on establishing and maintaining positive peer relationship of the children with intellectual disability. Strengthening the capacity of the education system as an overall principle which should guide all education policies and practices, starting from the fact that education is a basic human rights and the foundation for a more just and equal society. Inclusive education acknowledges and respects differences in children: age, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, HIV and TB status (Daily Graphic, May 20, 2008 p. 9 as cited in Gadagbui, 2008).

Inclusive education practice will be generally defined as the practice where: The lessons correspond to the diversity of students, which all students have access to teachers plan, teach and assess their lessons in collaboration, teachers are interested and support the participation and learning of all students, parents and the community is used as a source of support in the classroom (Acedo, Ferrer & Pamies, 2009) Inclusion can foster democratic values in the pursuit of social justice Secondly, it is a feasible option, and an integral part of the principles of equality of opportunity in education (Mitchell, 2010). Recent studies show that inclusive education provides the best opportunities to support the development for people with disabilities (Thomas & Loxley, 2001). Inclusive education in Ghana.

In Ghana, education of children and youth with disabilities started in 1936 and led to the establishment of a school for the blind at Akropong-Akwapim in 1946. Other Schools were built for the deaf, and the intellectually disabled in the sixties. These schools were mostly segregated. The children grew up with their peers and developed a common culture. The schools developed as centres of excellence. There was concentration of expertise on specific impairments and student-teacher ratio enables each child to have more attention. On the other side of those provisions, the schools are usually not available in the child‟s immediate environment. The expertise is only available for a small group of children

- System of teaching is very expensive. It is therefore not affordable.
- Children find it hard to re-adopt to life with their families, peers and communities.

The cost of special education per child is too high for most countries. Governments are recognising the need to develop a more affordable system which will provide quality education for all children, hence Inclusive Education. In the light of this global development since Ghana was a participant at the Salamanca and Dakar Conferences, the Ministry of Education pursued those rights hence the Ghana Education Service in its Education Strategic Plan of 2003–2015 adapted Inclusive Education. . Inclusive education is a relatively new concept emerging in education with the focus of enabling children with disabilities gain access and enrolment in regular schools. The effective practice and achievement of inclusive education rest on regular classroom teachers in reference to what knowledge they may have and how prepared they are. This calls for understanding of teachers view about inclusion and how their preparedness is. Educators and regular class peers become more accepting as they learn more about the abilities and problems of special learners. (Lewis & Doorlag, 2001). The knowledge that a learner is handicapped may raise the anxiety level of teachers for example knowledge that a learner is visually handicapped, Causes tension and anxiety in the teacher (Lipsky & Gardner, 1997, p. 89).

Lewis and Doorlag (2001) maintained that limited knowledge and experiences can lead to the development of prejudice and non-accepting attitudes and to a natural discrimination against learners who are different. Knowledge about special educational needs (SEN) does not necessarily have to be obtained from formal training. Knowledge can be gained in many ways; teachers can read or view films, video tapes and television programmers about learners with disabilities. Also, simulations of handicapping conditions can be used to increase understanding. As more is learned about learners with disabilities, they appear less different, more familiar and more accepting (Lewis &

Doorlag, 2001).

Teacher preparedness for inclusionary practice are crucial in providing quality education for all children including those with special educational needs. Teachers all over the world are dedicated to ensuring the right to education for all children. Although, many teachers are working in challenging circumstances such as large classes, inadequate infrastructure, weak supply of basic teaching and learning materials, high absenteeism, inflexible policies and curricula, low salaries, among others, they work to accommodate all learners in their schools.

According to Gallagher (2004), despite the efforts of policy-makers, head teachers and teachers, many children still lack teachers who are adequately trained and supported to meet their needs. UNESCO has estimated that worldwide 1.6 million additional teachers are needed to provide universal primary education by 2015. There is a real risk that under the pressure to increase the number of teachers within a very short deadline, the quality of the teacher training will decrease. Garman (2005) contends that inclusive education might be seen as a luxury, or as the responsibility of specialists, but inclusive education is crucial to ensure all children have access to quality education, as a result, well-trained, supported and motivated teachers have an impact on the enrolment, participation and achievement of all children, and especially of children with disabilities who need extra encouragement and support to have access to and stay in school.

In the view of Gersten (2001), activities in inclusive schools such as adaptations in teaching style, content and materials that are not related to inclusive values such as equality, rights, respect for diversity and participation, etc., are less sustainable and more related to instructions from higher authorities. The skills and knowledge teachers

learn in order to teach in inclusive settings should therefore be embedded in inclusive values to be meaningful. Gersten adds that teachers who believe it is their responsibility to teach all children are more efficient teachers in general.

According to Gersten and Dimino (2001), the fundamental of inclusion is the supposition that the general classroom teacher has certain knowledge and understanding about the needs of different learners, teaching techniques and curriculum strategies. Florian and Rouse (2009) state: „the task of initial teacher education is to prepare people to enter a profession which accepts individual and collective responsibility for improving the learning and participation of all children" (p. 596).

Savolainen (2009) also notes that teachers play a crucial role in quality education and quotes McKinsey and Company who say, "The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers" (p. 16). For instance, studies of Bailleul (2008) suggest that the quality of the teacher contributes more to learner achievement than any other factor, including class size, class composition, or background.

The need for „high quality" inclusive teachers becomes evident to provide not only equal opportunities for all, but also education for an inclusive society. According to Reynolds (2009), it is the knowledge, beliefs and values of the teacher that are brought to bear in creating an effective learning environment for pupils, making the teacher a critical influence in education for inclusion and the development of inclusion oriented schools. Similarly, Cardona (2009) notes that "concentration on initial teacher education seem to provide the best means to create a new generation of teachers who will ensure the successful implementation of inclusive policies and practices" (p. 35). Also, The OECD report „Teachers Matter" recognizes that the hassles on schools and teachers are becoming more complex as society now expects schools to deal effectively

with different languages and student backgrounds, to be complex to culture and gender issues, to promote tolerance and social cohesion, to respond effectively to disadvantaged students and students with learning or behavioural problems, to use new technologies, and to keep pace with rapidly developing fields of knowledge and approaches to student assessment.

To OECD, teachers, therefore, need confidence in their ability and the knowledge and skills in inclusive education to meet the challenges that they will encounter in the present school climate. Goldhaber and Brewe (2000) were also of the view that changes in education and in society place new demands on the teaching profession. They contended that classrooms now contain a more heterogeneous group of young people from different backgrounds and with different levels of ability and disability. As a result of these changes, teachers not only supposed to acquire new knowledge and skills but are also to develop them continuously" (p. 43). They stated that teachers have a key role to play in preparing pupils to take their place in society and in the world of work and points out that teachers in particular need the knowledge necessary to:

a. Identify the specific needs of each individual learner, and respond to them by deploying a wide range of teaching strategies.
b. Support the development of young people into fully
c. autonomous lifelong learners.
d. Work in multicultural settings.
e. Work in close collaboration with colleagues, parents and the wider community.
f. Possess pedagogical skills as well as specialist knowledge of their subjects.
g. Have access to effective early career support programmes at the start of their career.
h. Have sufficient incentives throughout their careers to review their learning needs and to acquire new knowledge, skills and competence.
i. Be able to teach competency and to teach effectively in heterogeneous classes.

j. Engage in reflective practice and research.

k. Be autonomous learners in their own career-long professional development.

Participants concluded that dealing with a culturally diverse classroom means much more than dealing with pupils who have a poor grasp of the language of instruction. The Peer-Learning Activity (2007) concluded that teacher education should provide teachers with knowledge about intercultural issues in school and society and engage teachers‟ commitment to working in a culturally diverse society. Several basic teaching skills were felt to be particularly important in this context:

Schepens (2009) contends that current teacher education programmes have been influenced by a number of pedagogical traditions in past years, for example academic, practical, technological, personal and critical/social re-constructionist traditions. Similarly, Britzman (2003) described practices in institutions holding onto the positivist or academic tradition as providing knowledge through various, often fragmented courses while schools provide the setting where student teachers are expected to apply those theories and integrate knowledge and practice by themselves.

Ferreira and Graça (2006) recommend that, to take full account of the diversity of the current school population, the following aspects should be included in teacher education: learning difficulties and disabilities; emotional and behavioural problems; communication techniques and technologies; symbolic representation, signification and multiculturalism; different curricula; teaching methods and techniques and educational relationships. To ensure culturally responsive teaching, Gay and Kirkland (2003) say that teacher education must include critical cultural self-reflection that takes place in a context of guided practice in realistic situations and with authentic examples and Baglieri (2007) proposes the incorporation of Disability Studies in teacher

education.

2.3 Benefits of Inclusive Education

Inclusion may appear inappropriate or may appear not to meet all the educational needs in the classroom, but in fact, segregated special education classrooms isolate students from peers who are different from them. There are many benefits of inclusion for both students with and without disabilities as well as society. The benefits of inclusion of students with and without disabilities are social benefits.

2.3.1 Academic benefits

One study by D"Alonso, Giordano and Vanleeuwen (1997) reported on many academic benefits of inclusion. One benefit found by Hunt, Staub, Alwell and Goetz (1994) was that students with disabilities spend more time engaged in learning than in special settings. This finding indicates that the students are engaged in learning more in the general education setting because they are receiving a variety of experiences they may not receive in the special education settings. Sharpe, York and Knight (1994) reported that inclusion of students with disabilities is not associated with a decline in the academic or behavioural performance of students without disabilities on standardized tests or report cards.

Students with disabilities are more likely to succeed in effective inclusion schools because teachers, administration, specialists, volunteers and typical classmates are working together to ensure that every student is valued, respected, and accepted for who he or she is and is provided with meaningful and appropriate learning experiences.

Emerging data suggest that students with disabilities do better academically in inclusive settings (Klinger, Vaughn, Hughes, Schumn, Elbaum & 1998; Rea, 1997; Walther-Thomas, 1997). Studies have shown that, high-achieving students are not harmed in

the inclusion process (Klinger et al, 1998; McDonnell, McLaughlin & Morrison, 1997; Sharpe York & Knight, 1999).

Emerging studies also suggest that the presence of identified students in general education settings may enhance classroom learning experience for peers who may be at risk academically (Walther-Thomas, 1997) as well as high achieving students (Stevens & Slavin 1995). This is understandable, this is because given the extra help to all class members when a learning specialist is present who can target specific problems as students work and develop appropriate intervention strategies immediately to address these concerns (Levin, 1997; Walther- Thomas, 1997). Research has also shown that inclusion has had a positive academic impact on all students. For example when students in a general classroom were assigned to cooperative learning groups in mathematics, there were no significant difference for groups that had a child with disability compared to those groups that did not have a child with disability (Hunt et al, 1994).

Mcleskey and Waldron (2002) reviewed the achievement levels of students with disabilities educated in a resource centre. The results indicated that the students with disabilities educated in the general classroom, alongside non-disabled peers educated showed a significantly greater improvement in reading than they did with their disabled peers educated in the resource centre. These findings show that, students with disabilities can also perform better in the other subject areas. Additionally, there has been research on the effect inclusion has on the performance of students with and without disabilities on standardized test. Odom (2000) concentrated on the results of standardized tests, which measured cognitive, language and social development for the educationally disabled students and compared those results to non- disabled

children in both inclusive and non-inclusive settings. They reported that there were no significant differences between the two groups with regard to developmental progress.

Moreover, Sharpe, York, and Knight (1994) reported the findings of a study conducted to compare the overall performance of students in elementary classrooms. The results indicated that having students with special educational needs in the general classroom did not yield a significant decline in the academic or behavioural performance of their non-disabled peers on measures of standardized tests. The results above indicated that students with disabilities in the general classroom would not lower the academic standards of the non-disabled students. On the contrary, many regular education teachers who feel unprepared to work with learners with disabilities in regular classes display frustration, anger and negative attitudes toward inclusive education because they believe it could lead to lower academic standards (Gary, 1997; Tiegerman-Farber & Radziewickz, 1998).

The results above indicate that students with disabilities in the general classroom would not lower the academic standards of the non-disabled students. On the contrary, many regular education teachers who feel unprepared and fearful to work with learners with disabilities in regular classes display frustration, anger and negative attitudes toward inclusive education because they believe it could lead to lower academic standards (Gary, 1997; Tiegerman-Farber & Radziewickz, 1998).

2.3.2 Social benefits

It is instructive to note that, inclusive education has several benefits among of which are;

Inclusion in general classroom can help the students to socialize and interact with each other, for all students to be appreciated. Thus; it provides the opportunity to develop friendships and this may not be actualized if students with disabilities are separated from other students without disabilities, these experiences are critical to the social development of students, which can lead to the student becoming an active member of society. Children without disabilities have reported to benefit from the exposure to disabled students in an inclusive setting; students of different abilities have the opportunity to appreciate the fact that not all students are created equal.

Having both non-disabled students integrated into an age-appropriate classroom has resulted in positive outcomes, which assisted in the development of social networks and friendships (D‟Alonzo, Vanleeuwen, & Giordano, 1995). When adequate supports are provided by student without disabilities, their peers with disabilities can benefit from inclusion effectively. Adults in inclusive schools provide students with on-going support, models of caring and accepting behaviours, constructive feedback, and encouragement to be supportive of one another (Kunc, 1992).

When inclusion is implemented effectively, daily involvement in each other‟s lives helps students to become more emphatic and understanding as they develop a better appreciation for unique qualities that all people possess (Kunc, 1992; Levin, 1997). D‟Alonzo et al. (1997) reported that high school students had relationships with students with disabilities that resulted in more positive attitudes, increased response to the needs of others and increased appreciation for diversity. D‟Alonzo et al. further

found out that, students with severe disabilities developed social networks, positive interpersonal relationships and friendships with students without disabilities. This study suggests that for some students with disabilities, increased interaction with their peers will increase their self-esteem and make them feel that they are truly part of the school. Bosea-Gyinantwi (2009) also observed that, inclusive setting makes the child with disabilities sociable, and receive a lot of assistance from their peers without disabilities. This happens because inclusive schools design academic work to use structures that facilitate social interactions among students (e.g. peer tutoring, cooperative learning). Through these interactions, all students have the opportunities to develop or enhance their communication, problem-solving and relationship building skills (Giagreco, Dennis, Cloninger, Eldelman, & Scattman; 1993).

2.3.2 Attitudes of teachers towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools

There is a body of literature on teachers‟ attitudes on inclusive education. Chambers and Forlin (2010) defined attitudes as a "learned, evaluative response about an object or an issue and a cumulative result of personal beliefs." (p. 74) Forlin adds that beliefs influenced teacher attitudes to inclusive education that in turn, influence their intentions and behaviours. Attitudes are formed by experience as well as by implicit learning and may reflect an individual‟s personality (Zimbardo & Lieppe, 1991). Johnson and Howell (2009) contend that attitudes may be seen to have three related components: cognitive (the idea or assumptions upon which the attitude is based), affective (feelings about the issue), and behavioural (a predisposition toward an action that corresponds with the assumption or belief). As a result, the formation and modification of teacher attitudes are important areas of education research (Weisman & Garza, 2002). Cook (2002) noted the need for positive teacher attitudes and for teachers to create a „sense of belonging‟ to support effective inclusive practice. In relation to the assertion, Cooks and

Silverman (2007) pointed out that teachers‟ attitudes directly affect their behaviour with students, and so have a great influence on classroom climate and student outcomes.

Several studies show that teachers‟ understanding and perception contribute to success of inclusion and that positive perceptions and understanding are linked to a range of factors, including training in special or inclusive education, experience in working with students with disabilities, and close contact with students with disabilities. Also, beliefs about disability, ethnicity, attitudes, and concerns of teachers can influence the practice of inclusive education, the quality of educational materials and instruction students receive (Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001; Nieto, 1997; Sharma & Desai, 2002).

Although it appears that teachers tend to be in favour of conclusion as a social and educational principle, their support of their practical implementation of inclusion is dependent on the type and severity of disability, with more reluctant views expressed towards inclusion of students with more severe disabilities and students with behaviour disabilities (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002}.The nature and severity of the disability appears to be related to teacher‟s willingness to accommodate students with disabilities in general classrooms. Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) noted that the highest-level support was given to the inclusion of students with mild disabilities who require the least amount of modification in curriculum and instruction. The researches indicated that the severity level of student disability and the amount of additional teacher responsibility required were the two factors that appeared to be related to the belief that including students with disabilities would have a negative effect on general education classroom. Students with mild disabilities (e.g. students with learning disabilities) have been portrayed as not being significantly different from students without distinguished disabilities (Wang, Reynolds & Walberg, 1998) and therefore were more likely to be welcomed in the inclusive classrooms.

Conversely, children with emotional and behavioural problems have typically been rated less positively in relation to perception and understanding about inclusion (Soodak, Podell, & Lehman 1998, Stoiber, Gettinger, & Goetz, 1998).

In general, teachers believe that students with the most challenging behaviour require additional teacher responsibility and that they are difficult to support. Other studies revealed that inclusion of students with disabilities into the general education classroom brings about larger classes which increase the teachers‟ work-load; large classes may be viewed as an obstacle to the successful implementation of inclusive education (Agran, Alper, & Wehmeyer, 2002). Larger classes place additional demands on the regular educator, while reinforcing concern that all students may not receive proper time or attention (Stoler, 1992). Cornoldi, Terreni, Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) noted that, classes cannot exceed 20 if there is one student with a disability in an inclusive classroom. Some teachers are also with the view that the classroom time will be insufficient when students with disabilities are included in the general classroom.

Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) indicated that teachers believed that the classroom time is insufficient for inclusion efforts. Similarly, Downing, Eichinger and Williams (199) found positive perspectives toward inclusion as teachers were more concerned about the classroom time required to support students with disabilities that might limit their ability to provide an appropriate education for general education students in the inclusive classroom. Insufficient classroom time available for teachers in inclusive classroom was therefore a major concern to teachers. Positive attitudes and beliefs combine to play a major part in support diversity in inclusive education (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Silva & Morgado, 2004). According to Cook (2002), training in special and inclusive education has consistently been found out to have influenced

educators‟ attitudes either in a single course or through a content-infused approach. Also, Lancaster and Bain (2007) agreed that in general, there is a positive change in attitudes after undertaking an inclusive and special education unit of study across a number of contexts and countries. The authors suggested that some type of formalized input is sufficient to increase the awareness of general education pre-service teachers. However, Molina (2006) finds out some research evidence to demonstrate that theoretical classes and reading are not sufficient to modify teachers‟ and students‟ negative attitudes towards students with special educational needs.

Mahat (2008) noted that in order to find out the attitudes of teachers towards students with disabilities. In his view, Mahat suggested that attitudes of mainstream teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities were influenced by past experiences (previous experience with teaching students with disabilities), previous knowledge (training in the field of inclusive education) and newly-acquired knowledge (professional development or training modules). Avramidis and Norwich (2002) note the importance of positive attitudes of beginning teachers in inclusive settings has been well documented. However, both pre-service and in-service courses that address the skills and the attitudes of teachers towards students with disabilities are frequently deemed insufficient by teachers (Westwood & Graham, 2003).

Finally, inclusive education can be achieved depending on teachers‟ positive attitudes towards teaching disabled children without exhibiting certain stereotypical patterns in students‟ academic behaviour (Jordan et al. 2001). In other words, teachers stereotypical and self-imposed perceptions of considering their pupils as one good or bad from the others closes their own motivation to be adaptable to each of their pupils‟ needs (Prater, 2010).

2.4 Factors Influencing Teachers' Attitudes

Research has suggested that teachers‟ attitudes might be influenced by a number of factors which are, in many ways, interrelated. For example, in the majority of integration attitude studies reviewed earlier, responses appeared to vary according to disabling conditions. In other words, the natures of the disabilities and/or educational problems presented have been noted to influence teachers‟ attitudes. In conclusion, even though in Bowman‟s (2006) study the opposite was true, teachers seem generally to exhibit a more positive attitude towards the integration of children with physical and sensory impairments than to those with learning difficulties and emotional-behavioural difficulties (EBD).

2.4.1 Teacher-related variables

A great deal of research regarding teacher characteristics has sought to determine the relationship between those characteristics and attitudes towards children with disabilities. Researchers have explored a host of specific teacher variables, such as gender, age, years of teaching experience, grade level, contact with disabled persons and other personality factors, which might impact upon teacher acceptance of the inclusion principle (Harvey, 2005).

2.4.2 Gender

With regard to gender, the evidence appears inconsistent; some researchers noted that female teachers had a greater tolerance level for integration and for disabilities persons than did male teachers (Rizzo & Sirotnik, 2001). Harvey (2005), for example, found that there was a marginal tendency for female teachers to express more positive attitudes towards the idea of integrating children with behaviour problems than male teachers (Beh-Pajooh, 1992; Leyseret al., 1994). However, did not report that gender

was related to attitudes (see also reviews by Hannah, 1988, & Jamieson, 2004)

2.4.3 Teaching experience

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

Leyser et al. (1994) also found that, in general, teachers with 14 years‟ or less teaching experience had a significantly higher positive score in their attitude to integration compared with those with more than 14 years. They found no significant differences in attitudes to integration among teachers whose teaching experience was between one and four years, five and nine years and ten and 14 years (no mention was made based on individual country). Another study by Harvey (2005) compared the willingness of teacher trainees and primary teachers to accept children with SEN in their classes. His findings indicated that there was a clear reluctance on the part of the more experienced primary teachers compared to teacher trainees in their willingness to integrate such children. In this respect, it would not be unreasonable to assume that newly qualified teachers hold positive attitudes towards integration when entering the professional arena. However, although the above studies indicated those

younger teachers and those with fewer years of experience are more supportive of integration; other investigators have reported that teaching experience was not significantly related to teachers‟ attitudes (Avramidis et al., 2000).

2.4.4 Grade level taught

The variable grade level taught and its influence on teachers‟ attitudes towards integration has been the focus of several studies. Leyser et al. (1994) international study found that senior high school teachers displayed significantly more positive attitudes towards integration than did junior high school and elementary school teachers, and junior high school teachers were significantly more positive than elementary school teachers (again, no mention was made based on individual country).

Other American studies revealed that elementary and secondary teachers differed in their views of integration and the kinds of classroom accommodations they make for students who are integrated (Chalmers, 1991), with elementary teachers reporting more positive views of integration and its possibilities than did their secondary counterparts (Savage & Wienke, 1999). Salvia and Munson (1996), in their review, concluded that as children‟s age increased, teacher attitudes became less positive to integration, and attributed that to the fact that teachers of older children tend to be concerned more about subject-matter and less about individual children differences. This was also supported by Clough and Lindsay (1991) who claimed that, for teachers more concerned with subject-matter, the presence of children with SEN in the class is a problem from the practical point of view of managing class activity. In this, it could be argued that primary school ethos is more holistic/inclusive, while secondary is subject-based, and that might impinge on teachers‟ attitudes. Although

there are studies which have not found a relationship between grade and attitude (Hannah, 1998).

2.4.5 Experience

Experience of contact with children with SEN or disabled persons was mentioned by several studies as an important variable in shaping teacher attitudes towards integration. Here, the „contact hypothesis" suggests that as teachers implement inclusive programmes and therefore get closer to students with significant disabilities, their attitudes might become more positive (Yuker, 1998a). Janney et al. (1995) found that experience with low ability children was an important contributing factor to their eventual acceptance by teachers. Already wary of reforms and overloaded with work, general education teachers" initial balancing of the anticipated high cost of integration against its uncertain benefit created hesitation or resistance. Following their implementation experiences, teachers re-evaluated the balance between the cost of teachers" time and energy as compared to the benefit for students, and judged the integration effort successful (p. 436).

Leyser et al. (1994) found that, overall; teachers with much experience with disabled persons had significantly more favourable attitudes towards integration than those with little or no experience. Findings of several other studies conducted in the USA by Leyser and Lessen, (1995) and in the UK by Shimman (1990), have also stressed the importance of increased experience and social contact with children with SEN, in conjunction with the attainment of knowledge and specific skills in instructional and class management, in the formation of favourable attitudes towards integration. These studies seem to suggest that contact with students with significant disabilities, if carefully planned (and supported), results in positive changes in educators"

attitudes. These studies, coupled with more recent ones on teachers‟ attitudes towards inclusion presented earlier, indicate that as experience of mainstream teachers with children with SEN increases, their attitudes change in a positive direction (LeRoy & Simpson, 1996).

However, it is important to note here that social contact per se does not lead to favourable attitudes. Stephens and Braun (2000), for example, found no significant correlation between reported contact with students with significant disabilities and teachers‟ attitudes towards integrating these students into regular classrooms. Another study by Center and Ward (1997) showed that primary teachers were more tolerant of integration if no special class or unit was attached to their school: they claimed that contact experience with children with SEN did not result in the formation of more positive attitudes. Surprisingly, there is evidence in the literature that social contact could even produce unfavourable attitudes; Forlin‟s (1995) study, for example, indicated that there were differences between teachers who were currently involved with the policy of inclusion and those who were not. Those not involved (but who were aware of the concept of inclusion) believed that coping with a child with SEN and with a mainstream child was equally stressful. Those who were involved considered the stress of coping with the child with SEN to be greater than for dealing with a mainstream child. Thus this study indicated that experience of a child with SEN might not promote favourable acceptance for inclusion, due to the stress factor.

2.4.6 Training

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

The importance of training in the formation of positive attitudes towards integration was supported by the findings of Beh-Pajooh (1992) and Shimman (1990), based on teachers in colleges. Both studied the attitudes of college teachers in the UK towards students with SEN and their integration into ordinary college courses. Their findings showed that college teachers who had been trained to teach students with learning difficulties expressed more favourable attitudes and emotional reactions to students with SEN and their integration than did those who had no such training.

Several other studies conducted in the USA Van-Reusen, Shoho and Barker (2000), and the UK Avramidiset al. tend to reinforce the view that special education qualifications acquired from pre- or in-service courses were associated with less resistance to inclusive practices. Dickens-Smith (1995), for example, studied the attitudes of both regular and special educators towards inclusion (not integration). Her respondents were given an attitude survey before and after staff development. Both groups of respondents revealed more favourable attitudes towards inclusion after their in-service training than they did before, with regular education teachers showing the strongest positive attitude change. Dickens-Smith concluded that staff development is the key to the success of inclusion.

2.4.7 Teachers' beliefs

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

This finding was further reinforced by another study by Stanovich and Jordan (1998), which attempted to predict the performance of teacher behaviours associated with effective teaching in heterogeneous classrooms. This investigation on *Teacher attitudes to integration/inclusion* was more sophisticated than previous ones because it was not only based on self-reports and interviews, but also on observation of actual teaching behaviours. The results revealed that the strongest predictor of effective teaching behaviour was the subjective school norm as operationalized by the principals‟ attitudes and beliefs about heterogeneous classrooms and his or her pathognomonic/interventionist orientation. Moreover, teachers‟ responses on the pathognomonic/interventionist interview scale were also found to be important predictors of effective teaching behaviour.

The above studies provide evidence that the school‟s ethos and the teachers‟ beliefs have a considerable impact on teachers‟ attitudes towards inclusion which, in turn, are translated into practice. It can be said that teachers who accept responsibility for teaching a wide diversity of students (recognizing thus the contribution their teaching has on the students‟ progress), and feel confident in their instructional and management skills (as a result of training), can successfully implement inclusive programmes (Soodak, Podell & Lehman, 1998, where receptivity towards inclusion was associated with higher teacher efficacy).

2.4.8 Teachers' socio-political views

There have been a few studies of integration attitudes in relation to educators‟ wider personal beliefs (political outlook, socio-political views) and attitudes. Stephens and Braun (2000), in a US study, found that attitudes to integration were more positive when teachers believed that publicly funded schools should educate exceptional children. Feldman and Altman (1995), in another study in the United States, found that classroom teachers with abstract conceptual systems held more positive integration attitudes depending on the ethnic origin of the integrated child. Teachers with abstract conceptual systems showed less need for order, less pessimism and less interpersonal aggression, characteristics which have been related to low levels of authoritarianism.

In his comparative study of educators in Devon, England, and Arizona, USA, Thomas (1995) found that educators with low scores on conservatism tended to have less negative attitudes to integration. More recently, Norwich (1994), in his comparative study of educators in rural and urban areas in Pennsylvania, USA, and Northampton shire, England, compared the relationships of integration attitudes to political outlook, socio-political views and other situational factors (contact with disability, professional

position). In this study, integration attitudes were related to sociopolitical views only in the UK sample. Norwich concluded that while educators‟ socio-political or ideological beliefs and values have some relation to integration, attitudes cannot be considered as a strong predictor alone and other situational factors (provision in the two areas and cultural issues) needed to be taken into consideration.

2.4.9 Educational environment-related variables

A number of studies have examined environmental factors and their influence in the formation of teachers‟ attitudes towards inclusion. One factor that has consistently been found to be associated with more positive attitudes is the availability of support services at the classroom and the school levels (Clough & Lindsay, 1991). Here, support could be seen as both physical (resources, teaching materials, IT equipment, a restructured physical environment) and human (learning support assistants, special teachers, speech therapists).

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

Besides those mentioned by Janney et al. (1995), other forms of physical support, such as availability of adopted teaching materials (LeRoy & Simpson, 1996), and smaller classes (Clough & Lindsay, 1991), have also been found to generate positive attitudes towards inclusion. Another type of support, that of the continuous encouragement from the head teacher, has also been mentioned in several studies as being instrumental in the creation of positive attitudes to inclusion. In the Janney et al. (1995), the enthusiastic support from head teachers was an attributing factor to the success of the part-time integration programme in the schools they studied. Chazan (1994), in his review of relevant literature, concluded that mainstream teachers have a greater tolerance of integration if head teachers are supportive. Similarly, Centre and Wards (1997) study reported that mainstream teachers whose head teachers had provided some form of support for the integration programme exhibited a more positive attitude towards its implementation than those who had not received any (Thomas, 1995).

Support from specialist resource teachers was also identified as an important factor in shaping positive teacher attitudes to inclusion (Kauffman et al., 2009). Janney et al. (1995) found that one of the factors cited by their respondents that had contributed to the success of the part-time integration programme they were implementing was the existence of effective support, both interpersonal and task related, provided by the school‟s special education teachers. Clough and Lindsay (1991) argued that special education specialist teachers are important co-workers in

providing advice to subject specialist teachers on how to make a particular subject accessible to children with SEN. Centre and Ward (1997) found that children with a mild sensory disability integrated in mainstream classes did not cause anxiety to

mainstream teachers because of the confidence generated by the presence of itinerant teachers for these children. Their study showed that experience of working with itinerant teachers positively affected teachers‟ attitudes. The importance of support from specialist resource teachers was also highlighted in another study conducted in the USA (Minke et al., 1996), which compared the attitudes towards inclusion and the perceptions of self-efficacy, competence, teaching satisfaction and judgments of the appropriateness of teaching adaptation of regular education teachers who co-taught with resource teachers in inclusive classrooms and their counterparts in traditional classrooms. Regular teachers in inclusive classrooms reported positive attitudes towards inclusion and high perceptions of self-efficacy, competence and satisfaction. Regular teachers in traditional classrooms held less positive perceptions and viewed classroom adaptations as less feasible, and less frequently used, than did teachers in classrooms with the protected resource of two teachers.

Other aspects of the mainstream school environment have also been identified in the above studies as being obstacles that have to be surmounted in order for inclusive programmes to be successfully implemented; for example, more often than not, teachers report overcrowded classrooms, insufficient pre-prepared materials (differentiated packages), insufficient time to plan with learning support team, lack of a modified/flexible timetable, inadequately available support from external specialists and lack of regular INSET (Avramidis et al., 2000). In particular, the need for more non-contact time so they can plan collaboratively has been stressed in a number of American studies (Diebold & von Eschenbach, 1991; Semmel et al., 1991).

In the Myles and Simpson (1999) investigation, for example, 48 out of 55 teachers (87.2 per cent) reported their perceived need for 1 hour or more of daily planning time for inclusion. It could be said that mainstream teachers feel that implementing an

inclusive programme would involve a considerable workload on their part, as a result of increased planning for meeting the needs of a very diverse population. In this respect, human and physical support can be seen as important factors in generating positive attitudes among mainstream teachers towards the inclusion of children with SEN.

2.5 The influence of Teachers' Attitude towards Teaching of Children with Disability in Inclusive Schools

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

Attitudes are conceptualised as relatively stable constructs comprising cognitive, affective, and behavioural components (Bizer, Barden, & Petty, 2003). Teachers‟ attitudes towards inclusion are often based on practical concerns about how inclusive education can be implemented, rather than be grounded in any particular ideology (Burke & Sutherland, 2004). Common practical concerns raised by teachers include:

accommodating the individualised time demands of students with disability without disadvantaging other students in the classroom; being apprehensive of the quality and quantity of work output of children with disabilities; lacking adequate support services; and limited training and competence in supporting inclusive educational practice (Bender et al., 1995).

The severity of the disability that teachers are required to accommodate within their classroom is inversely associated with their attitude towards inclusion. That is, the more severe the child's disability; the less positive their attitude is towards inclusion (Forlin & Chambers, 2011). The type of disability also appears to influence teachers‟ attitudes. For example, teachers were found to generally be more supportive of including children with physical and sensory disabilities than those with intellectual, learning, and behavioural disabilities (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Ellins & Porter, 2OO5).

Teacher education is viewed to be pivotal in developing the affirmative attitudes and skills required for successful inclusion, with formal educational training being identified as one of the main factors that promote an inclusive attitude (Bender et al., 1995). Similar findings have been found with trainee teachers Westwood and Graham (2003) where the inclusion of a compulsory module on diversity in a postgraduate degree promoted having an inclusive attitude. Pedagogies that combine formal training and planned hands-on experience with people with disabilities have been shown to improve preparedness and positive attitudes towards inclusion. Moreover, irrespective of degree type, trainee teachers had a better understanding of the potential of children with disabilities after completing a unit of study with a strong focus on inclusive education (Campbellet al., 2003).

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

The influence of age, gender and role on having an inclusive attitude is largely mixed. Some studies reported no significant effect of teachers‟ age on having an inclusive attitude Costello & Boyle, 2013). While others suggest training in inclusive practices significantly improves the attitudes of younger trainee teachers, but not older ones (Forlin, Loreman Sharma & Earle, 2009). Female teacher trainees are reported to be more tolerant in implementing inclusive education. (Avramidis et al., 2000) while other studies reported no effect of gender (Alghazo et al., 2003; Van Reusen, Shoho, & Barker, 2000). Following training, teachers with less experience have been shown to have a more positive attitude towards inclusion when compared with their more experienced counterparts‟ education (Campbell et al,2003), while other studies reported no effect of gender (Alghazo et al., 2003; Van Reusen et al., 2000). Following training, teachers with less experience have been shown to have a more positive attitude towards inclusion when compared with their more experienced counterparts (Campbell et al., 2003).

Conversely, some studies found that teachers who have been exposed to people with disabilities (i.e., friend or family member) were found to be more open to inclusion (Costello & Boyle, 2003) whereas other studies do not report any influence of prior

exposure to disability (Alghazo, et al., 2003). A recent cross-cultural study on trainee teachers‟ attitudes toward multiple aspects of diversity found that overall attitudes toward people who differed from them were predominantly acceptance regarding disability, gender and special talents; with over 80% of the participating trainee teachers upholding a positive attitude (Moltó et al., 2010).

In recent years, there has been growing interest in studying the pragmatic side of implementing inclusive education by measuring teachers‟ sense of self-efficacy of implementing inclusive education (Sharma et al., 2012). Self-efficacy in teaching is the belief that one‟s teaching can influence how well all students learn, including those who are unmotivated or demanding. Sharma and colleagues observed that the importance of self-efficacy emerges from its cyclic nature, whereby proficiency in performance creates a new mastery experience which, in turn, influences self-efficacy beliefs Empirical findings validate the associations between high self-efficacy in teachers and openness to implement varied instructional strategies for students of all ability levels, including those with learning difficulties (Chester & Beaudin, 1996), and more positive attitudes toward inclusive education (Meijer & Foster, 1998). Conversely, teachers with low self-efficacy in their teaching are more likely to see difficulties in learning to be attributable to the child (i.e., internal to the child) and less willing to adapt their teaching methods to suit the needs of students with learning difficulties (Weisel & Dror, 2006). Teachers with a higher efficacy attribute students‟ difficulties more to external factors than those with a lower efficacy, suggesting that teachers who feel more competent are more comfortable in accepting some responsibility for students‟ difficulties (Brady & Woolfson, 2008). Emerging evidence suggests that teachers‟ self-efficacy beliefs are a better predictor of the attributes they uphold regarding inclusive education than their role (i.e., whether a teacher works in a

special education setting, a mainstream setting, or a learning support setting.

Inclusion of students with and without disabilities requires changes in classroom infrastructure, the teaching methodologies, the attitude of teachers and instructional materials since the classroom contains mixed students with different disabilities, teachers will therefore need some in order to handle the classroom diversity.

Heiman (2002) noted that, despite the apparent benefits of inclusion, and regardless of teachers‟ commitment and positive perception, and notwithstanding their having the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the educational needs of diverse students with disabilities, teachers were concerned about the academic, social, and behavioural adjustment of the students with disabilities in inclusive classroom.Oslon (2003) studied special and general education teachers‟ attitude toward inclusion using survey as the research design. The researcher sampled 65 teachers and administered close-ended and open ended questionnaires for the respondents to show their level of agreement. The researcher observed that the general education teachers lacked training and in-services for successful inclusion of students with disabilities in the general classroom. Twenty-seven point two percent (27.2%) of the teachers surveyed indicated they agreed that general education teachers and other staff were provided with the training and in-services needed in order to feel competent to teach students with disabilities. Seventy-two point eight percent (72.8%) of the teachers indicated that they lacked appropriate training to handle students with disabilities. It must be noted that, Oslon‟s study is similar to this one where the researcher also used survey as the research design, and close- and open-ended questionnaires as the instrument for the survey. A study by Layser and Tappendorf (2001) reported that teachers needed various activities included in in-services or pre-services such as simulations,

discussions, panel presentation, and relevant information about disabilities. Other teachers stressed their concern that, as more students were included, teachers would need additional tools and skills for coping with the social and emotional problems that accompany inclusive schooling (Idol, 1997). This is because of the changes that inclusion demands in general education classrooms.

Some researchers have attributed teachers‟ negative responses toward inclusion to the teachers‟ lack of positive experience with well-designed inclusive programs (McLeskey, Waldron, So, Swanson & Loveland, 2001; Vaughn, Schumm, & Saumell,1996) inclusion will therefore require training of general education teachers to manage the classrooms that contain students with and without disabilities.

McLeskey et al. (2001) further compared the perspectives of teachers, who were not working at the time of the investigation, were not working in inclusive settings with those who were working with well-designed inclusive programs. The results indicated that teachers in well-designed inclusive programs had significantly more positive perspectives and understanding toward inclusion compared to teachers who lacked this experience. Center and Ward (1997) indicated that teachers who were anxious about including student with disabilities in their general education classroom exhibited lack of confidence in their instructional skills and the quality of support services available at the classroom and school levels.

Center and Ward (1997) indicated that teachers who were anxious about including student with disabilities in their general education classroom exhibited lack of confidence in their instructional skills and the quality of support services available at the classroom and school levels. Similarly, Scruggs and Mactropieri (1996) reported that teachers believed that sufficient resources were not available to support inclusion

efforts, although more teachers agreed they were provided physical support than human support. Because positive perception and understanding towards inclusion among teachers appear to be a necessary factor for successful inclusion, teacher education should invest in teacher preparation activities that can help teachers to teach students with disabilities in inclusion settings (Bullough, 1995; Hutchison & Martin, 1999). These programs have adopted many reforms to impact positively the perception, understanding and the instructional skills of the future teachers. The majority of these programs have examined the impact of special education courses on the perception of general education teachers towards inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms (Carrol, Forlin, & Jobling, 2003; Shade & Steward, 2001).

Several studies in general and special education have reported that teachers‟ preparation has been characterized by a lack of effectiveness to meet the challenge of inclusive education. Lambard, Miller, and Hazelkorn (1998) conducted a study in 45 states in the U.S to explore the perception of teachers regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities. The researchers reported that in general, teachers did not feel prepared to meet of students with disabilities, especially those who had received little or no in-service training regarding inclusive practices, and had not participated in developing individual education programs for students with disabilities.

Similarly, in Northern Ireland and Scotland, 231 teacher trainees were surveyed and almost all believed that their preparation did not enable them to meet the demands of inclusive education (Wishart & Manning, 1996). Agbenyega (2007) also noted that, teachers as a result of their level of training are unable to teach adequately students with disabilities. Matinez (2003) sought to assess the effectiveness of an introductory special education course of student teachers‟ perception towards inclusion, their sense

of teaching efficacy and their knowledge about adapting instruction of children with disabilities. The result revealed that the special education course did not have statistically significant positive effects on the teachers‟ perception towards inclusion or their perception of teaching competence.

Tait and Purdie (2000) investigated 1626 general education pre-service teachers‟ understanding toward people disabilities at Australian university. The respondents were either in the final semester of their fourth year or enrolled in one year postgraduate diploma in education. There were no mandatory courses related to students with disabilities offered to pre-service teachers. However, in the final semester of their fourth year of study, students attended lectures and tutorial about students with disabilities. Tait and Purdie concluded that the one year general teacher training course was ineffective in influencing students‟ perception in a positive way. Moreover, the authors were not sure whether a longer teacher training program would lead to positive results, and recommended that further research was needed to address this issue. Heiman (2002) noted that teachers may resist inclusive practices on account of inadequate training. It would appear that teachers perceive themselves as unprepared for inclusive education because they lack appropriate training in this area (Bender et al., 1995; Daane et al., 2000).

Inadequate training relating to inclusive education may result in lowered teacher confidence as they plan for inclusive education (Schumm et al., 1994). Teachers who have not undertaken training regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities, may exhibit negative attitudes toward such inclusion (Van Reusen, et al., 2001), while increased training was associated with more positive perception towards inclusion of students with disabilities (Briggs et al., 2002; Powers, 2002). Training in the field of

special education appears to enhance understanding and improve perception regarding inclusion (Kuester, 2000; Power, 2002). Introductory courses offered through teacher preparation programs may sometimes be inadequate in preparing the general educator for successful inclusion (Beattie e al., 1997).

On the other hand, some studies also reported that, there are no significant differences between special educators and general classroom teachers. Dicksons-Smith (1995) studied the perception of 200 general and special educators toward inclusion of all students, regardless of their disabilities. The results indicated that both groups of teachers exhibited more positive perception towards inclusion after the in-service training than they did before. The studies and the findings above indicate that, more teachers are of the view that, when given appropriate training and skills, they can teach effectively in inclusive settings.

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

2.6 Challenges Teachers Face in Teaching of Children with Disability in Inclusive Schools

Some teachers are of the view that educating students with and without disabilities in the same classroom faces some challenges such as modification in the curriculum and instruction, teachers‟ confidence level, collaboration between the teachers and the school administration, experience in dealing with students with disabilities and assessment and grading practice in an inclusive classroom. Loreman et al., (2007)

found that, factors such as close contact with a person with disability, teaching experience, knowledge of policy and law, and confidence levels of significant impact on student teachers perception towards inclusion. Bones and Lambe (2007) have reported that training in special or inclusive education and experience teaching or relating to students with disabilities have positive impact on attitude and perception.

In addition, such positive perception supports the potential for more successful inclusive programs or experiences for students (Kuyini & Desai, 2008; Subban & Sharma, 2006). Possessing previous experience as an inclusive educator appears to positively predispose teachers toward inclusive education (Hodge & Jasma, 2000). It would appear that previous contact with persons with disabilities allows regular education teachers to feel comfortable within the inclusive classrooms. Direct experience of including students with disabilities into mainstream settings appeared to be an essential factor in shaping teachers views toward inclusive settings (Giangreco et al., 1993) Brown (1996), in her 4-nation UNESCO study of approximately 1000 teachers with experience in teaching children with disabilities , reported a wide difference in perceptions regarding inclusive education. These teachers favoured inclusion of different types of children with disabilities into the general classroom. Brown noted that in countries that had a law requiring inclusion, teachers expressed favourable views ranging from 47% to 93%. However, teachers from countries that offered mostly segregation education were less supportive to inclusion with their favourable views ranging from 0% to 28%. These findings show that, when teachers are exposed in teaching student with disabilities, they will develop positive perceptions for inclusion. Cook and Landrum (2000) found that teachers with seven or more years of teaching experience with students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms felt that they could potentially meet the needs of more students with disabilities in their

classrooms than did teachers with fewer years of inclusive experience.

Good and Brophy (1992) also documented that experienced teachers provide students with disabilities in inclusive settings with more teacher praise, encouragement to do their best, opportunities to answer questions, and more carefully monitoring their performance. However, other researchers have noted that the mere experience of contact with students with disabilities not lead to the formation of more positive perception toward inclusion (Center & Ward, 1997). Stephens and Braun (2000) reported a non- significant correlation between contact with student with disabilities and teachers‟ perception towards inclusion. In contrast, some studies reported that teachers with more experience hold more negative perception towards inclusion (Forlin, 2005).

Some mainstream teachers claimed that they had chosen to teach a specific discipline and not special education, and inclusion policy forced them to enter areas they were unsure about or not interested in it (Vaughn, 1999). Forlin (1995) found that the most experience educators (i.e., teachers with more than 11 years of teaching experience) reported the lowest level of acceptance for inclusion. Moreover, the highest level of acceptance was found among teachers with less than six years of teaching experience in an inclusive classroom. Based on these inconsistent findings, it seems that nature of the inclusion practice or experience, whether pleasant or not, is what determines the impact on perception.

Successful implementation of inclusive education demands collaboration between the school administration and the teachers. The administration should be committed in providing the appropriate materials necessary for inclusive practices as this could be a challenge to teachers. Administrative support has also been cited as a significant

factor in determining teacher perception towards inclusion, as the teacher feels reaffirmed if the school principal fosters a positive learning environment for both teachers and students (Idol, 1994; Larrivee & Cook, 1979).

Teachers believe that the support of the principal and other school leaders are critical in order for them to implement inclusive practices (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003). Principals need to accept ownership of all students and support inclusive placement in order to inspire these feelings among other schools personnel (Gameros, 1995; Idol, 1994). However, research suggests that administrators‟ perception towards students with disabilities is less than positive; thereby impacting on the process of inclusion in schools (Daane et al., 2000). Clayton (1996) noted that the administrative staffs lack sufficient understanding and expertise regarding the delivery of services to students with disabilities. Further research commented that administrators may hold positive views of inclusion as they are further away than mainstream teachers, in terms of actual experience (Larrivee & Cook, 1979). Lack of administrative support may lead to lack of teachers‟ confidence and may feel reluctant to give their best in an inclusive classroom.

Sigafoos and Elkins (1994) concluded that mainstream educators generally lacked confidence as they attempted to include students with disabilities into their classes. This may be as a result of lacking proficiency about modifying the regular education curriculum to suit students with individual learning needs. Further, Avramidis et al. (2000) support the view that teachers who perceive themselves as competent inclusive educators often have more positive perception towards inclusive education. The authors also asserted that teachers acquire increased competence as a result of increased training in the field of inclusive education.

Inadequate knowledge with regard to instruction techniques of curricular adaptations which contribute to decreased confidence may be factors which influence teachers‟ perception toward inclusive education (Janneyet al., 1995; Lesar et al., 1997). For teachers to feel confident to teach disabilities student, they should be able to modify the curriculum to suit every individual in an inclusive classroom.

Miller and Savage (1995) indicated that, the success of inclusive schooling efforts is largely dependent on the general education teachers‟ ability and willingness to make appropriate modifications to accommodate the individual differences. Ensuring that the needs of all students will be met with inclusion, Hamre-Nietupski, McDonald, and Nietupski (1992), reviewed some challenges along with possible solutions when integrating students with disabilities into the regular classroom.

These challenges include; 1) providing functional curriculum in a regular classroom, and 2) providing community based instruction. For example, a student with severe disability such as an intellectual disability may have trouble with routine hygiene skills. These deficits may alienate the child more if not addressed. The teacher can use this opportunity to reinforce appropriate behaviour for the disabled student as well as the entire class. The issue of hygiene, whether it is daily grooming skills or appropriate table manners can be incorporated in the class ""health" curriculum. The disabled student will then work on the area of deficit without being singled out in front of their peers while the rest of the class has the benefit of having these skills reinforced.

Another strategy outline was providing community-based instruction. This can be defined as allowing the community, whether individual or agencies the opportunity to enhance a lesson with real-life experiences. For example, if there is a fire safety

lesson in the curriculum, this may provide the perfect opportunity for local fire fighters to present to the class. Often the professionals will bring fire equipment or a video, which will help reinforce the lesson. All students benefits from this type of multi-sensory approach (i.e. coordinating the visual aids with the lecture. If teachers are able to adapt the curriculum in this way, they could enhance inclusive practices.

Assessing and grading of students with and without disabilities in the general classroom seems to be difficult to many teachers. Assessment is a complex process for teachers. Teacher training is assessment is important because, ultimately, classroom practices result in grades that impact promotion, standing, and future opportunists for students, (McMillan, 2007; O'Connor, 2007). Teachers use assessment tools to monitor learning and then they assign grades to students which areas supposed to summarize and capture the extent to which students have learned. Grading is the most common method of communicating student learning whether a student has learned something or not (Allen, 2005). Grades summarize assessment, made by teachers and professionals for students at the end of a specified time (Allen, 2005; McMillan, 2007; O'Connor, 2007; Tomlison, 2005).

Classroom assessment and grading practices are meant to enhance the learning process, facilitate instruction, and encourage opportunities for new knowledge to be gained (Campbell & Collins, 2007; Davies, Herst-Luedtke, & Reynolds, 2008). Assessment in an inclusive classroom could be formative which means that, the assessment should focus on the individual learners and incorporate wide variety strategies that teachers and learners use in collaboration or summative which is called assessment of learning (Harlen, 2005; Klecker, 2002). It is used to confirm what students know and how well they have met curriculum guidelines (McMillan, 2007;

York, 2003). It assesses how well students have met their own personalized programme goals or determines future placement in programs. It is used to communicate achievement to parents, other teachers and institutions, employers, government, and general public (McMillan, 2007). These assessment practices seem to be difficult as the individual teachers may not be competent enough to carry out this type of assessment. Formative assessment is typically called assessment for learning (Davies, Herst-Luedtke & Reynolds, 2008).

Formative assessment acknowledges that students learn in diverse and individual ways, but there are still predictable patterns that they will follow in increasing their proficiency. Teachers are aware of this universal process and effectively guide students and adapt to meet them where they are at their learning process. This requires time, knowledge and understanding of student development and ability to adapt regularly and appropriately (Boston, 2002; Davies et al., 2008; McMillan, 2007). Formative assessment maintains that the student is in the central learning process. Students take ownership for their own learning as the teacher provides direction, guidance and feedback to achieve the desired outcomes.

This a complete time consuming, and challenging task for educators in inclusive classrooms (Weston, 2004). These assessment practices will therefore require changes which enhance learning for students and to make inclusive classroom assessment meaningful. Even though it may be challenging, teachers can develop assessment tools that create reliable, valid and meaningful learning opportunities that communicate achievement. Some teachers have not been exposed to disabilities classrooms and this can be a disadvantage. Educators need to coordinate efforts and understand the needs of the classroom in terms of developing skills and lesson plans

(Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Students with severe and profound disabilities require more adaptation and medical attention than the average student. Teachers must be skilled in handling severe disabilities and create lesson plans based on individual abilities and adhere to dietary needs of the child. Lack of experience can lead to the child not progressing with skills or cause of adverse medical incidents (Ross-Hill, 2009).

Disability inclusion classrooms must be able to involve its students in all classroom activities. Teachers need to address how the classroom will communicate with each other and encourage participation. If there is a lack of adaptive equipment or adaptive communication and language tools, it makes it difficult for teachers to function as a united classroom (Burke & Sutherland, 2004). When there are children of all abilities in the classroom, both physical and academic, children in the middle can easily fall between the cracks. These children can have learning disabilities, hearing impairments, ADD or language delays to name a few. Providing the right amount of attention and adaptation can be challenging, especially if there is a higher teacher to student ratio (Forlin & Chambers, 2011). Normally, inclusive classrooms have a regular educator and special needs educator. Due to the nature of the classroom and size, it is imperative that there be an appropriate number of teacher aides to assist the teachers with day to day activities (Burke & Sutherland 2004). Not all students have been exposed to persons with disabilities and this becomes a challenge to teachers. Teachers must not tolerate insensitiveness and cruelness and teach that all students are to be treated with respect, regardless of ability (Ross-Hill, 2009).

As some students are not use to dealing with persons with disabilities, parents are no exception. Teachers need to convey to parents how the classroom is conducted and that all educational needs will be met. Further because there are varying abilities in the classroom, teachers can be challenged to address individual academic needs based on ability (Westwood & Graham, 2003).

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

2.7 Summary of Literature Review

This chapter reviewed the related literature on the research topic, the theoretical framework. The chapter was discussed under the following subthemes: (1) the concepts of inclusive education; (2) inclusive education in Ghana among their children with hearing impairment; (3) benefits of Inclusive Education; (4) attitudes of teachers towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools; and (5) The influence of teachers‟ attitude towards teaching of children with disability in inclusive schools. Also, the factors that influence teachers‟ attitude towards inclusive education was also highlighted. In addition, the challenges teachers face in teaching of children with disability in inclusive schools was also looked at.

Even though the literature on attitudes of regular or general education teachers towards inclusion of children with special educational needs in the inclusive basic schools has revealed the Benefits of inclusive education, attitudes of teachers towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools, influence of teachers‟ attitude towards teaching of children with disability in inclusive schools, factors that influence teachers attitude towards inclusive education and challenges teachers face in teaching of

children with disability in inclusive schools and educators, those findings cannot be emphatically related to the situation in Ghana because almost all of the studies were done outside Ghana.

Furthermore, none of the few studies done in Ghana has tried to look into the attitudes of regular or general education teachers towards inclusion of children with special educational needs in the inclusive basic schools within the Ada East District. Therefore, there is a need for further research on the attitudes of regular or general education teachers towards inclusion of children with special educational needs in the inclusive basic schools.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology for the study. The following areas are covered; research design, population, sample size, sampling technique, instrumentation, validity, reliability, procedure for data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The design employed for the study was a cross-sectional survey because the focus of the study was to gain insight into the attitudes of regular or general education teachers towards inclusion of children with special educational needs in the inclusive basic schools within the Ada East District. According to Weirsma (1980), cross-sectional survey research involves the collection of data in order to test hypothesis or answer research questions concerning the current status of the subject of study. Surveys can, he states, be useful for gathering facts in order to establish important and useful information for the educational purposes. Survey methods collect data through questionnaires or/ and interviews (Orodho, 2005). According to Gay (1992), cross-sectional survey design studies can provide information about the naturally occurring behaviour, attitudes or other characteristics of a particular group. Surveys attempt to collect data from members of a population for the purpose of establishing the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables.

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

3.3 Study Area

An important component of the research process is site selection. According to Berg (2004) and Adane (2013), an inappropriate location could weaken or ruin eventual findings. The study concentrated on Ada East in the Greater Accra Region. The Ada East District is situated in the eastern part of the Greater Accra Region. The total land area of the district is 289.783 (square km). The district shares common boundaries with the Central Tongu District to the North, South Tongu District and Ada West to the East and West, respectively. It is bounded to the south by the Gulf of Guinea, which stretches over 18 kilometers from Kewunor to Totope. It is also bounded by the Volta River South–Eastwards extending to the Gulf of Guinea southwards, thereby forming an estuary, about 2 kilometres away from the District capital, Ada-Foah.

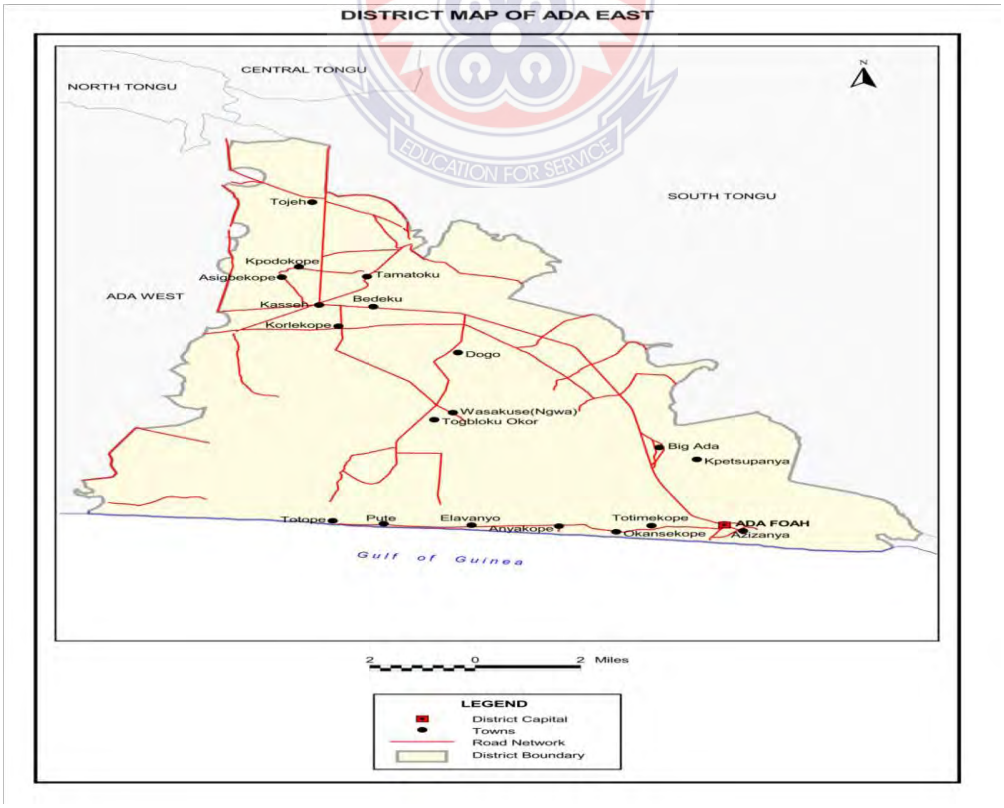
The population of the Ada East District at the time of the study, according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census of Ghana, was 71,671 representing 1.8 percent of the region‟s total population. Males constituted 47.5 percent and females represented 52.5

percent. About 70 percent (68.3%) of the population resided in rural localities. The district had a male to female ratio of 10:9. The youthful population (population less than 15 years) in the district accounted for 54 percent of the population, depicting a broad base population pyramid, which tapers off with a small number of elderly persons (population aged 60 years and older) 6.5 percent. The total age dependency ratio (dependent population to population in the working age) for the district was 85.5; and the age dependency ratio for males was higher (89.8) than that of females (88.9).

The proportion of Ghanaians by birth in the district is 96.6 percent. Those who had naturalized constituted 0.5 percent, and the non-Ghanaian population in the district was less than 2 percent of the population. Other details of the population were: Those (b) aged 11 years and above - 72.8%, (b) who were illiterate - 27.2%. The proportion of literate males is higher (82.2%) than that of females (64.8%). About 60% of the people indicated that they could read and write both English and a Ghanaian language (s). Of the population aged 3 years and above (23,354) in the district, 25.3 percent had never attended school, 40.4 percent are currently attending and 34.3 percent have attended in the past. Seventy percent of the population aged 15 years and older are economically active while 30.0 per cent are economically not active. Of the economically active population, 95.0 percent are employed while 5.0 percent are unemployed. For those who are economically not active, a larger percentage of them are students (50.2%), (15.8%) perform household duties and 5.8 percent are disabled or too sick to work. Four out of ten (48.2%) unemployed are seeking work for the first time. Of the employed population, about 20.2 percent are engaged as skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers, 39.3 percent in service and sales, 23.3 percent in craft and related trade, and

6.8 percent are engaged as managers, professionals, and technicians. About 4.3 percent of the district‟s total population has one form of disability or the other. The proportion of the female population with disability is slightly higher (4.8%) than male‟s (3.8%).

The types of disability in the district include sight, hearing, speech, physical, intellect, and emotion. Persons with emotional and sight disability recorded the highest of 37.8 percent and 30.6 respectively, followed by physical disability (19.1). About 4.6 percent of the population with disability is in the urban localities. There are more females with sight, physical and emotional disabilities than males in both the urban and rural localities. Of the population disabled, 46.2 percent have never been to school. The site is deemed ideal for the researcher because it is easily accessible. The map Ayigya community is shown by Figure 1



Source: Ghana Statistical Service, GIS

Figure 1: Map of Ada East District

3.4 Population for the Study

The population for the study comprised 178 general education teachers and head-teachers in 11 basic schools in the Ada East District in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. A sampling frame is a list of all the items in a population. It is a complete list of everyone or everything a researcher wants to study (Sarndal, et al., 2003). It is the listing of all units in the population from which the sample will be selected (Bryman, 2001). The need for sampling frame identification for a research project has been agued by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000). Cohen et al. mention that upon identification of a population, researchers must select sampling technique early in the planning process to manage time, accessibility issues, and expenses. The basis of Cohen et al.‟s argument underscores the reality that it has always been difficult to study an entire population in a research design.

Population refers to the aggregate or totality of objects or individuals regarding which inferences are to be made (Cohen & Manion, 1994,cited by Asiedu, 2015). A population can be defined as a group of individuals or people with the same characteristics and in whom the researcher is interested (Kusi, 2012). According to Maduekwe (2011), population is the larger group to which a researcher wishes to generalise the study. Kankam and Weiler (2010) explain that a population refers to all the people who you will focus on in a study. It includes all members of a defined class of people, events or objects. In research parlance, population is defined as the larger group upon which a researcher wishes to generalize: it includes members of a defined class of people, events or objects (Creswell, 2009).

3.4 Sample, Sampling Techniques and Procedures

The sample for the study was 90 teachers (39 males and 51 females) with an average age of 40 years. Also, 11 out of 30 schools were purposely sampled to be part of the study. The schools were selected because they were the only schools practising inclusive education in the district.

A sample could also be defined as a subset or collections of some units of the universe or population (Asamoah-Gyimah & Duodu, 2006). Avoke (2005) defines sample as the subset of the entire population of interest to the researcher. When dealing with people, it can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey. In sampling, the researcher endeavours to collect information from a smaller group or subset of a population in such a way that, the knowledge gained is representative of the total population under study (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

Sampling involves taking a portion of a population, observing the portion and the generalizing the findings to the large population. However, to study a whole population to arrive at a generalization was not practicable (Dampson & Danso, 2012). Sampling is the procedure a researcher uses to select people, places, or things to study (Flick, 2014). The quality of a sample determines the quality of the research findings in large measure. Sampling and selection of a site is to a large extent be influenced by the strategy of enquiry used by the researcher (Creswell, 2009). Sampling is a procedure whereby elements or people are chosen from a population to represent the characteristics of the population.

In this study the purposive sampling strategy was used to select the schools to be part of the study and the convenience sampling strategy was used to select 90 respondents to participate in the study. With these when the researcher visited the school respondents available were given the instrument to respond. Creswell (2002) stated that, in purposive sampling, researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand a phenomenon. Sampled size of 90 regular or general education teachers were purposively sampled for the study because they were teachers without training in special education. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) cited in Avoke (2005) also assert that purposive sampling enables researchers to handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment and typicality. In this way, the researcher builds up a sample that is satisfactory to specific needs. Again, the researcher used his own judgment to select population members whom he felt would give him the desired or accurate information (Adentwi & Amartei, 2009). Purposive sampling, as pointed out by Agyedu, Donkor, and Obeng (2011) is a sample chosen on the basis of some characteristics possessed by the subjects and deemed important for the research based on the judgment of the researcher. The purposive sampling technique was chosen because it is less costly and less time consuming and is free from bias, and prevents unnecessary and irrelevant items or units entering into the sample per chance. Purposive sampling technique gives better results if the investigator is unbiased and has the capacity of keen observation and sound judgment while ensuring intensive study of the selected items.

3.5 Instrumentation

The tools employed by the researcher to gather the necessary data for the study were interview, questionnaire and observation. The purposes of the researcher using these methods were to probe deeply and analyze intensively the life cycle of the selected case. It was possible for the researcher to enter into the respondents‟ personal world in order to gain a deeper and clearer understanding of their experiences, feelings and perspective through questionnaire and interview.

According to Flick (2014), interviews may be the primary data collection strategy to provide information on how individuals conceive their world and make sense of important events in their lives. One of the major advantages of the interview is that it provides access to what is „inside the person‟s head,‟ and as such it makes it possible to determine what a person knows, likes or dislikes and thinks (Bryman, 2006). Another major advantage of the interview is its adaptability in terms of following up ideas, probing responses and investigating motives and feelings further (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). A major disadvantage of interviewing as data collecting instrument is that it could be prone to subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Another contextual disadvantage of interviewing is the interviewer effect of personal identity. A researcher‟s ethnic origin could impact on the amount of information participants are willing to divulge and their honesty about what they reveal in the interview sessions (Fram, 2013). Apart from ethnic origin, data may also be affected by the gender and age of the researcher as interviewer. Response effects in terms of the eagerness of participants to please the interviewee with their information may also serve as hampering factor in collecting honest data (Krueger & Casey, 2009). To

counter these hampering effects as far as possible, the researcher will employ the maximum diversity type of purposive sampling. In this study, the researcher will use interviewing as a data collecting instrument because the data required will be based on emotions, experiences, and feelings for the sake of a deep understanding. For that reason, the researcher values contact with key players in the research field who could provide privileged information. The researcher will rely on the fact that with interviews information can be obtained not only in terms of participants‟ words, but also in terms of non-verbal communication, such as tones of voices and facial expressions. This will contribute to more complete and subtle meanings of the collected data. A questionnaire is a set of questions or statements that assesses attitudes, opinions, beliefs, and biographical information (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001).

A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. The questionnaire is given to respondents who are expected to read and understand the questions and write down the reply in the space meant for the purpose in the questionnaire itself. The respondents have to answer the questions on their own. The researcher considers questionnaire and interviews to best fit the purpose of collecting data for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of exploring the attitudes of general education teachers towards inclusive education.

In view of Leedy and Ormrod (2005), questionnaires offer participants the advantage of answering questions with the assurance of anonymity for their responses. Questionnaires are used when researchers want to obtain information on a large number of issues and from large sample size. Consequently, questionnaires are usually employed in survey researches. The interview and questionnaire focused on the content specified by the research objectives for a systematic description,

prediction or explanation of the phenomenon under study (Bryman, 2006).

3.5.1 Interview

Data were collected via semi structured interviews; Face-to-face interviews occurred under a tree in the school premises and ranged in length from 20 to 30 minutes. The interviewees involved in the study were interviewed to elicit responses for the study. The interview items were based on the research questions raised. Five items were raised to investigate the attitudes of regular or general education teachers towards inclusion of children with special educational needs in the inclusive basic schools within the Ada East District. Prompts and probes were designed to gain further understanding of interview questions raised.

Flick (2014) opined that semi-structured interview guide was designed to capture the major themes of the stud. The semi-structured interviews allowed for consequential interaction between the researcher and participants Their advantage is that, while they are reasonably objective, they also permit "a more thorough understanding of the respondents" opinions and reasons behind them than would be possible using questionnaire" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Semi-structured interviews combine objectivity and depth, and generates valuable data that could not be successfully obtained using any other approach (Flick, 2014). The interview will enable the researcher to elicit meaningful data through a comprehensive strategy in the form of open-ended questions (Creswell, 2009). The researcher will introduce the topic and thereafter guide the discussion by asking specific questions.

The use of an interview guide will allow flexibility in asking follow-up questions. Secondly, the researcher by using the instrument gets the opportunity to seek clarification through probing and expanding the responses of interviewees to ascertain

their feelings and experiences (Kusi, 2012). Fraenkel and Wallen (2008); Colleman and Briggs (2007) indicate that the use of an interview is for a researcher to interact with a respondents convenience to gather information for a particular study. Interview affords the opportunity for feedbacks or further explanation (Babbie, 2007). Though it is time consuming, interviews are able to help both the researcher and the respondents to clarify issues.

3.5.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was also used to gather data for the study. The questionnaire was given to the teachers involved in the study. The questionnaire had four sections with the second, third, and fourth sections linking directly to the research questions raised for the study. The first section looked at the background characteristics of the respondents. Find out regular classroom teachers‟ attitudes towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools within in the Ada East District about inclusive education. The third section focused on the attitudes of regular teachers in the district influence their teaching of disabled children in inclusive schools, the factors that influence the attitudes of regular classroom teachers in the district towards inclusive education. Four parts focused on inherent challenges that regular classroom teachers face in teaching of disabled children in inclusive schools.

According to Jack and Norman (2003), there are two forms of questionnaire: closed ended and open-ended form. The closed-ended form is also known as restricted or structured calls for short, check-mark and require the respondent to provide “**YES” / “NO**” responses or rank alternatives provided based on how one feels about the issue. The respondent‟s choices are limited to the set of opinions. However, the open-ended questionnaire which is also termed as unrestricted or unstructured calls for a free

response in the respondent‟s own words. The respondent frames and supplies the answers to the questions raised in the questionnaire.

The form of questionnaire used for the study was both closed-ended and open-ended form. The questions were made up of two sections; the firs sections consisted of the teachers‟ bio- data such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, teaching experience, number of pupils with disabilities in class and types of disabilities. The second sections focused the main research objectives.

3.5.3 Observation

Observation was employed by the researcher to get the vital data needed for the study. Observations provide additional source of data for verifying the information obtained by other data collection methods. Observation draws on the direct evidence the witness has (Cohen, Manion, & Morison, 2000). In the cause of making observation it can either be participant based, where by the researcher becomes part and parcel of the community he or she wants to study, or non-participant observation, where by the observer can be in the community targeted by only observing what is happening.

Specifically, the researcher used non participant observation to gather information during class play time, canteen time, learning and co-curricular activities. Sampled pupils were observed two times in each day for three weeks. During observation the researcher wrote down the exhibited behaviours interest to him.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

The validity of research instruments was ensured by assessing the questionnaire items during their construction. Questions were discussed with the colleagues for correction after which it was given to supervisor for verification. This was done to clear any lack of clarity and ambiguity. The content related to the validity of the questionnaire was

determined and strengthened through an extensive review of the literature.

Validity, according to Kankam and Weiler (2010), refers to the "…degree to which an instrument accurately measures what it intended to measure" (p. 78). Validity refers to the extent to which the research instrument serves the use for which it is intended (Seidu, 2007). To ensure that the instrument is valid, it will be scrutinized by the researcher"s supervisor. Face validity was done by giving the instruments to colleague M.Phil Special Education students for peer review. Indeed, their comments will be considered for review of the questions. The content validity of the instruments was granted by experts in the area of inclusive education as well as the research supervisor who will scrutinize the items for their suitability before pre-test. All the necessary corrections in the items was made and declared valid by the supervisor.

Content validity is a measuring instrument which gauges whether there has been adequate coverage of the investigative questions guiding the study (Creswell, 2003). It indicates that the technique assesses or measures what it is supposed to measure (Creswell, 2009). It is a judgmental assessment on how the content of a scale represents the measures. According to Creswell (2003), there are two ways of determining content validity: firstly, the designer may determine it through a careful definition of the topic of concern, the items to be scaled, and the scale to be used; secondly, the researcher supervisor who is an expert may judge how well the instrument meets the standard. Construct validity was ensured by employing accepted definitions and constructions of concepts and terms; operationalizing the research and its measures. One may also wish to measure or infer the presence of abstract characteristics for which no empirical validation seems possible (Patton, 2002). It is nonfigurative and separate from content validity which deals in actualities. Creswell

(2009) states that in this type of validity, agreement is sought on the „operationalised" forms of a construct, clarifying what we mean when we use this construct. This validity is divided into two main categories: convergent and discriminant. Convergent validity is described as the level to which the scale correlates with other measures of the same construct. On the other hand, discriminant validity defines the degree to which a measure is distinct from other measures. Convergent validity shows the homogeneity of measures in the same constructs and discriminant explains heterogeneity between different constructs.

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which the items or parts are homogenous or consistent with each other (Seidu, 2012). From the perspectives of Eshun and Effrim (2007), reliability also concerns itself with the consistency of results of the use of a particular instrument. That is the tendency to obtain the same results if the measure was to be repeated by using the same subjects under the same conditions.

Hackman (2002) viewed reliability as, "…the extent to which data are consistent, accurate and precise" (p. 213). It is also the extent to which a research instrument produces consistent results when administered under similar conditions. To ensure reliability of the research instruments, they were pre-tested on 10 general teachers of three public basic schools which were conveniently selected from the Ada West District. In two weeks later, the test-retest technique was used. The same 10 teachers who took part in the first pilot trial were asked to answer same questions. The two results were compared and found to be consistent. The pilot study offered the researcher an opportunity for identifying some of the problems that will occur in the main study. This informed the necessary corrections to be made in the questions before the main study is done.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

In conducting a study, Creswell (2005) advises researchers to seek and obtain permission from the authorities in charge of the site of the study because it involves a prolonged and extensive data collection. In line with this, an introductory letter was obtained from the Head of Department of Special Education, University of Education, and Winneba. This was used to obtain permission from the District Director of Education and head-teachers of the selected schools to conduct the study. The letter provided the details of the study, including data collection, and issues of confidentiality and anonymity. An approval letter was given to the researcher before data collection. After permission was granted, the researcher informed the study participants of the impending interview and questionnaire. The interviewees were contacted to verify the appointment before engaging them. The face-to-face interview was done personally at the various schools, and on scheduled date and time. The interviews were taped recorded and played back to them, transcribed, coded and edited. Notes were taken to complement the taped data. The researcher assured respondents of the confidentiality of whatever information they provide. Later, the respondents who answered questionnaire were contacted and permission sought before the questionnaires were administered and collected soon after the respondents had completed it.

In an ensuring trustworthiness, an introductory letter from the Department of Special Education, University of Education, Winneba was sent to seek permission from the headmasters of the schools who later upon confirmation informed their staff. The various schools received copies of the introductory letter. All participants were addressed with pseudonyms in place of their real names. Only the researcher has access to all the data. In this study the researcher maintained all formalities in relation

to anonymity and confidentiality. Also, the participants were made to be aware that the information gathered were for the purpose of research and nothing else.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

3.8.1 Data Analysis

The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic approach and descriptive methods. Quantitative data were analysed using statistical package for Social Science software (SPSS version).

Yin (2003) stated that before interpretation takes place, data should be analysed statistically and presented. For the qualitative (interview) data, responses by the interviewees to each question were categorized into themes according to research questions. Hence, the qualitative data was analysed thematically. Thematic organization and analysis is the process that identifies analyses and reports the occurrence of themes in the data collected from the research areas. According to Braun & Clarke (2006), thematic analysis follows six basic steps.

1. Familiarizing with the data through thoroughly reading the transcriptions. This helps the researcher to have in mind what exactly is in the data.
2. Generation of initial codes. Putting labels or descriptions on a list of ideas developed from the transcription as already read by the researcher.
3. Searching for themes. Related codes are organized under different themes.
4. Reviewing the themes. The themes developed are reviewed for their relevance and legitimacy of being called themes.
5. Defining and naming themes developed. Defining the overall content of the themes and the message it carries in it before producing a report
6. Producing a report (p. 56).

The interview data were checked and presented in relation to the research questions. In reporting the information collected, some direct quotations were used. Reporting direct statements from research participants is important, because it helps to maintain the originality of data collected (Cohen et al., 2007).

In the analyses of the quantitative data, the questionnaires were categorized under themes with respect to the research questions. Editing and coding were made, after which, the data were entered into the computer using the statistical package for social science software (SPSS). Before performing the desired data transformation, the data were also cleaned by running consistency checks on every variable. Corrections were made after verification from the questionnaires and the database was generated. The data were represented using descriptive statistics involving mainly frequency distribution tables and percentages, bar and pie chart.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues arise from the kind of problems that social scientists investigate and the methods used to obtain valid and reliable data. Resnik (2009) defines ethics in research as the discipline that study standards of conduct, such as philosophy, theology, law, psychology or sociology. Babbie (2007) defines ethical issues as the general agreements, shared by researchers about what is proper and improper in the conduct of scientific inquiry. These include seeking permission, voluntary participation, and no harm to participants, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (Punch, 2009). In other words, it is a method, procedure or perspective for deciding on how to act and for analysing complex problems and issues.

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

A statement of consent will be given to participants to sign as evidence of their willingness to participate in the study. Panneerselvam (2004) advises that researchers should ensure that participants are protected from any physical or psychological harm that may arise from research procedures. The researcher received a verbal permission to collect data from the school three days after submitting an introductory letter from the Department of Special Education, University of Education, Winneba. Permission was also sought from the headmasters of the schools who later upon confirmation informed their staff. The various schools received copies of the introductory letter. All participants were addressed with pseudonyms in place of their real names. Only the researcher has access to all the data. In this study the researcher maintained all formalities in relation to anonymity and confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR

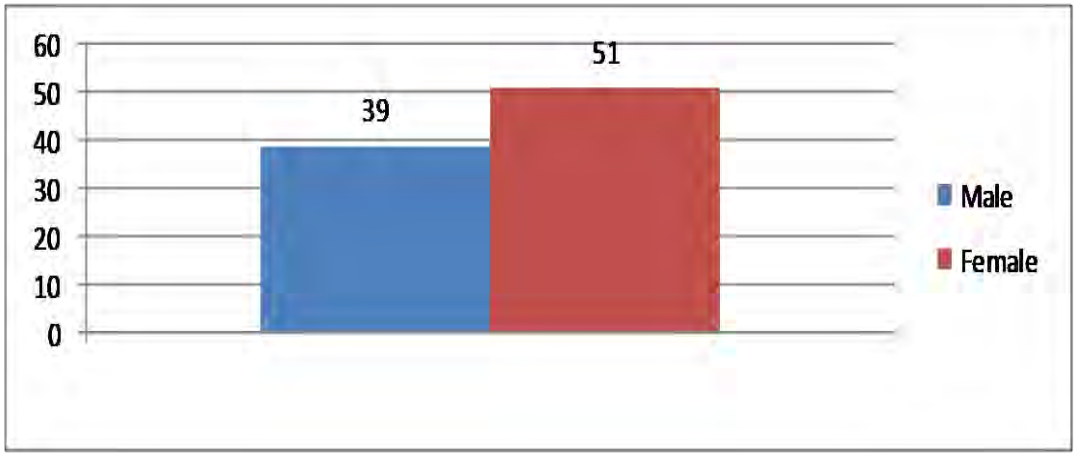
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents results of data collected from the respondents based on the research questionnaire administered. The presentation of the findings was guided by these research questions:

a. What attitudes do regular classroom teachers in the Ada East have towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools?
b. In what ways regular classroom teachers‟ attitudes influence the teaching of children with disabilities in inclusive schools?
c. What factors influence the attitudes of regular classroom teachers in the district towards inclusive education?
d. What inherent challenges do regular classroom teachers face in teaching children with disabilities in inclusive schools?

In this chapter, demographic information of teachers was analysed. The four research questions were also analysed. The data gathered by the questionnaire was analysed using frequencies and percentages, and the result presented in tables. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents. This section discusses the demographic characteristics of the teachers involved in the study. The parameters discussed include: gender, age, marital status, academic status and length of teaching experience.



Source: Field work data (2018)

Figure 2: Demographic data of Respondents in Relation to Gender

Figure 2 above showed the demographic data for gender of the respondents for the study. From the data, thirty nine (39) representing 43.3% were males whiles fifty one (51) representing 56.7 % were females. This indicated that more women were involved in the study than their male counterparts during the period of the study.

Table 1: Demographic data of Teachers' ages

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

Source: Field work (2018)

Table 1 above showed the ages of respondents for the study. Fifteen (16.7%) were between the ages 20 and 29 years (young age). Forty five (45) teachers representing 50% fell within 30 to 39 years; (middle age), twenty (21) representing 23.3% were between the ages 40 and 49 years (middle age) whiles nine (9) representing 10% were also above 50 years (old age). From the data, most of the teachers fell within (young and middle age) than their other age groups during the period of the study.

Table 2: Academic Status of Respondents

Academic status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Teacher certificate A	9	10
Diploma in education	27	30
First Degree	36	40
Masters	3	3.3
Postgraduate Diploma	15	16.7
Total	**90**	**100**

Source: Field work data (2018)

Table 2 above presents the academic status of the respondents for this study. It was observed that 9(10%) held Teacher Certificate A, 27(30%) held Diploma certificate, 36 (40%) had a Bachelor‟s degree, 3(3.3%) had Master‟s Degree, and fifteen 15(16.7%) held Postgraduate Diploma. The data indicate that the greater percentage of respondents had obtained the requisite teaching qualification. It is obvious that teachers‟ teaching qualification is positively correlated with learning outcome.

Table 3: Teaching experience of teachers.

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

Source: Field work data (2018)

In finding out the teaching experience of the teachers, it was realized that, 24(26.7%) had taught between 1 to and years, 39 (43.3%) had taught between 6 and 10 years, 18(20%) had 11-15 years teaching experience and 6(6.7%) had 16 years and more teaching experience. This indicated that several of the teachers in the study had been teaching between 6 and 10 years.

4.1 Main Issues

Research question one: What attitudes do regular classroom teachers in the Ada East have towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools?

This question required teachers to respond to statements that sought to assess their attitudes towards inclusive education. The results were as follows:

Table 4: Attitude of Teachers towards Inclusive Education

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

Key: A=agree; SA= Strongly Agree; U= Undecided; SD = Strongly Disagree; D=Disagree

Source: Field work data (2018)

A little over 63% of the participants believed that teachers must give children with disabilities special attention, 35.6% disagreed, and 1.1% were neutral. Chambers and Forlin (2010) defined attitudes as a

…learned, evaluative response about an object or an issue and a cumulative result of personal beliefs… that beliefs influenced teacher attitudes to inclusive education that in turn, influence their intentions and behaviours. (p. 74).

About 40%of the participants indicated that they wished they could spend more time teaching children with disabilities in my class/school, 56.6% thought otherwise, and 4.4% were not decisive. Also, 39.9% said there is nothing wrong with including children with disabilities with other children in a general class setting. About 58% of the participants felt that it was not right to include children with disabilities with other children in general class setting, and 2.2% were indecisive. Additionally, 54.5% of the participants suggested that if they had their way, they would avoid teaching children with disabilities, 42.2 % disagreed, while 3.3% were indecisive.

Majority of the teachers (66.6%) disclosed that they naturally felt excited when they saw children with disabilities that wanted to learn with other students. However 32.2% did not think same and 1.1% was indecisive. The question then is why a majority of the teachers would indicate that they naturally felt excited when they saw children with disabilities that wanted to learn with other students, but at the same time that they would avoid teaching children with disabilities? Why did majority of them feel that it was not right to include children with disabilities with other children in general class setting?

According to Cook (2002), training in special and inclusive education has consistently been found out to have influenced educators‟ attitudes either in a single course or through a content-infused approach. Also, Lancaster and Bain (2007) agree that in general, there is a positive change in attitudes after undertaking an inclusive and special education unit of study and this is the case across a number of contexts and countries. They suggest that some type of formalized input is sufficient to increase the awareness of general education pre-service teachers.

However, both pre-service and in-service courses that address the skills and the attitudes of teachers towards students with disabilities are frequently deemed insufficient by teachers (Westwood & Graham, 2003).

Forty percent of participants agreed that they tried as much as possible to encourage co- teachers to attend to the needs of children with disabilities. Surprisingly, majority of them (60%) said they did not do so. This could be indicative of poor attitude towards inclusive education.

Cook (2002) noted the need for positive teacher attitudes and for teachers to create a sense of belonging to support effective inclusive practice. In relation to Cook‟s assertion, Cooks and Silverman (2007) pointed out that teachers‟ attitudes directly affect their behaviour with students and so have a great influence on classroom climate and student outcomes. Eighty-four percent of the respondents believed that all children (whether disabled or able) should enjoy equal attention from teachers. A little over13% did not believe that, while 2.2% remained indecisive.

Positive attitudes and beliefs combine to play a major part in support diversity in inclusive education (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Silva & Morgado, 2004). However, Molina (2006) finds out some research evidence to demonstrate that theoretical

classes and reading are not sufficient to modify teachers‟ and students‟ negative attitudes towards students with special educational needs. Finally, inclusive education can be achieved depending on teachers‟ positive attitudes towards teaching disabled children without exhibiting certain stereotypical patterns in students‟ academic behaviour (Jondanetal, 2001). In other words, teachers stereotypical and self-imposed perceptions of considering their pupils as one good or bad from the others closes their own motivation to be adaptable to each of their pupils‟ needs (Prater, 2010).

4.2 Analysis of Interview Data

Theme two: *ways regular classroom teachers' attitudes influence the teaching of disabled children in inclusive schools*

This question sought to find out from the study participants how their attitudes influence their teaching of disabled children in inclusive schools. Respondents were therefore required to express their views on the issue.

On the theme attitude of teachers, being a factor which influence their teaching of disabled children in inclusive schools. For the comments of the respondents, it was learned that the kind of attitude teachers‟ exhibit influence their teaching and how they will include students with disabilities in school.

For instance, a teacher remarked as follows:

> *Education is the right of all children, and inclusive schools aim to ensure that all children have equal access to education. I consider the needs of all the children when teaching (Verbatim comment from Teacher 1)*

Another teacher intimated that:

> *Inclusive education means giving opportunity to students with special needs to attend general or regular school to be taught by the same teachers, the way I teach is child centred because I have the needs of the pupils in the classroom at heart. I always try to portray positive*

> *attitude towards my students in order for them to feel at home (verbatim comment from teacher 2)*

The view of one teacher is noteworthy here:

> *Inclusive schools strengthen the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners and my attitude in teaching is very important for positive result" (verbatim comment from teacher 3*)

Another teacher stated that:

> *In the past, students with disabilities were taught in separate classrooms, and in some cases separate schools. Due to the inclusion education, students with disabilities are attending public school with typically developing peers and this has influence my methods of teaching, I make sure that all pupils are able to perform the instructional objectives of lessons taught (verbatim comment from teacher 4)*

A teacher also has this to say:

> *Inclusive schools places students with disabilities in classrooms with peers who do not have disabilities now I teach all pupils in a way they understand I show concerned about the children with disabilities (Verbatim comment from teacher 5)*

The view of another teacher is noteworthy here:

> *Inclusive education accommodates all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. It is education for all so the programme has really influence my method of teaching (verbatim comment from teacher 6)*

Responses captured from the teachers suggested that inclusive schools ensure that all children have equal access to education. Also, education is a right for all children; therefore, they exhibit positive attitude toward their student. Inclusive education has influence their methods of teaching, they make sure that all pupils are able to perform the instructional objectives of lessons taught.

The interview data presented and analysed in this section showed that the teachers believed their attitudes influenced their teaching methodology. They therefore exhibited positive attitude toward their students. They seemed to suggest that children

with disabilities have a right to education just like any other regular children as stipulated in the Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Education is a fundamental human right: Every child is entitled to it. This is in consonance with Ankutse (n.d.) defined inclusive education as a process of increasing the participation of all students in schools including those with disabilities. According to Ankutse, the inclusive education concept focuses on those groups which, in the past, have been excluded from educational opportunities. These groups include children living in poverty, those from ethnic and linguistic minorities, girls, children from remote areas, children with disabilities and other special educational needs, and children who are gifted and talented. Ankutse concluded that, children with disabilities, as well as children who are gifted and talented, are often the most marginalized, both within education and society, in general. Ankutse‟s assertion also supports the findings of UNESCO (2009) that described inclusive education as a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners.

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

The Salamanca Statement has been a considerable source of influence in the formulation of local educational policies and has rekindled Ghana‟s commitment to improve the access, quality and provision of equal educational opportunities for all children, including those with disabilities. In particular, the Education Strategic Plans (ESP) of 2005 to 2015 and 2010 to 2020 have decreed inclusive education as the most appropriate educational provision for students with disabilities, with the goal of achieving an inclusive education system by 2015 (Government of Ghana, 2012, 2003). The recently drafted inclusive education policy of Ghana is founded on the premise that every child has the right to education. This policy therefore seeks inclusive education for all persons with mild as well as severe Special Education Needs (SEN) at all levels of education (Ministry of Education [MOE] 2013).

Theme three: *Factors which influence the attitudes of regular classroom teachers in the district towards inclusive education*

This question sought to determine those teacher characteristics that influence their attitudes towards children with disabilities . Respondents were therefore required to express their views on the issue. The data gathered from the interviews were categorized under these themes: training, availability of educational resources, age teaching experience, motivation and encouragement from head teachers and disability education coordinators, past experiences and Gender.

4.2.1 Training

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

For instance, a teacher remarked as follows:

> *Training is very important, I have not acquire enough special or comprehensive training on how to teach children with disabilities , and that makes my attitude towards them unsatisfactory, the government and other policy makers should come to our aid (verbatim comment from teacher 1)*

Another teacher intimated that:

> *Training is very important in determine our attitude towards inclusion, but I have not acquire enough special or comprehensive training on how to teach children with disabilities , and that makes my attitude towards them unsatisfactory (verbatim comment from teacher 2)*

The view of one teacher is noteworthy here:

> "*Inadequate knowledge, skills and training discourages me from accepting inclusive education and playing my part well. The Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service should organize regular inclusive education training for teacher for us to develop attitude towards the inclusive program. (Verbatim comment from teacher 3)*

Another teacher asserted that:

> *'Those teachers who have some level of knowledge and training about inclusive education tend to and skills in handling special need children exhibit positive attitude towards inclusive education compared to those of us who have little or no training at all. (Verbatim comment from teacher 4)*

Deducing from the above, it is clear that regular training for teachers help develop towards inclusive education this is because training about inclusive education help them to develop skills in handling special need children and therefore exhibit positive

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

Besides, the importance of training in the formation of positive attitudes towards integration was supported by the findings of Beh-Pajooh (1992) and Shimman (1990), based on teachers in colleges. Both studied the attitudes of college teachers in the UK towards students with SEN and their integration into ordinary college courses. Their findings showed that college teachers who had been trained to teach students with learning difficulties expressed more favourable attitudes and emotional reactions to students with SEN and their integration than did those who had no such training.

Also, Dickens-Smith (1995), for example, studied the attitudes of both regular and special educators towards inclusion (not integration). Her respondents were given an attitude survey before and after staff development. Both groups of respondents revealed more favourable attitudes towards inclusion after their in-service training than they did before, with regular education teachers showing the strongest positive attitude change. Dickens-Smith concluded that staff development is the key to the success of inclusion.

4.2.2 Availability of educational resources

Availability of educational resources emerged as one of sub theme on factors which influence the attitudes of regular classroom teachers in the district towards inclusive education

The view of one teacher is noteworthy here:

> *We have not been provided with enough resources to support inclusive education, so how do you expect me to take inclusive education serious. When we have enough educational resources, they make teaching and learning in the inclusive setting less cumbersome (Verbatim comment from teacher 1)*

Another teacher intimated that:

> *If government expects positive attitude from teachers towards inclusive education, then the Ministry of Education should be committed and provide all the necessary educational resources. When adequate and relevant teaching and learning materials are made available in school they augment teaching because they cater for all senses (Verbatim comment from teacher 2)*

Grounded from the comments above teachers acknowledge that availability of educational materials make teaching and learning in the inclusive setting less cumbersome Here, participates identified resources and support as both physical (resources, teaching materials, IT equipment, a restructured physical environment) and human.

The above findings support Clough and Lindsay (1991) who opined that a number of studies have examined availability of resources and their influence in the formation of teachers‟ attitudes towards inclusion. One factor that has consistently been found to be associated with more positive attitudes is the availability of resources or support services at the classroom and the school levels (Clough & Lindsay, 1991). The study revealed availability of educational resources as one of the factors that influence the

attitudes of regular teachers in the district towards inclusive education.

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

4.2.3 Age and teaching experience

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

Some interviewee intimated that:

> *Some of the teachers especially the older ones feel reluctant to accept the children with disabilities in class meanwhile they are more experienced and must have positive attitude. (Verbatim comment from teacher 2)*

Another teacher opined that

> *The young teachers who have just been posted have very good attitude towards the children with disabilities and always willing to assist. (Verbatim comment from teacher2) Grounded from the comments above it is clear that the young teachers who have just been posted have very good attitude towards the children with disabilities and always willing to assist. This could be due to introduction of special education to most University programmes.*

The findings support Lindsay, (1991) who observed that younger teachers and those with fewer years of experience have been found to be more supportive to integration. Forlin‟s (1995) study, for example, showed that acceptance of a child with a physical disability was highest among educators with less than six years of teaching and declined with experience for those with six to ten years of teaching. The most experienced educators (greater than 11 years of teaching) were the least accepting. Leyser et al. (1994) also found that, in general, teachers with 14 years or less teaching experience had a significantly higher positive score in their attitude to integration compared with those with more than 14 years. They found no significant differences in attitudes to integration among teachers whose teaching experience was between one and four years, five and nine years and ten and 14 years (no mention was made based on individual country). Another study by Harvey (2005) compared the willingness of teacher trainees and primary school teachers to accept children with SEN in their classes. Harvey‟s findings indicated that there was a clear reluctance on the part of the more experienced primary school teachers, compared to teacher trainees, in their willingness to integrate such children. In this respect, it would not be unreasonable to assume that newly qualified teachers hold positive attitudes towards integration when entering the professional arena. However, although the above studies indicated those younger teachers and those with fewer years of experience are more supportive of integration; other investigators have reported that teaching experience was not significantly related to teachers‟ attitudes (Avramidis et al., 2000).

4.2.4 Motivation and Encouragement from Head Teachers and Disability Education Coordinators.

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

For instance, a teacher remarked as follows:

> *Encouragement from my head teacher and the disability education coordinators have been my source of inspiration for teaching children with disabilities. (Teachers 1)*

Another teacher asserted that:

> *The disability education coordinators have played a very vital role in shaping my attitudes towards disabled pupils. Their advice and motivation have helped me develop a good perception about disabled pupils.* (Teachers 2)

The view of one teacher is noteworthy here:

> *Our headmaster has demonstrated excellent leadership by helping us develop a positive and favourable attitude towards inclusive. He is always ready to listen to our concerns and take action (Teachers 3)*

Another teacher intimated that:

> *Support and encouragements from the disability education coordinators have been exceptional; they provide orientation for non-specially trained teachers to manage special children alongside the normal children. They also support teachers in selecting appropriate materials for teaching special children and help address educational challenges of disabled pupils. They also encourage children with disabilities to keep their dreams and aspirations alive, Motivate pupils with disabilities to be active class participants and encourage regular pupils to do group studies and share ideas with special children without difficulties based on the advice of the children with disabilities coordinators. This has really assisted me to be supportive of inclusion education (Teachers 4)*

The continuous encouragement from the head teachers as well as teachers is very crucial in ensuring of successful inclusive education has been mentioned in several studies as being instrumental in the creation of positive attitudes to inclusion. This is because motivation of pupils with disabilities helps them to

be active s participants and encourage regular pupils to do group studies and share ideas with special children without difficulties.

The views expressed by these respondents are in conformity with Janney et al. (1995), who asserted that the enthusiastic support from head teachers was an attributing factor to the success of the part-time integration programme in the schools they studied. Chazan (1994), in his review of relevant literature, concluded that mainstream teachers have a greater tolerance of integration if head teachers are supportive. Similarly, Center and Ward‟s (1997) study reported that mainstream teachers whose head teachers had provided some form of support for the integration programme exhibited a more positive attitude towards its implementation than those who had not received any (Thomas, 1995).

Support from specialist resource teachers was also identified as an important factor in shaping positive teacher attitudes to inclusion (Kauffman, Lloyd and McGee, 2009). Janney et al. (1995) found that one of the factors cited by their respondents that had contributed to the success of the part-time integration programme they were implementing was the existence of effective support, both interpersonal and task related, provided by the school‟s special education teachers. Clough and Lindsay (1991) argued that special education specialist teachers are important co-workers in providing advice to subject specialist teachers on how to make a particular subject accessible to children with SEN. Centre and Ward (1997) found that children with a mild sensory disability integrated in mainstream classes did not cause anxiety to mainstream teachers because of the confidence generated by the presence of itinerant teachers for these children. Their study showed that experience of working with itinerant teachers positively affected teachers‟ attitudes.

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

4.2.5 Past experiences

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

For instance, a teacher remarked as follows:

> *I think in the past I have not been successful teaching in an inclusive class so it has affected my acceptance of inclusive education (Verbatim comment from teacher 1).*

The view of one teacher is noteworthy here:

> *Last year I had about two pupils with disabilities in my class, I encountered some challenges during teaching because they were slow learners and portrayed some undesirable behaviours, if I had my way I will avoid teaching them (Verbatim comment from teacher 2).*

Another teacher stated that:

> *I took a postgraduate programme in special education last year because I felt that previously I was lacking the knowledge and experience in handling special education. Now I will fully appreciate inclusive education. (Verbatim comment from Teacher 3).*

Another teacher intimated that:

> *My previous encounter with a particular pupil with disabilities in the neighboring school changed my attitude towards inclusive education totally. Now I have gained new knowledge about inclusive education and develop positive attitude towards inclusive education and will do everything possible to support it. (Verbatim comment from Teacher 4).*

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

4.2.6 Gender

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

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

A respondent commented on this sub-theme by saying that:

> *I have realized that the female teachers especially are very patients and sympathetic towards the children with disabilities than the male teachers (Verbatim comment from teacher 1).*

Another respondent asserted that:

> *The female teachers understand inclusive education better; they understand the special children and handle them better. They are more responsive to their needs than the male teachers (Verbatim comment from teacher 2).*

Inferring from the above, it is clear that the female teachers understand inclusive education better and exhibit positive attitude towards it. These findings corroborate Harvey (2005), who found that there was a marginal tendency for female teachers to express more positive attitudes towards the idea of integrating children with behaviour problems than male teachers. Female teachers had a greater tolerance level for integration and for special needs persons than did male teachers (Rizzo & Sirotnik, 2001).

Theme four: ***inherent challenges regular classroom teachers face in teaching of children with disabilities in inclusive schools***

Teachers agreed that they experience some challenges in trying to implement inclusive education. Same results were obtained from questionnaires and interviews. They include

4.3 Lack of regular training

Lack of teachers" training emerged as sub theme on inherent challenges regular classroom teachers face in teaching of special needs children in inclusive schools.

A teacher commented that:

> *In order to achieve professional skills one has to go through training. When teachers do not receive regular training it does not help them in discharging their duties because constant training equips teachers with the necessary skills to handle the students with diverse needs (Verbatim comment from teacher 1)*

A respondent commented on this sub-theme by saying that:

> *I am not trained for inclusion education therefore I am not well equipped about how to handle an inclusive classroom. Workshops should be on ongoing basis until we feel that we are well equipped to teach inclusive classrooms effectively. In service training also goes a long way on the part of an inclusive curriculum. (Verbatim comment from teacher 2)*

Deducing from the above it is clear that most teachers do not have the requisite training as far as inclusive education is concerned and this poses much problem to the implementation of the programme.

The findings above are in line with Heiman (2002) who noted that teachers may resist inclusive practices on account of inadequate training. It would appear that teachers perceive themselves as unprepared for inclusive education because they lack appropriate training in this area (Daane, Beine-Smith & Latham, 2000).

Inadequate training relating to inclusive education may result in lowered teacher confidence as they plan for inclusive education (Schumm, Vaughn & Gordon, 1994). Teachers who have not undertaken training regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities, may exhibit negative attitudes toward such inclusion (Van Reusen, Shoho, & Barker, 2001),

4.3.1 Lack of Competencies

Lack of competencies also emerged as sub theme on inherent challenges regular classroom teachers face in teaching of disabilities children in inclusive schools.

The view of one teacher is noteworthy here:

Competency and satisfaction are panacea to successful inclusion. In order for the inclusion to be successful the teachers who are handling them should be competent so as to help achieve the aim of inclusive education. (Verbatim comment from teacher 1)

Another teacher intimated that:

> *Teaching in the inclusive classroom is very tedious therefore it require teacher who are competent in order to handle all children equal. Thus, the lack of training will impede the effective implementation of the programme. (Verbatim comment from teacher 2)*

Judging from the above it is clear that Competency helps in successful inclusion of students. Without competency the teachers cannot achieve their competency. The assertion above is in line with Minke et al., (1996) who contended that the importance of support from specialist resource teachers was also highlighted in another study conducted in the USA (Minke et al., 1996), which compared the attitudes towards inclusion and the perceptions of self-efficacy, competence, teaching satisfaction and judgements of the appropriateness of teaching adaptation of regular education teachers who co-taught with resource teachers in inclusive classrooms and their counterparts in traditional classrooms. Regular teachers in inclusive classrooms reported positive attitudes towards inclusion and high perceptions of self-efficacy, competence and satisfaction. Regular teachers in traditional classrooms held less positive perceptions and viewed classroom adaptations as less feasible, and less frequently used, than did teachers in classrooms with the protected resource of two teachers.

4.3.2 Lack of Teaching and Learning Materials

Lack of teaching and learning materials emerged as another sub theme on inherent challenges regular classroom teachers face in teaching of children with disabilities in inclusive schools.

The view of one teacher is noteworthy here:

> *Unless the government of Ghana has enough funds to provide learning facilities like computers, tape recorders, Braille, hearing aids, overhead projectors the issue of inclusion will always remain on paper. (Verbatim comment from teacher 1)*

Another teacher intimated that:

> *Teachers rely heavily on a diverse range of materials to support their teaching and their student s' learning. These are essential to effective instruction as they assist to reinforce and supplement the instructor's communication during the presentation of the lesson. Therefore, if the materials are not available it will it will not help to achieve the objective of the inclusive education programme. (Verbatim comment from Teacher 2).*

Grounded from the above it is obvious that TLMs enhances teaching and learning because pupils are able to see and often feel what the teacher teaches and this go a long way to stimulate pupils" interest and increase understanding and retention. TLM therefore serve as multi-sensory approach of teaching.

Janney et al. (1995) who stipulated that other forms of physical support, such as availability of adopted teaching materials (LeRoy & Simpson, 1996); and smaller classes (Clough & Li above revelation is in line with Ndsay, 1991), have also been found to generate positive attitudes towards inclusion.

One factor that Clough and Lindsay (1991) consistently found to be associated with more positive attitudes is the availability of support services at the classroom and the school levels (Clough & Lindsay, 1991). Here, support could be seen as both physical (resources, teaching materials, IT equipment, a restructured physical environment) and human (learning support assistants, special teachers, speech therapists) (Clough & Lindsay, 1991).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further studies based on the findings from the study.

This study sought to examine teachers‟ attitudes towards persons with disabilities in inclusive schools within Ada east district. Four research objectives guided the study. They were to:

a. Assess the knowledge of regular classroom teachers in the Ada East District about inclusive education.
b. Explore the factors which influence the attitudes of regular teachers in the district towards inclusive education.
c. Examine the attitudes of regular teachers in the district towards inclusive education.
d. Investigate the challenges facing regular teachers in the implementation of inclusive education in the district.

The study was a mixed research that employed cross-sectional survey design. The population of interest was regular education teachers. Data were collected using semi-structured interview and questionnaire from a sample of 90 respondents which was comprised of 39 males and 51 females. Descriptive statistics, such as simple frequency counts and percentages were used to analyse the quantitative data, while content analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data.

5.1 Summary of key Findings

The data were analysed using thematic approach and descriptive method involving percentages and frequencies and the findings were observed: On attitudes of regular teachers in the district towards inclusive education; the study found that they believe children with disability need to be given special attention by their teachers in inclusive education, also, they wish they could spend more time teaching children with disabilities in my class/school. Besides, there is nothing wrong with including children with disabilities with other children in general class setting. Lastly, the study found that teachers encouraged co-teachers to attend to the needs of children with disabilities.

Again, on the ways regular classroom teachers attitudes influence the teaching of children with disabilities in inclusive schools the he study found that inclusive schools ensured that all children have equal access to education. Also, the researcher found that teachers exhibited positive attitude towards all of their students. Besides, inclusive education has influence their methods of teaching, such that they made sure that all pupils were able to meet instructional objectives of lessons taught. Lastly, teachers naturally felt excited when they saw children with disabilities that wanted to learn with other students.

Furthermore, the study unveiled that level of training, availability of educational resources, age and teaching experience, motivation and encouragement from head-teachers and disability education coordinators, past experiences and gender as some of the factors that influenced attitudes of regular classroom teachers in the district towards inclusive education. Regarding challenges regular classroom teachers faced in the implementation of inclusive education in the district, the following findings

were identified:

i. lack of regular training impede the implementation of inclusive education;

ii. Lack of competencies affects implementation of inclusive education; and (iii) lack of teaching and learning materials that could impede the implementation of inclusive education.

5.2 Recommendations

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

1. It is recommended, among others, that teachers in the mainstream schools are provided with intensive training on teaching children with disabilities in an inclusive setting to enable them give special attention to children with disabilities in inclusive setting. Besides, teachers in inclusive schools should spend more attention to learners with disabilities and attend to the needs of children with disabilities.
2. Regular classroom teachers‟ attitudes should be reoriented so influence the teaching of children with disabilities in inclusive schools. Constant education should be given to teachers so as to enable teachers exhibited positive attitude towards all of their students and ensure that all children have equal access to education.
3. The school authorities should provide constant training, provision of educational resources, motivation and encouragement from head-teachers and disability education coordinators, so as to help the teachers to give off their best.
4. Authorities should provide adequate support for teachers to enable them respond effectively to the needs of all children within the class.

5.3 Conclusion

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

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

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

The following areas are suggested for further research: the effect of pre-service and in service training on teachers‟ attitudes and self-efficacy in inclusion education. Besides, investigation into the challenges and concerns faced by teachers in inclusive classrooms is required.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire for Teachers

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

I am Victoria Ananga a second year graduate student of the University of Education, Winneba. As part of the academic requirement, I am conducting a research on teachers‟ attitudes towards the education of persons with disabilities in inclusive schools within Ada east district. I assure you that any information provided shall be used sorely for academic purposes, confidentiality is assured.

(Please tick and specify when appropriate) Section A: Background Characteristics

1. Gender: (a) Male [ ](b) Female [ ]
2. Age: (a) Less than 30 years [ ] (b) 30-39 years [ ] (c) 40-49 years [ ] (d) 50 & above [ ]
3. Marital status (a) Single [ ] (b) Married [ ] (c) Divorced [ ] (d) Separated [ ] (e) Widowed [ ]
4. Educational Qualification (a) Teacher certificate A [ ] (b) Diploma in education [ ]

(c) First Degree (d) Masters [ ] (e) Postgraduate Diploma [ ] (f) others……..

5. Teaching Experience (a) 1- 5years [ ] (b) 6 – 10 years. [ ](c). 11 – 15 years [ ]

(d) 16-20yrs [ ] (e) 21years and above [ ]

6. How many pupils with disabilities do have you in your class?

…….

7. Which types of disabilities do pupils have in your class, and which you are familiar with?

Spinal Bifida [ ] Cerebral Palsy [ ] Duchene Muscular Dystrophy [ ]

Epilepsy [ ] Musclosketal Conditions [ ]ADHD [ ] Visually Impaired [ ] Language

Impairment [ ] Hard of Hearing [ ] Speech Impediments [ ]

Section B: Main Research Objectives

8. What is your understanding of inclusive education?

……

……

Attitudes of regular teachers towards inclusive education. Respond to each statement by indicating whether you SD = Strongly Disagree; D=Disagree; U =Undecided, A=agree; SA= Strongly Agree.

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

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

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17. In what ways do your attitudes influence your teaching of special needs children in inclusive schools?

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

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19. What challenges do you face in teaching of special needs children in inclusive schools?

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

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THANK YOU

APPENDIX B

Interview Guide for Teachers

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

What attitudes do regular classroom teachers in the Ada East have towards children with disabilities in inclusive schools?

- What is your understanding of inclusive education?
- Do you believe children with disability need to be given special attention by their teachers?
- Is there something wrong with including children with disabilities with other children in general class setting?
- Do you naturally feel excited when you see children with disabilities that want to learn with other students?
- Do you try as much as possible to encourage co-teachers to attend to the needs of children with disabilities?
- Do you believe all children whether disabled or able should enjoy equal right from teachers?

In what ways do regular classroom teachers attitudes influence their teaching of special needs children in inclusive schools?

a. Do you wish you could spend more time teaching children with disabilities in my class/school?
b. If you have your way, will you avoid teaching children with disabilities?

Do your attitude attitudes towards children with special needs influence your teaching? Give reasons for your answer.

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

- Does training influence your attitudes towards inclusive education?
- Does availability of educational resources influence your attitudes towards inclusive education?
- Does age-teaching experience influence your attitudes towards inclusive education?
- Does motivation and encouragement from head teachers and special needs education coordinators, influence your attitudes towards inclusive education?
- Past experiences influence your attitudes towards inclusive education?
- Are there any factors that influence the attitudes of regular classroom teachers in the district towards inclusive education? please specify.

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What inherent challenges do regular classroom teachers face in teaching of special needs children in inclusive schools?

- What challenges do you face in teaching of special needs children in inclusive schools?

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THANK YOU

APPENDIX C

Observation Guide (Field Note)

OBSERVATION IN THE CLASSROOM

- Pupils with disabilities answer teachers‟ questions in the classroom
- Pupils with disabilities feel comfortable sitting beside their non-disabled peers
- Pupils with intellectual disabilities participate in the group discussion with their non-disabled peers
- Pupils with l disabilities initiate interaction the with their non-disabled peers
- Pupils with disabilities sustain interaction the with their non-disabled peers

Observation outside the classroom

- Pupils with disabilities play with peers with their non-disabled peers
- Pupils with disabilities participate in grounds work
- Pupils with disabilities socialize with their non-disabled friends
- Pupils with disabilities feels happy playing with their non-disabled peers