UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES IN THE WA MUNICIPALITY

MUSA HAJARATU JUMAI

MASTER OF EDUCATION

2023

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES IN THE WA MUNICIPALITY

MUSA HAJARATU JUMAI
(220035038)

A Dissertation in the Department of Early Childhood Education, Faculty of Applied Behavioural Science in Education, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education (Early Childhood Education) in the University of Education, Winneba

DECEMBER, 2023

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Musa Hajaratu Jumai, hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere:

Signature: ……………………………………
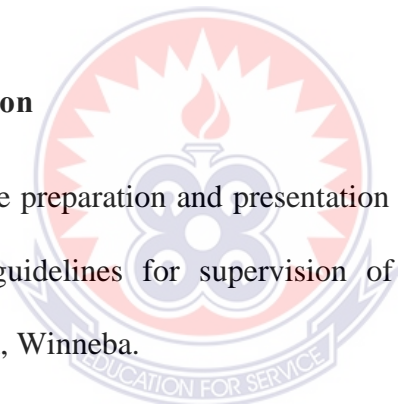
Date: …………………………………………

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor's Name: DR. MICHAEL SUBBEY

Signature: ………..……………………………

Date: …………………………………………

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this research to my entire family especially my children Abdul Basit Ballu Limann and Samiat Hasulitia Limann, Musa Dimie Ahmed and my late mother Musa Yelweh Hawawu.
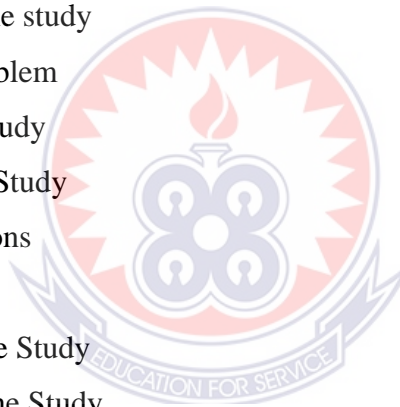
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure   **Page**

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CWD	Children with Disabilities/Child with Disability
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
SBM	School Based Management
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
SPAM	School Performance Appraisal Meeting
PTA	Parents/Teacher Association
IFSP	Individual Family Service Plan
SEN	Special Educational
SBM	School Based Management
PBF	Pupil-Bound Funding
PWD	People living With Disabilities
SMC	School Management Committee

ABSTRACT

This study explored parental involvement in the education of the child with disabilities (CWD) in the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study investigated parents' expectations of the CWD in school, parents' involvement in decision making process in the schools of CWD, parents' contributions and collaborations between parents and teachers to enhance learning outcome of the CWD in schools. In conducting the research, explanatory sequential design was used. The study involved 110 respondents consisting of teachers, parents of children with disabilities and children with disabilities. A mix of sampling methods was used. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used in the selection of parents and teachers and the data was collected using a questionnaire and interview guide. The study adopted the explanatory sequential mixed method. The data from the quantitative phase was analysed descriptively while qualitative data were analysed thematically. The result of the study showed that parents expected their CWD to acquire basic employable skills, able to live independent lives and contribute to national development. Secondly, the study also revealed that although there was high attendance of PTA meetings by parents particularly mothers, parents are not part of decision making of issues of their ward's schools. The study also discovered that parents poorly contribute to learning outcomes of their children because they do not assist them with homework as well as not encouraging them enough on their academic work. Lastly, the study also discovered that there is poor teacher-parents relationship. The study therefore recommended that parents of CWD should be educated to guide and assist them to ensure they have fair expectation of CWD and make them meaningful stakeholders in delivering quality education to children with disabilities
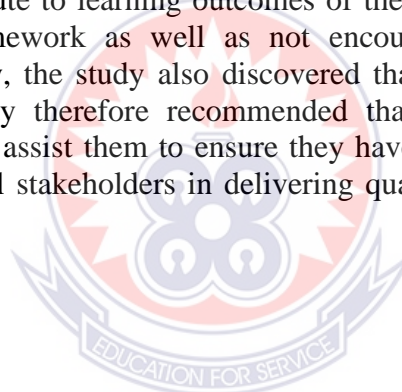
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the study

Disabilities have been a puzzle that have existed from time immemorial and has affected children all over the world in diverse ways for many years. Most of these could be mental retardation, visual impairment, hearing loss and in many other forms. Persons affected with disabilities are usually stigmatized and, in some cases, isolated, which goes a long way to worsen their plight (Kuyini, 2014).

Historically, adults and children with disabilities (CWD) were oppressed, their human rights were violated, and their access to education was denied. Majority of them were sacrificed and some of them were used as an object of entertainment. Philanthropists felt that individuals with disabilities should be given custodial care to protect them from abuse (Kuyini, 2014, Avoke, 1997; Kirk, Gallagher, Anastasiow, Coleman, 2006). This led to the concept of institutionalization, where individuals with disabilities were placed, fed and clothed as well as protected.

Education as a human right has been recognized and acknowledged by various national and international organizations (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). It recognized the principle that everyone in any society has the right to education. Education shall be free and compulsory, at least in the fundamental stages, and that parents have prior rights to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children (Article 26). Following this declaration, many countries accepted the sentiments of rights of education to all children. Rights of children were also raised in World Conference on Education for All (1990) at Jontiem. Subsequent to the Declarations of Education for all, many developing countries honoured the spirit and

1

tried to enhance access to education for typically developing children. Unfortunately, equal priorities for educational opportunities were not provided for the CWD in developing countries. In 1994, representatives of 25 international organizations and 92 national governments met in Spain under the support of UNESCO. This conference gave birth to the 1994 Salamanca Statement on Principles and policy of inclusive education. The principle of inclusive education was seen as a solution to address lack of access, equity and participation in education for children with disabilities. In the conference, it was agreed that regular schools with inclusive orientation are most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving education for all (UNESCO, 2000; Ainscow, 2005; Mittler, 2005). Ghana was one of the first signatories to the principles and policy of inclusive education. Since then, Ghana is said to be practicing inclusive education (Gadagbui, 2010).

 In Ghana and in some African countries' pupils with special needs, particularly those with visual impairment have been negatively treated and neglected (Kuyini, Eni-Onurula & Ogunleke, 2006). Historically, societal involvement in the education of CWD was primarily one of superstitions. According to MacCuspie (1992), CWD are generally slow learners and can hardly learn at the same pace with their peers without disabilities. This, probably, was the reason that universally culminated in the adoption of the segregation method or what is known today as the special schools. The systematic development of any child, to a very large extent, hinges on parents. To echo the voice of Smith and Luckasson (1992:369), indicated that there is no resource more important to a child than his or her parents. Teachers come and go; however, most parents provide major consistent, sustained and unshaken support to their children's needs.

2

 When it comes to collaborative work with the CWD, the parent-teacher relationship is often marked with distrust and disillusionment in Ghana. Parents and professionals may view each other as hostile, indifferent, and unable to help the child (Leyser, 1985). However, parents' influence all three domains of a child's academic, language, and social-emotional development, and each domain affects the others (Calderon & Greenberg, 1993; Calderon, Greenberg, &Kusche, 1991; Musselman & Kircaali-Ittar, 1996). Additionally, however, research has shown that parental beliefs and expectations about their children's learning are strongly related to children's beliefs about their own competencies, as well as their achievement (Galper, Wigfield, & Seefeldt, 1997). Parents who evidenced high levels of school contact (volunteering in the classroom, participating in educational workshops, attending Policy Council meetings) had children who demonstrated greater social competency than children of parents with lower levels of school contact (Parker et al., 1997; Rojalin Samal, 2012).

This dissertation, therefore, assesses conditions influencing involvement of parents in the education of their CWD as well as the expectations parents of their wards. The study further looked at the expectations of parents in educating their wards with disabilities. Furthermore, the study looked at how parents of children with disabilities are involved in decision making concerning the nature of education offered to their children. Similarly, the study examined the contributions of parents towards the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities. Finally, the study explored the collaboration between parents of children with disabilities and the teachers in providing quality education for children with disabilities.

1.1 Statement of Problem

Studies in Europe showed that parent's involvement in the education of CWD had multiple benefits to the child particularly in promoting development of all domains of

the child. On the contrary, it has been found that even the education of the children without disabilities in the Ghanaian society leads much to be desired (Gadagbui, 2000). In the Upper West Region of Ghana particularly the Wa Municipality it is common to see children with such disabilities having been neglected by parents who have been "disappointed" by their wards performance and are now roaming the streets without the necessary skills to live independent lives.

In Ghana pupils spend more time in their homes than in the school environment at the Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School levels (Avoke,1997). From careful observation in the Wa Municipality by the researcher, many parents do not have understanding and skills on how to engage their wards to continue to learn even if at home. In some instances, the environment is not conducive to learning and so many children do not learn or revise what they have been taught when at home. Inherent in this challenge is that many parents are not aware of the roles they are supposed to play to contribute to the learning outcomes of their wards in the country. There is limited literature on this works in the case of parents who have children with disabilities. Full participation of children with disabilities within the inclusive education system is a worldwide educational goal (United Nations, 1989; UNESCO, 1994), but many questions regarding how to succeed with inclusion still remain unanswered particularly in Ghana.

Various studies have been conducted on parent involvement in pupils' academic performance. Even though there has been much discussion in the literature on parental influence in the academic performance of pupils with disability, it appears there is a lack of nuance in understanding these influences of parents to better be able to proffer workable solutions. For instance, lacking in the literature is an appreciation of the influence of parental involvement in the education of disability children. This study

4

therefore aimed to close the literature gap by examining parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities in the main-stream school setting in the Wa municipality of the upper west region of Ghana.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out parental involvement in the education of children with disability in early childhood centres in the Wa Municipality of Ghana.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study were to;

1. explore the expectations of parents in the education of their children with any form of disabilities in the Wa Municipality of Ghana.

2. assess the contributions of parents of pupils with disabilities in enhancing learning outcomes of CWD in the Wa Municipality.

3. find out how the partnership between schools and parents supports in the education of children with disabilities in the Wa Municipality.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the expectations of parents in educating their children with disabilities in the Wa Municipality of Ghana?

2. What contributions do parents of children with disabilities make regarding improvement of learning outcomes of their children in the Wa Municipality of Ghana?

3. How do schools and parents of children with disabilities partner to support the education of children with disabilities in the Wa Municipality of Ghana?

5

1.5 Delimitations

Conceptually, the focus of the study was to investigate parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities in the Wa Municipality of Ghana. Geographically, the study area is the Wa Municipality. The study spans through the period from 2023-2024.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

There were some difficulties associated with interviewing children with disabilities. However, this was overcome by the researcher as he recruited persons who could sign to help with interpretation of the conversations. In addition, the researcher and the assistants were trained on how to interview children with emphasis on children with disabilities. In addition, the study does not have sources of funding

1.7 Significance of the Study

The results of this study would disabuse the minds of parents of their perceptions toward their children with any forms of disabilities. In fact, the study would bring to bear that parental love and care are indispensable contribution that parents should give naturally to every child, irrespective of any problem. The study is very likely to create more awareness about the abilities of CWD. In addition, it would bring to bear the facts surrounding children with disabilities and the school environment within the study area.

Again, the study would sensitize parents as being active team members in the rehabilitation of their wards. They would also be made aware that they are valuable source of information to the professionals since the facts they provide serve as basis upon which educational training programs can be drawn. In addition, these facts have the potential of informing programs and policy in other establishments.

Moreover, this would reassure parents that they are capable of serving as co-teachers to train their children. As a result, parents can draw collaborative goals with professionals (multi-disciplinary team) since it is easier to work towards such goals and achieve them as the program drawn are from their own decisions. As a result, both parents and teachers would be better equipped to handle children with disabilities.

In conclusion, this study would serve as a source of information to teachers, parents and related professionals. It would again add more information to the existing knowledge in mainstream education and pave the way for more research work to be done in areas of parental involvement in education of children with disabilities or retardation. In effect it would contribute to policy formulation and implementation within the country.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study is organized in five chapters. The first chapter consists of introduction of the study, which consists of the background to the study. The section also discusses the statement of the problem, study objectives and the research questions, significance and scope of the study, as well as the organization of the study. The second chapter focuses on theoretical and empirical literature on the subject of discussion. Chapter three also shows the methodology adopted for the study. Thus, it seeks to indicate the research approach and design used, the target population, sample size, sampling technique, data collections, study instrumentation, data analysis and its presentation as well as the methods used in achieving the research objectives. The fourth chapter covers data analysis and findings of the study. The final chapter constitutes the conclusions and recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This section gives an overview of the chapter concerning existing literature on the subject matter. The literature was reviewed from related research work done locally and internationally, publications and internet. The literature review is discussed under the following sub-headings: expectations of parents about the education of the CWD, the involvement of parents in making decision regarding the education of the CW, role parents of children with disabilities play in the learning outcomes of their CWDs and finally collaborations between parents and teachers to support the learning of CWDs.

2.1 Children with disabilities

Fourteen categories of disabilities are identified and defined under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). They include Autism, Deaf-Blindness, Deafness, Developmental Delay, Emotional Disturbance, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopaedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Speech or Language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury and Visual Impairment including Blindness (Artiles, 2019).

Hearing loss is considered to be the most prevalent congenital abnormality in newborns and is more than twice as prevalent as other conditions that are screened at birth, such as sickle cell disease, hypothyroidism, phenylketonuria, and galactosaemic (Crumley, 1991). It is one of the most sensory disorders and is the consequences of sensor neural and/or conductive malfunctions of the ear. The impairment may occur during or shortly after birth (congenital or early onset or may be late onset) caused

postnatal by genetically factors, trauma or disease. Since hearing impairment in infants is silent and hidden, great emphasis is placed on the importance of early detection, reliable diagnosis and timely intervention (Spivak *et al.,* 2000). Classification of hearing disability is done according to severity and sometimes differently by different institutions (adapted from Peter V. Paul & Stephus P. Quingley, 1990 & WHO). The differences notwithstanding are description of types of hearing impairments that turn to be very similar.

According to Ocloo *et al.,* (2002), the birth of the visually impaired child comes as a shock to parents and families because in the majority of instances there was no reason for any mother to look forward to anything other than the birth of a physically normal child. Blindness can result from variety of causes and many a time not associated with hereditary conditions. Authorities further state that blindness causes many types of reaction: parents' reactions to the situation of having to care for the visually impaired vary according to their different personalities and temperaments. This may show in feelings of anger, disappointment, guilt, over-protection, bitterness, rejection, aggression, and in some cases inclinations toward murder. In fact, these attitudes apply to most families to whom any child with any kind of disability is born.

Every child needs approval and acceptance by his or her parents. Not only does this make him or her feel secured and self-respecting, but also the whole of his successful training and education depends on the urge to please his parents for their reciprocal affection. Several characteristics of visual impairment have the relevance for developmental process; age of onset, etiology, type, and degree of vision lost (partial, central vision, peripheral vision) and the prognosis. Usually, the types and degree of vision lost are reported on the form completed by ophthalmologist or optometrist following an eye examination.

9

Observation of pupils with blindness at the Ghana National Basic School by Awini A, (2010), in Cape Coast during the 2008/2009 academic year revealed that, compared to typical pupils, those with blindness were more often teased and ignored. Those pupils with blindness were most at times neglected by their teachers and peers. These observations appear to be more consistent with Bryan's (1997), agitation that student without disabilities as well as teachers in general classroom usually do not accept pupils with blindness. Since these negative experiences influence a child's social and academic development it is therefore necessary to delve into such cases and find solutions to them.

Mental retardation is another form of disability associated with children. A number of experts have over the years dabbed into the definition of mental retardation. The earliest definition was that of Tredgold (1937). It states that it is an incomplete development of such a kind and a degree that the individual is incapable of adapting to the 'normal environment of his or her fellows in such a way as to maintain existence independently.

Doll (1994), proposed that any definition of mental retardation had to include six (6) key elements which are, social incompetence, mental sub-normality, developmentally arrested, retarded of maturity, constitutional factors, and essentially incurable. Grossman (1983), define mental retardation as significant sub-average general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficit in adaptive behaviour and manifested during the developmental period.

However, from the layman's views in the Ghanaian perspective, mental retardation has been classified as a bad omen to those parents, in order to suffer the burden as a result of some atrocities been committed by themselves or by their ancestors. Mental

10

retardation is a condition of restricted or incomplete development of the mind which is especially characterized by slow or incomplete development of skills, manifested during a particular developmental phase which contributes to overall level of intellectual, language, motor, and social skills. Available research and literature indicate that parent to whom the child is born (attached), grows up and develops during the formative years (birth-5 years) are the best source of information and any form of development, (Barnes, Guttered, Satter, and Farrer, 1986). Parents therefore are to be made aware of available educational options and information on child rearing techniques, (Bernstein, 1993).

In the United Kingdom, the policy statement special educational needs in the mainstream suggest that the role of parents as partners in the education of pupils particularly during the child's formative years is of major importance, especially in respect of a child with special educational needs. The same policy document further suggests that a child's progress should be made available to parents of children with special needs and parents need to be familiar with provisions offered their children. Parental participation in the education of children with mental retardation is well documented, and because of the documentation, it gives parents a lot of mandate to assume responsibilities for their children. The involvement of parents in the United Kingdom and the U.S.A have assumed such phenomenal level that "Parental Empowerment" as a phrase has emerged as a descriptive label to depict this level of enthusiasm (Montgomery, 2009).

In the United States, PL 99-457, part 4 and (IDEA) requires that an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), be developed for each child who is diagnosed as disabled, developmentally delayed or at risk of delay. Mcgonigel, Kaufman and Johnson, (1991), noted that; section 677 of the regulation describes the IFSP as a

11

written plan developed by multi-disciplinary personnel including parents or guardians that contain strategies which parents or guardians can employ to enhance the upbringing of their disabled children. Kirk et al, (1993:28) stated that parental empowerment means, "parents no longer passively and unthinkingly take advice from professionals or a team of professionals about treatment of their children with special needs". That is, parents are now expected to play a major and determining role concerning children's career, and professionals are to provide needed counsel and specialized advice. In Ghana as a result of inadequate personnel in the majority of service areas, children with disabilities are largely ignored (Gadagbui, 2010).

Segregation has a tendency to retard educational and mental development of such children and to deprive them of benefits they would receive in an integrated school system. Snow (2007) provides insight as to why this inclusion and the need to belong are very important by providing comparative data in the Ghanaian context. In addition, the literature reveals the importance of principals' and teachers' perceptions of parental involvement and its influence on the level of parental involvement (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009; Epstein & Becker, 1982; Hughes, et. al, 2005). Barnyak and McNelly's (2009) study noted that beliefs and practices shape their approach to parental involvement. Both teachers and principals play a critical role in parental involvement. To this end, the researcher examined a trend analysis of teachers' and principals' perception of parental involvement over time (1999-2003), if teachers' and principals' perceptions are correlated with the level of reported parental involvement, and whether schools meet their state eligibility requirements. By zeroing in on the perceptions of both principals and teachers over multiple years, the researcher showed whether these perceptions make are associated with parental involvement levels. This historical trend analysis provides information of school staff perceptions of parental

involvement before, during, and after the implementation of NCLB. Because NCLB mandated parental involvement and is currently being implemented in schools, the historical trends of staff perceptions can be useful to district administrators and educators as they continue to work with teachers and principals to design programs that increase parental involvement and train teachers and principals to more effectively interact with parents.

2.2 Parental expectation in the education of children with disabilities

All parents develop expectations about their child's education based on their own experience and information provided by the school concerned, the media and informal networks of parents. Legislation has helped focus attention on what a parent has the right to expect (DES, 1980; 1986). This includes the right of all parents to, for example, be involved in the choice of the school their child will attend, have an annual report on their child's progress and have parental representation on the school 's governing body. Similarly in Ghana there are adequate provisions which give parents legitimate demands and therefore expectations of their children with disabilities. Some of these legal instruments include the constitution, the children's act and disability act. Despite these legal frameworks, many parents still feel that the school does not listen to them enough or does not keep them sufficiently informed about how their children's' needs are being met (Lindsay and Dockrell, 2004; Blok, Peetsma, & Roede, 2007).

The concept of "expectancy" forms the basis for virtually all behaviour. Expectancies can be defined as beliefs about a future state of affairs. As such expectations represent the mechanisms through which past experiences and knowledge are used to predict the future (Olsen, Roese & Zanna, 1996). Expectations are the subjective predictions about the future' (Russell, 2003). They originate from and affect a person's beliefs,

13

knowledge and experience and can affect person's behaviour during social interaction they have with others (Tajfel & Fraser, 1978).

Studies that have explored parents' expectations of teachers and of the school indicate that parents expect quality of teaching, their child's academic progress and happiness, homework, fair discipline and information (West, David, Noden, Edge & Davies, 1996; Crozier, 1999; Foot, Hower, Cheyne, Terras & Rattrey, 2000; Tartar &Horenczyk,2000). Parents of children with Special Educational Needs may develop similar expectations but additional legislation associated with pupils with SEN has set out what they have the right to expect in relation to the initial assessment and ongoing review of their child's educational needs (DES, 2001). They will also develop expectations related to their child's individual needs and development and of the services and support they receive but the only studies found concerning expectations of parents of disabled children (Bennet, Lee & Lueke, 1998; Woolman, Garwick, Kohrman & Blum, 2001) have not provided any conclusive information.

However, the passage of the disability act in Ghana has to some extent alleviated the problems of disables in the country and as it was earlier entrenched in the constitution. The disability act in Ghana clearly provides the framework of what parents and CWD can expect from the immediate family, the community, service providers, the state and the nation as a whole.

First, the disability act according to article 1 guarantees children with disabilities the right to family life and social activities. It states 'A person with disability shall not be deprived of the right to live with that person's family or the right to participate in social, political, economic, creative or recreational activities. Secondly, it also provides differential treatment in respect of residence. The article states that 'except

as otherwise required by the condition or the need for improvement of a person with disability, a person shall not subject a person with disability to differential; treatment in respect of residence. Article 3 further adds that, 'Where a person with disability has to be put in a specialized establishment, the environment and living conditions of the establishment shall, except as otherwise required by the condition of the person with disability, be as close as possible to those of a person without disability of the same age as the person with disability.

In addition, the disability act criminalizes the exploitation of and discrimination against a person with disability. In article 20, subsection 1 and 2, additional explanatory points are given. The sub-section 1 indicates that a person shall not discriminate against, exploit or subject a person with disability to abusive or degrading treatment. While sub-section 2 explains, an employer shall not discriminate against a prospective employee or an employee on grounds of disability unless the disability is in respect of the relevant employment.

The disability act also creates space to facilitate the employment of persons with disability through public employment centre. Specifically, article 9 states; "the Ministry shall through the public employment centres, assist to secure jobs for persons with disability". The ministry of labour has not been able to facilitate this role effectively.

Expectations originate from and have an impact on an individual's interaction across his/her social environment. For example, cultural values will influence the beliefs on which expectations are based and, through the development and review of expectations, a person gains a greater understanding of his/her personal experiences. It is therefore, useful to examine the origins and effects of parents' expectations using

15

the ecological model proposed by Bronfen Brenner (1977) in his study of human development. This is a study of how people develop their understanding through interaction with their social environment at different levels. Bronfenbrenner identified four levels, which are:

• **The microsystem**, or the relationship an individual has with his/her immediate physical and social environment;

• **The mesosystem**, incorporating the inter-relationships between the most significant settings in which an individual is involved at a particular time;

• **The exosytem**, including other specific formal and informal social structures that impinge on and so influence events;

• **The macrosystem**, encompassing the prevailing ideology and the institutional culture that informs the other systems, including the economic, social, legal, educational and political systems that determine the beliefs and values of a society.

2.3 Parental involvement in education

Astin (2016) was one of the earliest developers on theories on involvement particularly for pupils. In his theory on Student Involvement, he explained how desirable outcome for institutions of higher education are viewed in relation to how pupils change and develop in result to being involved co-curricular. He opined that the main concept of the theory has three key essentials. According to him, the first is a student's "inputs" such as their demographics, their background, and any previous experiences.

The second is the student's "environment", which accounts for all of the experiences a student would have during college. Lastly, there are "outcomes" which cover a

16

student's characteristics, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and values that exist after a student has graduated college. In this direction parental involvement will also involve these three essentials; demographic characteristics of the parents, parent's environment and finally outcomes.

Astin further created five basic assumptions about involvement. He argues that involvement requires an investment of psychosocial and physical energy. Secondly, involvement is continuous, and that the amount of energy invested varies from student to student. Thirdly, aspects of involvement may be qualitative and quantitative. Next, what a student gains from being involved (or their development) is directly proportional the extent to which were involved (in both aspects of quality and quantity).

Lastly, academic performance is correlated with the student involvement. This theory has many applications in the world of higher education, and is one of the strongest pieces of evidence for co-curricular student involvement. Furthermore, researchers have continued to study this correlation with similar results. Student involvement in co-curricular activities such as student organizations, leadership positions, and activity in campus residence halls has a positive correlation with retention and academics. Because of the positive aspects of co-curricular involvement, universities have been encouraging pupils to become involved. According to Astin (1984) involvement is a construct that should not be either mysterious or obscure. Quite simply, student involvement refers to the amount of physical and psycho-logical energy that the student devotes to the academic experience.

He explained that the involvement theory has five basic postulates: Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects;

17

regardless of its object, involvement occurs along a continuum; Involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features. The extent of a student's involvement in academic work, for instance, can be measured quantitatively (how many hours the student spends studying) and qualitatively (whether the student reviews and comprehends reading assignments or simply stares at the textbook and day-dreams);

The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program; The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement.

According to Astin (1984), dictionaries also give meanings of the word involvement. The word, involvement, is an active term, the list uses verb forms. As a result, some words and phrases that give meaning of the word 'involvement' from dictionaries and a thesaurus are written in active form. They include; attach oneself to, commit oneself to, devote oneself to engage in, incline toward, join in, partake, participate in, plunge into, show enthusiasm for, tackle, to take an interest in, take part in, to take up to and to undertake. Most of these terms are behavioural in meaning.

According to the Austin these could have also included words and phrases that are more "interior" in nature, such as value, care for, stress, accentuate, and emphasize. However, the manner in which the word is used implies a behavioural component. The author further noted that motivation is an important aspect of involvement, but rather emphasizing that the behavioural aspects are critical: It is not so much what the individual thinks or feels, but what the individual does, how he or she behaves, that defines and identifies involvement.

18

In this direction parental involvement is the process of acquiring knowledge and skills to appropriately invest resources (time, energy and financial) including emotional and psychological towards the training and education of their children particularly for children with disabilities. Similarly, this narrative presents creates space for parental involvement in the education of their children with disabilities to have both qualitative and quantitative dimensions.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)/ No Child Left Behind (NCLB) definition for "parent" includes a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or step-parent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare). Also, they referred to 'involve' as "to enfold or envelope" thus, involvement implies doing together. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legal definition of parental involvements stated, ''(32) - the term 'parental involvement' means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

(A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;

(B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; (C) that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and (D) the carrying out of other activities, (as specified in section 118 of the act) (Washington, 2011).

There are multiple definitions and inconsistencies in what defines parental involvement. This multiplicity of definition makes it hard to operationally define and empirically measure (Fan & Chen, 2001). In addition, multiple definitions provide

19

persistent confusion between a range of behaviours, activities, goals, and outcomes for parent involvement (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Sheldon, 2002). These definitions represent multiple behaviours and practices such as parents' communication with teachers (e.g., Epstein, 1991), parents' participation in school activities (e.g., Greenwood &Hickman, 1991), and parents' aspirations for their children (e.g., Spera, Wentzel & Matto, 2009).
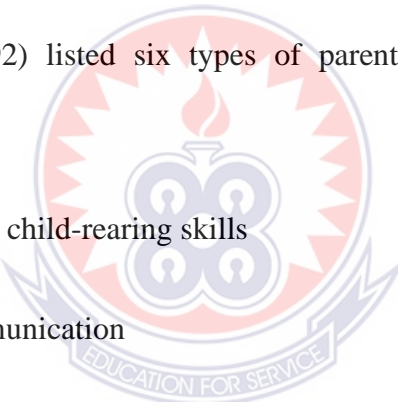
Sheldon (2002) agreed with Gronlick and Slowiaczek's (1994) perspective that parent involvement is defined as parents' investment of resources in their children. Chavkin and William (1993) expanded the definition of parent involvement to include (a) ensuring that children have proper school supplies, (b) monitoring the amount of sleep that children get, and (c) supporting the child in arriving at school on time. Feuerstein (2000) defined parent involvement from a range of behaviours including discussing school with children to attending parent-teacher conferences.

There have been several interpretations and conclusions drawn to define parent involvement in different research studies. Much of the discrepancy across such studies stems from the type of data being collected and the design of the studies. Although the role of parents in a child's education was thought to be critically important in their academic success, it was not until the 1960s that parent involvement was analysed through experimental design and research. In 1966, Coleman et al., fostered a national focus on outcomes related to parental involvement by suggesting a substantial relationship between parental involvement in their child's education and their child's academic success.

A number of researchers began to look at parent involvement in an attempt to measure the effect of parent involvement on student achievement. However, the

20

inconsistencies persist because of the different definitions that researchers use to explain parent involvement, and the different behaviours and activities researchers' measure. With these practices, it is no surprise that inconsistency remains as an issue in coming up with one acceptable definition of parental involvement. This is important to know for this study because the researcher used a more encompassing definition of parental involvement that was promoted by Keith et al. (1998) to include activities at home, in the classroom, and with the school more broadly.

Parental involvement as a generic concept refers to quite diverse behaviours, depending on the motives of schools and parents, the chosen perspective (the parent or the school perspective) and the activities in which the involvement might become manifest. Epstein (1992) listed six types of parental involvement in schools as follows;

 (1) Assisting parents in child-rearing skills

(2) School-parent communication

 (3) Involving parents in school volunteer opportunities

(4) Involving parents in home-based learning

(5) Involving parents in school decision-making, and

(6) Involving parents in school-community collaborations.

Essentially, parents are involved in three key activities in the education of the child. First parents support and prepare children in their respective homes before they go to school. Secondly, parents collaborate with teachers and other educational stakeholders to make the children stay in schools productively. And finally, parents also play a key

21

role in ensuring that there is conducive atmosphere at home after to school to motivate children to cultivate skills in personal studies, doing homework and projects.

2.3.1 Schools' beliefs about parental involvement in the education of cwd

Many schools believe it is important for parents to feel that they are involved in the education of their child. They inform parents on a regular basis about teaching and special activities. They also approach parents to volunteer at school, for example on school excursions. Schools believe that, if parents participate in this way, they will gain a better understanding of the school's aims and methods, and will feel more closely involved. Some scholars claim that greater parental involvement could contribute to a higher academic achievement of the child (Eccles and Harold, 1993; Georgiou, 1999). Similarly, schools communicate the academic performance of their wards to them through the school report cards inclusive of remarks on their behaviour and interest. In some instances, parents get the performance of their wards during PTA meetings, SPAM sessions and when parents happen to be invited by teachers (Ghana Education Service, 2010).

A common-sense hypothesis might be that, the way in which parents become involved moderates the strength of the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement. This hypothesis has been confirmed in a meta-analysis by Fan and Chen (2001). Parents might choose a specific form of involvement, depending on their skills, their availability and requests or invitations from the school. The model then hypothesizes that involvement affects the child's development through mechanisms such as modelling, instruction, and providing feedback. The authors clearly assume that the mechanisms through which the parents affect the child's growth operate in parallel to the mechanisms that are used at school. According to Fan and Chen, parental involvement has corresponding influence on the academic

22

outcome of pupils', its quality is influenced by the socio-demographic characteristics of parents as well as the level and preparedness of teachers and school authorities.

2.3.2 The role of teachers in parental involvement

Teachers seem to play a key role in parental involvement in the education of their children with disabilities. Bandura (1997) emphasized on the importance of the teachers' sense of efficacy. This sense supposedly influences the level of parental participation. Teachers who are secured in their self-perceived capabilities are most likely to invite and support parents' educational efforts. Teachers' beliefs with regard to parent involvement also seem important. For a number of reasons, teachers might display a rather reserved attitude towards parent involvement (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1992; Huss-Keeler, 1997). According to Bandura, efficient teachers adopt innovative measures to enhance parental involvement in education. Hoover-Dempsey et al., (1992) and Huss-Keeler (1997) further confirmed that the nature of the teacher has influence on the manner in which he or she might behave. If the role of teachers to effect parental involvement in the education of their wards is left to their discretion, it will never be pursued and parental involvement in education of children with disabilities will continue to marginalize.

Cultural barriers, limited experience, negative encounters, mistrust or dissatisfaction on the part of the parents and other circumstances might make teachers reluctant to engage with parents. A study by Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2002) evaluated an in-service teacher education program specifically designed to improve teachers' beliefs and skills relating to parental involvement. The program was implemented in two public schools with a high percentage of children who were at risk for socio-economic reasons. Although the program proved effective in that the teachers' perception of their own efficacy – considered being an important antecedent of beliefs about

23

parents– displayed a small gain, the effects on scales representing beliefs about parents and parent involvement were negligible. It seems that teachers' attitudes might be more difficult to influence than is generally thought. This was one of the reasons that the Dutch government decided to invest in an appropriate legislative framework rather than in the alteration of teachers' beliefs.

One challenge associated with parental involvement is the lack of a clear definition. Lee and Bowen (2006) contended there is no unitary definition, model, or measure of parental/family involvement, and there is the tendency to rely on traditional definitions. Some researchers characterize traditional definitions as including parents in school fundraising activities, school plays, or school sporting events (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Sheldon, 2002). However, NCLB promoted the concept of parental involvement as a meaningful partnership consisting of regular communication and parent participation in the development and implementation of a plan for school improvement (Cowan, 2003).

Thwala, Ntinda & Hlanze (2015) in a study of the 'lived experiences of parents' of children with disabilities in Swaziland using a sample of 20 involving 20 primary schools observed that raising a child with disability is a challenge to most parents. The findings revealed that the parents encounter challenges at work, at home, school and in the community such as emotional stress, failure to cope with the children's disability and financial challenges. The study also indicated that the parents were not sure of what was expected of them in making educational decisions on behalf of their children. It also reported that parents of children with disabilities were not trained on how to cope with their children's disability and how to work with educators.

Lastly, the types of activities associated with parental involvement can come in many forms, from talking to a child about their education aspirations, assisting with homework, volunteering at school activities, talking to teachers about a student's progress, and being involved in school governance structures. For instance, McNelly (2001) provided a framework for parent involvement that included four elements: parent-child discussion, monitoring, involvement in school and classroom activities, and participation in school organizations. Other researchers such as Kenbrow and Benhart (1993) focused only on two elements: parent-initiated contact with schools and parent participation in school organizations.

Henderson and Berlas (1994) examination of 85studies found three common elements within various types of parental involvement programs had positive results on pupils' performance: family interaction patterns, parental behaviours at home, and school interactions. Other researchers such as Desimone, Finn-Stevenson, and Henrich (2000) explored comprehensive whole-school reform models that implement parental involvement in school management and collaborative decision-making models. These shared decision-making models "reorganize decision-making and service provision to develop a cohesive community of parent, teachers, and pupils" (Desimone et al., 2000, p. 270).

Studies show there are many variables that influence parental involvement and such variables have been categorized across both psychological and sociological dimensions. Griffith's (1998) survey of 33,224 parents and 26,904 elementary pupils in 122 US public elementary schools regarding school structure and social environment to parental involvement in schools revealed a set of sociological and psychological variables both at the individual and the school level that contribute to parent involvement. Several researchers have found that there are motivational factors

25

for parent involvement (Griffith, 2000; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, & Hoover-Dempsey; 2005).

One highly cited research is by Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005), who developed a multi-dimensional model based on four psychological contributing factors of parents becoming involved in their children's education. These variables included (a) parental role construction, or parents' beliefs about what they should do in the context of their child's education; (b) parental self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school, or how much parents believed they could improve children's school outcomes; (c) parents' perceptions of general invitations for involvement from the school; and (d) parents' life contexts such as socio-economic status, culture, and family structure. The first three are psychological aspects while the fourth deals with socio-economic status of parents. These factors are a set of characteristics that illustrate both behavioural and cognitive dimensions of parental involvement.

An examination of these factors by Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) led to the following assertion. Across the findings and suggestions, there are themes of empowerment for all participants in children's schooling and all concerned with respecting and enhancing parents' contributions to children's school success. With particular reference to our focus here on parents, there are thus strong suggestions that school attention to parents' personal motivations for involvement, and family life-context variables persistent to involvement can support personal motivation and positive influence on student outcomes. Walker et al. (2005) revised the Hoover-Dempsey scale model into five categories.

26

The first three categories examine the psychological predictors such as parents' motivational beliefs, parent perceptions of invitations, and perceived life contexts. The fourth category examines the parents' involvement forms defined as school-based behaviours and home-based behaviours. Lastly, the researchers explored the reciprocal relationship between the theory and measurement constructs. This type of scale model provided the opportunity to measure parent involvement along many different types of psychological dimensions. For instance, using this multidimensional framework, Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, and Sandler (2007) found that parents' relationship to teachers and children is a strong motivating factor for parent involvement.

In addition, intrapersonal and interpersonal psychological factors such as perception of invitation to involvement from teachers, motivational beliefs, and perceived life contexts were found to be strong predictors of home and school-based involvement as well as self-efficacy and time and energy for involvement. Research findings suggested that understanding the psychological underpinnings of parent involvement is critical in designing and implementing programs, policies, and practices (Washington, 2011).

2.4 Parental involvement in decision-making in the schools

In both the developed and developing worlds, government attempts to improve education have been mostly about providing more classrooms, more teachers, and more textbooks to schools (Ainscow, 2005). There is growing evidence, however, that more inputs are not enough to make schools work better. One important reason why education systems are failing to provide children with a solid education is the weak accountability relationships among policy makers, education providers, and the

27

citizens and pupils whom they serve (Ghana Education Service, 2010; Ministry of Education, 2001).

It is not surprising then that the transfer of some decision-making power to schools has become a popular reform over the past decade (Ghana Education Service, 2010). School-based management (SBM) puts power in the hands of the frontline providers and parents to improve their schools (World Bank, 2009). Its basic premiseis that people who have the most to gain or lose are pupils and their parents and those who know what actually goes on in the classroom and school teachers and school principals should have both greater authority and greater accountability than they do now with respect to school performance (Blok, et al., 2007; Michigan Department of Education, 2011). It is this direction Ghana passed education acts to enhance the role of SMC and PTAs in the management of school in Ghana. Specifically, through a Regulation under the Ghana Education Service Act (Act 506) of 1995, the School Management Committee was introduced (Ghana Education Service, 2010).

During the past two decades, educational differences between richer and poorer countries, as measured by enrolment rates and average years of schooling, have narrowed, but the global gap in student achievement levels remains very wide. Where successful, SBM offers the potential to close that learning gap (World Bank, 2009). However, as a result of poor monitoring by actors including parents and government, the gap in terms of quality continue to widen.

Advocates of this strategy, SBM, maintain that decentralizing decision making encourages demand for a higher quality of education and ensures that schools reflect local priorities, values, needs and concerns. By giving a voice and decision-making power to local stakeholders who know more about the local education systems than

28

do central policy makers, decentralization can improve educational outcomes and increase client satisfaction. One way to decentralize decision-making power in education is known popularly as school-based management (SBM).

There are other names for this concept, but they all refer to the decentralization of authority from the central government to the school level. SBM emphasizes the individual school (represented by any combination of principals, teachers, parents, pupils, and other members of the school community) as the main decision-making authority, and holds that this shift in the formulation of decisions would lead to improvement in the delivery of education. In Ghana reforms in laws have introduced several measures and structures to ensure school-based management. At the level of the school, PTAs, SMCs and school-based SPAM are supposed to enhance governance at this level. However, these structures largely do not work. The capacities of PTAs are low. SMCs are not properly constituted and composed and in many cases are none existent (Ghana Education Service, 2010).

School-Based Management is the decentralization of authority from the central government to the school level (Caldwell 2005). In the words of Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990),

"School-based management can be viewed conceptually as a formal alteration of governance structures, as a form of decentralization that identifies the individual school as the primary unit of improvement and relies on the redistribution of decision-making authority as the primary means through which improvement might be stimulated and sustained" (p. 290).

Most SBM projects involve some sort of transfer of responsibility and decision making that are usually the responsibility of school operations to a combination of

29

principals, teachers, parents, and other school community members. These projects try to empower principals and teachers and strengthen their professional motivation, thereby enhancing their sense of ownership of the school. They also seek to involve the local community in a meaningful way, making decisions about their local school. By these means, the projects aim to increase the speed and relevance of school level decision making.

Most SBM projects work through some sort of school committee (or School Council or School Management Committee). The school committee may among other things monitor the school's performance including test scores or teacher and student attendance. Secondly, it may also raise funds and create endowments funds for the school projects. Thirdly it may also appoint, suspend, dismiss, and remove teachers, and ensure that teachers' salaries are paid regularly too. Finally, notwithstanding but rarely, approve annual budgets, including the development budget, and examine monthly financial statements. Several of these projects among others seek to strengthen parents' involvement in the administration of the school by getting them involved in the school committee or council. Parents participate voluntarily and take on various responsibilities, ranging from the assessment of student learning to financial management. In some projects, parents are involved directly in the school's management by being custodians of the funds received and verifying the purchases and contracts made by the school. School councils also may be required to develop some sort of school improvement plan (Epstein, 1992; Ghana Education Service, 2010; World Bank, 2009).

SBM programs lie along a continuum in the degree to which decision-making is devolved to the school. The other key dimension of SBM is who is given responsibility for the devolved functions. There are four models that typify the

30

various arrangements included in SBM reforms. First is the administrative-control SBM in which the authority is devolved to the school principal. Second is professional-control SBM in which teachers hold the main decision-making authority so as to use their knowledge of the school and its pupils. Third is a community-control SBM in which parents have the major decision-making authority. And finally, a balanced-control SBM in which decision-making authority is shared by parents and teachers.

2.5 Parental contribution in the learning outcomes of children with disabilities

Some scholars claim that greater parental involvement could contribute to a higher academic achievement of the child (Eccles and Harold, 1993; Georgiou, 1999). In the Netherlands, important changes have recently been implemented with regard to the education of children with special needs. The changes are set out in the Pupil-Bound Funding (PBF) system. Parents now have the right to choose which type of school their child attends: inclusive education at a mainstream school or segregated education at a school for special education. One of the main aims of the new system is to increase parental involvement in education. Extensive research conducted over the past forty years indicates that when parents are engaged in their children's education, academic achievement increases (Michigan Department of Education, 2011).

Research over the last forty years provides educators and parents with a substantial body of evidence that parent involvement and engagement is associated with children's academic performance and social competence. Comprehensive surveys of this research document the following benefits for pupils, families and schools. First, pupils achieved more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background

or the parents' education level. Second, pupils have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and complete homework more consistently.

Third, pupils have higher graduation rates and greater enrolment rates in post-secondary education. Forth, educators hold higher expectations of pupils whose parents collaborate with the teacher. Fifth, student achievement for disadvantaged children not only improves, but can also reach levels that are standard for middle-class children. In addition, the children who are farthest behind make the greatest gains. Sixth, children from diverse cultural backgrounds perform better when parents and professionals collaborate to bridge the gap between the culture at home and at the learning institution. Seventh, student behaviours such as alcohol use, violence, and antisocial behaviour decrease as parent involvement increases.

According to research, the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to: (1) create a home environment that encourages learning; (2) communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; and (3) become involved in their children's education at school and in the community. This is consistent with procedures established by the Ghana Education Service to enhance the participation of parents in the education of their wards.

It is, therefore, a key component of national educational policies and early childhood programs. Much of the research on parent involvement, as it relates to children's outcomes, has emphasized the relationship between specific parent involvement behaviours and children's achievement. Parental involvement at school (e.g., with school activities, direct communication with teachers and administrators) is associated with greater achievement in mathematics and reading (Griffith, 1996; Reynolds, 1992;

32

SuiChu &Williams, 1996). Higher levels of parent involvement in their children's educational experiences at home (e.g., supervision and monitoring, daily conversations about school) have been associated with children's higher achievement scores in reading and writing, as well as higher report card grades (Epstein, 1991; Griffith, 1996; Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996; Keith et al., 1998).

Other research has shown that parental beliefs and expectations about their children's learning are strongly related to children's beliefs about their own competencies, as well as their achievement (Galper, Wigfield, & Seefeldt, 1997). Parents who evidenced high levels of school contact (volunteering in the classroom, participating in educational workshops, attending Policy Council meetings) had children who demonstrated greater social competency than children of parents with lower levels of school contact (Parker et al., 1997). It was hypothesized that home-based involvement would be most strongly associated with positive classroom learning outcomes and that direct school-based involvement would predict lower levels of conduct problems. Home-Based Involvement activities, such as reading to a child at home, providing a place for educational activities, and asking a child about school, evidenced the strongest relationships to later pre-school classroom competencies. These activities were related to children's approaches to learning, especially motivation and attention/persistence, and were found to relate positively to receptive vocabulary.

2.6 Parental partnership with teachers in the education of their children

The Michigan State Board of Education has recognized the importance of parent and family engagement and passed the Family Involvement Policy on May 15, 1997. The Michigan House of Representatives also understands the value of parents and families and in 2001 urged schools to develop involvement contracts with parents of their pupils. The Michigan Senate acknowledged the role of parents and families in

education in 2004 and called upon schools to develop parent involvement plans designed to support student achievement. In 2005 when Ghana Education noticed the importance of the role of parents in the education of children passed the act that brought into existence Parent Teacher Associations which had contributed significantly to school activities in Ghana.

Thwala, et al, (2015) in a study in Swaziland suggested the need for the development of training programs which will empower parents with knowledge to better partner with educators for the benefit of the child. To address these challenges, government will need to put in place policies which will look at the needs of parents of the children with disabilities. Ziebart (2005) in a study on 'supporting parents as active partners in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities' concluded that communication between professionals and parents is the major barrier encountered by parents.

In the Michigan State Board of Education Family Involvement Policy (1997) and Canter (2004) recognized the critical role played by parents in the development of children particularly those with disabilities. Family of school pupils play a number of supporting roles, including as their advocates and as people who can provide valuable insight into their specific needs to instructors, who may at times feel pressed by trying to meet the needs of diverse groups of pupils. There are rarely any simple answers to balancing the needs of each individual child with disabilities with others' needs, with competing structural, bureaucratic, pedagogical, and emotional factors often adding extra layers of effort and complexity for everyone involved. But when families and educators work together as partners, it enhances the likelihood that children with disabilities will have positive and successful learning experiences.

34

Another factor that can hinder educators' efforts to build strong working relationships with families is not having adequate time to do so (Thwala, et al., 2015). Strong home–school partnerships based on ongoing dialogue and engagement can help alleviate many of the concerns of both families of children with disabilities and educators (Bakere, 1992). Ultimately, it is the children with disabilities themselves who benefit the most from feeling that there is continuity of communication, support, and caring between home and school.

Parents' leadership skills, providing input on school policy and programs relating to special education, and raising disability and special education awareness at schools and in the community. Although arising out of a US initiative, the recommendations may benefit similar parent groups in all areas (Michigan Department of Education, 2011). They recommended the use of psychological evaluations, which are often conducted as part of a comprehensive evaluation for special education services or used to create behaviour modification plans.

Because the reports generated by these evaluations are often difficult to understand, however, it is important for parents to know the right questions to ask during follow-up meetings. The processes and tools help parents gain confidence as equal partners in their children's education through meaningful participation in IEP team meetings. The author noted that the degree to which these meetings represent significant opportunities for parents to exercise their right to participate in decision making largely depends on team culture, the attitudes and beliefs that a particular group of people values.

In any case parents can hold a significant position as far as the training and development of children with disabilities is concerned (Bakere, 1992). Among the

35

processes in which parents can be involved are identification (diagnosis), assessment, educational programming, training, teaching, and evaluation (Blok, et al., 2007). Parents who are well oriented can easily identify disabilities at early stage. They can provide very essential tips in assessment of functional skills after otherwise inaccessible to professionals (Bakere, 1992; Blok, et al, 2007). According to these authors parents can also provide different information about the developmental characteristics of their children. They established that initial meeting with parents conducted to discuss the assessment result and findings also help to develop the management/teaching plan.

The child rights in Ghana also have this for parents to enforce. It is the responsibility of a parent to educate CWD as it is spelt out in article 16, sub-section (1) 'A parent, guardian or custodian of a child with disability of school going age shall enrol the child in a school'. And sub-section (2). A parent, guardian or custodian who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ten penalty units, or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding fourteen days.

Also, the state has the responsibility to make facilities available in each region to ensure access. This is specified in article (17), 'The Minister of Education shall by Legislative Instrument designate schools or institutions in each region which shall provide the necessary facilities and equipment that will enable persons with disability to fully benefit from the school or institution'. In addition, the government has additional responsibilities in connection with pupils living with disabilities as specified in article 18 sub-section (1) and (2).

36

In Ghana, because of low socio-economic status of some parents, couple with derogatory stigmatization that goes with disabilities, most parents shirk their responsibilities in the education of the affected children. Some parents who even send their children with mental retardation to school refuse to bring them home when school vacates. When these children finally get home, their parents do not supplement the teachers' efforts of continuous stimulation. Also, some parents seem to be withdrawing from their role of partnership with teachers in their children's education, (Ocloo et al, (2002).

Gadagbui (1998), contended that parents lack comfort and some are ignorant about much pertinent information concerning the child. For example, some lack information on related services and are made to play passive roles. These things do not enhance parents' cooperation in the assessment, development, and training of the child with any disabilities. As a result, it is felt that one way of actively involving parents in any program about their children is first, to minimize their negative emotions through effective counselling, reassurance and parents' group participation to share experiences.

Family involvement is the strongest predictor of child educational outcomes. This dimension is associated significantly with children's motivation to learn, attention, task persistence, receptive vocabulary skills, and low conduct problems. Family involvement in education has been identified as a beneficial factor in young children's learning (National Research Council 2001; US Department of Education, 2000).

The attitude of the parents signifies that the supporting nature of family in their children's education. Parental attitude can be negative or positive. The negative attitude of the parents regarding education and schooling can prevent their children

from getting education. With less parental support in school work, low level of motivation and poor self-esteem of children can result in low school and personal achievement. Positive attitude of the parents can be beneficial to their children in many cases and can be reflected in improvement in class performance, creating interest among children to learn, and higher achievement scores in reading and writing.

Parental empowerment by legislation in educating children with disabilities is reviewed in this study in detail. Parents play key roles in the education of their children with disabilities.

2.7 Theoretical Framework for Parental Involvement

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model of the parental involvement process is adopted (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; 1997; Hoover-Dempsey, et al., 2005). The model is related to three major questions: (a) why do (and don't) families become involved in educational activities; (b) what do families do when they are involved in educational activities, and (c) how does family involvement in children's education make a positive difference in student outcomes. The model focuses on understanding specific elements of the parental involvement process and relationships among them (Hoover-Dempsey, 2010). These elements include parents' choices of involvement forms, major mechanisms through which parental involvement influences educational and related developmental outcomes in children, the major mediating variables that enhance or diminish the influence of involvement, and major outcomes for child learning.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler introduced the model in 1995 and the model was revised in 2005 (Walker et al., 2005). The model is structured in five levels (see figure

38

1) operating between parents' initial choice to become involved (Level 1) to (level 5) which explains beneficial influence of that involvement on student outcomes (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Level 1 includes the constructs that focus primarily on personal motivators of the individual parent, explaining parents' fundamental decisions about involvement.

Three major constructs are part of level 1: (a) personal motivators which include parental role construction and parental self-efficacy for helping their child succeeding in school, (b) parents' perceptions of invitations to be involved, which comprise general invitations from school (e.g. being welcomed by the school, and being encouraged to be involved in the child's education), teachers (e.g. a trusting relationship), and child (e.g. child requests for help or engagement in educational activities), and (c) life context variables, consisting of parental knowledge and skills as well as parental time and energy.

Walker et al. (2005) hypothesized that parents' perceived life context moderates the influence of other level 1 constructs, which means that any distance between what parents think they can and should do and what they actually do is influenced by their perceptions of available resources. An intermediate level, that is level 1.5, comprises parents' choices of involvement forms which are involvement activities within the home context and/or involvement activities within the school context (Lavenda, 2011). Level 2 includes the mechanisms of involvement, namely the methods parents use for influencing the child's schooling, which we further call 'activities', through which parental involvement influences educational and related developmental outcomes in children.

39

These are modeling (which is a parent's explicit attitude towards reading and actual parents' reading behavior), encouragement (which is a parent's support for a child in activities related to school tasks and learning), reinforcement (which is parent's application of positive consequences for learning behaviours and efforts of their child), and instruction (which is the engagement of a parent with their child by giving various forms of instruction such as teaching and tutoring). Level 3 refers to major variables that may enhance or diminish the association between the parents' involvement activities and the child's academic achievement.

These variables are the child or student perceptions of learning mechanisms/methods used by a parent. Level 4 refers to students' attributes conducive to achievement such as academic self-efficacy, the intrinsic motivation to learn, self-regulatory strategies and social self-efficacy for relating to teachers. Level 5 is a student's academic achievement, and according to the model, parental involvement at each level of the process predicts to some extent student outcome (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997, 2005, 2010; Walker et al., 2005).

Theoretical framework

Level 5: Student Achievement			

Level 4: Student Attributes Conducive to Achievement			
Academic Self-Efficacy	Intrinsic Motivation to Learn	Self-Regulatory Strategy Knowledge & Use	Social Self-Efficacy for Relating to Teachers

Level 3: (Mediated by) Student Perceptions of Learning Mechanisms Used by Parents			
Encouragement	Modeling	Reinforcement	Instruction

Level 2: Learning Mechanisms Used by Parents during Involvement Activities			
Encouragement	Modeling	Reinforcement	Instruction

Level 1.5: Parent Involvement Forms			
Values, Goals, Expectations, Aspirations	Involvement Activities at Home	Parent/ Teacher/ School Communication	Involvement Activities at School

Level 1:

Personal Motivators		Parents' Perceptions of Invitations to be Involved			Life Context Variables		
Parental Role Construction for Involvement	Parental Efficacy for Helping Student Succeed in School	General School Invitations	Specific Invitations from Teacher(s)	Specific Requests/ Invitations from Student	Parental Knowledge & Skills	Parental Time & Energy	Family Culture

Figure 2.1. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's Model of the Parental Involvement

Process. Adapted from The Parent Institute, www.parent-institute.co (2012).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology and designs employed to achieve the objective of the dissertation. The central objective of the dissertation was to delve into parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities in the Wa municipality of Ghana. It consists of the profile of the study area, research design, the methods of data collection that were employed and the instruments used in the data collection and the analyses of the data. It. In brief, this chapter outlines the overall methodological framework of the study.

3.1 Research paradigm

The foundations on which research are conducted are on their ontological and epistemological positions. In this regard, Bryman (2016), argues that research methods are inevitably rooted in epistemology and ontology. Epistemology is regarded as a theory of knowledge. It is concerned with what is (or should be) regarded as accepted knowledge in a discipline (Bryman, 2016). Bryman argued further that one of the most crucial aspects of epistemology is the question of whether or not a natural science model of the research process is suitable for the study of the social world.

Ontology is concerned with the "nature of social entities" thus whether social entities should be considered objective or constructive (Bryman, 2016). Again, to Bryman, the crucial question of ontology is whether social entities can and should be considered objective. Entities that have a reality external to social actors (objectivism), or whether social entities can and should be considered social

constructions built up from the perception and actions of social actors (constructivism).

From the discussion above, this study is grounded on Pragmatism. According to studies of Selcuk (2018), pragmatism is the belief in realism and idealism or the practical nature of philosophical phenomena in most surveys.

3.2 Research approach

The approach that is used in this study is mixed method. Mixed method is a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analyzing and integrating quantitative (e.g., experiments and surveys) and qualitative (e.g., focus groups discussions, interviews) data (Selcuk, 2018). According to Selcuk, the use of the mixed method reduces the weaknesses of each single method that would have been used separately. The study therefore used mixed method of data collection to satisfy the research objectives. Mixing means the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in the conduct of the research. This makes the study use limited period of time to complete the study and the understanding of pertinent issues of the study. The study with the support of the mixed method becomes pragmatic in nature.

3.3 Research design

For any research process a systematic research design is appropriate in enabling the researcher arrives at a valid findings and logical conclusions. According to MacDaniel & Gates (1996:41) research design "is a systematic plan that has to be followed in order to reach the objectives of the study". Explanatory Sequential mixed method was used to carry out the study.

According to Creswell (2016), a research design is the overall plan for connecting the conceptual research problems to the pertinent and achievable empirical research. It is

an enquiry which provides specific direction for procedures in research. The design that is used had the capacity for observation by the researcher as it enables empirical understanding of the status quo within a particular phenomenon under investigation.

3.4 Study population

According to Levy and Lemeshow, (2013), a population is the aggregate of all the elements showing some common set of characteristics that comprises the universe for the marketing research problem. Population is a group of people, who have one or more common characteristics, on which the research study envisage (Selcuk, 2018). The population for this study include parents of children with disabilities as well as early childhood teachers that teach children with disabilities.

3.5 Sample and sampling technique

The part of the population selected to represent the entire population is referred to as the sample. Sampling then is the process of selecting the individual to represent the population, while sampling technique is the method used for selecting the sample (Selcuk, 2018). The study used a multi-stage sampling approach to do the sampling. This means different sampling techniques were used in the conduct of the study. The researcher adopted two sampling procedures, purposive and convenient sampling. Purposive sampling also called judgmental sampling is non-probability sampling techniques in which a researcher selects the sample based on his or her judgment about the characteristics required of the sample members and the specific purpose that the researcher has in mind based on his or her research (Proctor, 2000). Purposive sampling was used to select the sample for the in-depth interviews, this was to enable the researcher include a desired and representative sample of parents with children with disabilities. The criteria for selecting parents, teachers and CWD are listed below.

44

1. Criteria for inclusion of parents with CWD

Based on this approach the criterion for selecting parents who had children with disabilities included the following.

a. The parent's child must be mentally, visually or hearing impaired

b. The parent must live with the child with disability

c. The parent's child with disability must be attending school

d. The parent must be willing to cooperate in this research work

2. Criteria for inclusion of teachers

In selecting teachers for this study, the researcher adopted the following criteria for inclusion or exclusion from the study.

a. The teacher must be involved in teaching the child with any of those challenges.

b. The teacher must be willing to cooperate in this research work.

c. The teacher must have some experience in handling children with disabilities.

3. Criteria for inclusion of pupils

In selecting students for this study, the researcher adopted the following criteria for inclusion or exclusion.

a. The student must be suffering from any of the following disabilities (mentally, visually or hearing impaired).

b. The student must be a school going child and in school

c. He or she must live in the community where this research took place.

45

This procedure actually helped the researcher with the specific kind of information the researcher needed because the sample was selected based on expert's opinion and the researcher's own criteria indicated above.

Another procedure that was used alongside purposive sampling was convenient sampling (also called haphazard or accidental sampling). This refers to sampling by obtaining the people or units that are most conveniently available. A convenience sample is the one that the researcher uses any subjects that are available to participate in the study (Babbie, 2001).

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

According to Creswell (2016), data collection is defined as the collection and measurement of information on concerned variables that would support an investigation in a systematic manner by answering the study's research questions. To be able to evaluate measurement outcomes, interview and questionnaires were used to gather the data.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

The main instrument that was employed to collect data for the research was questionnaire. A questionnaire is defined as a research instrument that consists of a set of questions or other types of prompts that aim to collect information from a respondent (Creswell, 2016). The two most common types of questionnaires are close-ended questions and open-ended questions. Respondents replied to them on their own free will without any influence from another person. The researcher had a helping hand from two research assistants. The researcher took them through a brief training on how to administer the questionnaires and gather data.

3.6.2 Interview Guide

An interview guide or semi-structure interview guide was developed to streamline the interview process for the focus group discussions. This was used to conduct in-depth interview on the issues under study. Unstructured interviews can be carried out in a one-to-one situation or collectively with a group (Kumar, 1999). In this particular study it was conducted in a group of five. The discussions were guided by the interview guide.

3.7 Data collection Procedure

The researcher first obtained an introductory letter from the Department of Early Childhood, University of Education, Winneba to seek permission from the various schools, offices, and other concerned authorities. The letter spelled out the purpose of the study, the need for individual participation and anonymity as well as the confidentially of respondents' responses. The management of the Wa Municipal Education Directorate issued an introductory letter to the sampled schools to grant the researcher access to the data collection. After establishing the necessary contact with the head teachers of the selected schools and authorized offices, permission was obtained for the administration of the instruments. The researcher self-administered the instrument on the respondents. The responses from the respondents from the interview of parents were recorded with an audio recording device. Each person spent between 20-30 minutes responding to the questions from the instrument. The data collection exercise was conducted within a period of three (3) weeks.

3.8 Data Processing and Analysis

According to Babbie (2001), data analysis has to do with translating data into a meaningful outcome that can enable the researcher draw conclusions about the

problem he or she is investigating. The researcher collected the responses in a form of issuing data questionnaires. These questionnaires were then processed and analyzed.

The quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS). The Statistical package then displayed the data in a form of tables, frequencies and percentages which greatly enhanced the analysis process because they were effective illustrations that depicted relations and trends. Triangulation further helped qualitative and quantitative analysis to yield simultaneous interpretation of results.

Thematic analysis was also used to analyze the qualitative data. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2017). Thematic analysis provides accessible and systematic procedures for generating codes and themes from qualitative data (ibid). The data was transcribed and then analyzed.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are indispensable to the efficiency of any data-collection procedure. Validity is defined as the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of specific inferences made from the instrument or procedure results. Kahn (2018), stated that, reliability is a needed condition for validity but not adequate. A test must be reliable for it to be valid, but a test could be reliable and still not be valid. The reliability of a research instrument concerns the extent to which the instrument yields the same results when repeated on several occasions. To ensure the validity of the questions, the preliminary questionnaire was given to course mates and other colleagues to read through and offer suggestions for revision. Appropriate suggestions were given, and the questionnaire restructured accordingly. It was also viewed by

48

other experienced researchers who went through and ensured that the necessary suggestions and corrections are done. Pilot-testing of the instruments was done in the Sissala West District which has similar characteristics to the study area to check how reliable the instrument before its delivery to the participants.

3.10 Trustworthiness

In order to make the research findings convincing and trustworthy, I considered the issues of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability while conducting interviews (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To ensure credibility, which can replace internal validity, the interviews were recorded for accurate interpretations and used member checks techniques as suggested by Teddie and Tashakkori (1998) and Singh (2007). After transcribing the interviews, data provided each interviewee with the transcribed version and the corresponding recorded interview to check that the transcriptions are identical to what they said in the interviews. Transferability, which should replace external validity, was addressed by providing thick description of the situation studied and documenting all steps of research. The explicit description of my research process, methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation highlights the detailed steps of my research and provides a thick description of the whole research process. Dependability or reliability was increased in my study in two different ways. First, the researcher used the same interview guide that has been carefully designed, worded, and piloted while conducting interviews. Second, the data was transcribed and provided interviewees with the transcribed versions for verification. Confirmability, which should replace objectivity, was achieved by auditing and triangulation. In addition to reviewing questionnaires and interview guide before and after piloting, they helped with evaluating whether or not the findings, interpretations, and conclusions are supported by data. While acknowledging

49

the subjective nature of interpretive research, the researcher ensured that respondents present a detailed, accurate, and non-biased account of participants' views.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

The data collection methods give chance to the researcher to carefully gather information regarding the area under study. This was possible because some ethical issues were taken into consideration. The data collection started after the researcher was introduced with a letter from the Early childhood Department at the University of Education, Winneba to the Wa Municipal Education office and the selected schools head teachers before the field work was embarked on. The participants were informed about the purpose of the project and their informed consent was sought to participate. Their identity was kept in strict confidentiality, thus meeting the requirements of the code of ethics of the university. Finally, all the information that was collected in the course of this dissertation was used only for the purposes of the study, and is kept confidential. During the administration of the questionnaires and interview schedule, the researcher identified herself to the respondents to avoid impersonation. The purpose of the study and the nature of the questionnaires and interview schedule were made known to the participants. Participation in the study was based on the willingness of respondents. Anonymity of respondents was respected. During the field work all forms of identification including names and telephone numbers of respondents were avoided.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULT

4.0 Introduction

The analysis is based on the socio-demographic background of respondents. The second section covers the three main objectives of the study.

4.1 Demographic/ background data

Table 4.1: Gender of the respondent

Sex of Respondent	Teachers	Parents	Children with Disabilities	Total
Male	58% (29)	26.7% (08)	53.3% (16)	48.2% (53)
Female	42% (21)	73.3% (22)	46.7% (14)	51.8% (57)
Total	100% (50)	100% (30	100% (30)	100% (110)

Source: field survey, 2023

Table 4.1 presents the gender status of respondents. A slight majority of the teacher-respondents were males with 58% (29) while females were 42% (21). On the contrary the majority of parent-respondents were females with 73.3% (22) while the remaining 26.7% (08) were males. Additionally, 60% (18) of the children with disabilities respondents were males and 40% (12) were females. Overall, it can be inferred that the majority of respondents were females with 51.8% (57) while males were 48.2% (53), which is reflective of our national population which shows females are more than males with a slim margin (2000, PHC). Besides, this could be attributed to the fact that by the Ghanaian socialization process, females are largely involved in the provision of home-based care for vulnerable persons like the aged, persons with disabilities and generally the sick.

Furthermore, male parents have the prerogative to abandon their children at birth when they notice these children are born with disabilities. On the other hand, females do not have that option of abandoning their children when they have disabilities and they tend to bonded with these children till death do them apart. At best their male counterparts provide them with some financial support to help with the up of these children with disabilities.

Table 4.2: Academic qualification of teachers

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid Professional	40	80	80	80
Non-Professional	10	20	20	100
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: field survey, 2023

Data in Table 4.2 shows that, the majority of teachers are professional with 80% (40) while the remaining teachers are non-professional, 10% (10). It can be inferred that the majority of teachers in the Municipality and the country as a whole are trained on the basic requirements of the profession. The biggest challenge is the inability of the system to embark on regular refresher courses for these teachers, intensify monitoring and supervision as well as work on a good compensation system to maintain the morale of teachers.

52

Table 4.3: Experience of teachers

	Frequency	**percentage**	**Valid percentage**	**Cumulative percentage**
Valid 1-5	20	40	40	40
6-10	16	32	32	72
11-15	10	20	20	93
16+	4	8	8	100
Total	**50**	**100**	**100**	

Source: field survey, 202

Majority of teachers, (60% (30) as indicated in Table 4.3 showed that they have 6+ years of experience on the job. Whereas 32% (16) have experience between 6-10 years, 20% (10) have experience between 11-15 years. Also, 40% of the teachers has experience between 1- 5 years while a minority of the respondents, 8% (8), has experience 16+ years. Teachers within the study have good experience on the job and potentially can handle task assigned them, more so if they are given refresher training. As explained above, as a result of the low-capacity development programs for teachers, there is no positive correlation between number of years on the job and accumulated knowledge and experiences on the job. What this means is that you could meet a teacher with several years on the job as teacher and/or as educational administrator and yet the person is immature in the laws and conventions of the service in which the person works. This could have been examined deeper with knowledge test as the instrument. However, this study has limited resources to allow

the researcher delve in that area of study. In addition, it is key area of interest of this study and therefore the limited information on it in this particular study.

Table 4.4: Methods of teaching by teachers

Teaching method	frequency	percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Teacher centered	37	74	74	74
Child centered	13	26	26	100
Total	**50**	**100**	**100**	

Source: field survey, 2023

Majority of the teachers, 74% (37), in the Wa Municipal in the Upper West Region of Ghana use teacher-centered approach in teaching. However, a minority of teachers, 26% (13) use the child-centered approach. The method of teaching used by the majority of teachers, is not appropriate for CWD in the normal school system. This means that, the methodology adopted by eight out of ten teachers and manner in which they carry out their tasks as teachers is not friendly to pupils in general let alone children with disabilities.

During the study, the researcher came to a conclusion that teacher centered approach was the dominant approach for tuition in most of the schools across the Municipality. This was also confirmed by the parents that the teachers do not use innovative means for teaching, more so when these same schools also contain some children with disabilities. This feeds in the earlier fact that the teachers stay on the job for several

54

years without in-service training. In addition, it was also observed that many of the teachers taught without the use of teaching and learning materials (TLMs). For instance, it was observed that about eight out of ten teachers did not use TLMs for instruction and common excuse given was that they were not available in the schools.

4.2 Parental Expectation in the Education of Children with Disabilities

This variable (parental expectation of CWD) was investigated using Likert-type scale where "1" represented "Strongly Disagree", 2, 3,4 and 5 represented Disagree, Uncertain, agree; Strongly Agree respectively. The result from the study on the expectations of parents in sending their children to school is presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Parental Expectations of their children with disabilities

Item		N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
	Parents:					
1	know that their children need special treatment	30	1	5	3.53	1.02
2	are satisfied with the treatment given their wards with disabilities in the school	30	1	5	3.12	0.81
3	are not satisfied with the teaching provided for their children in school	30	1	5	2.89	0.89
4	Think their children should pass	30	1	5	3.74	0.82
5	regard their children as having the same potential as any child without disabilities	30	1	5	3.49	0.95
6	Think that their children should be able to live independent lives in future	30	1	5	3.99	0.87
7	Think that their children should also contribute to national development	30	1	5	3.89	0.85
8	Regard their children performance as satisfactory	30	1	5	3.01	0.75
9	Expect that their children should be able to acquire basic employable skills	30	1	5	4.05	0.88
	Valid N (listwise)	30				

Source: field survey, 2023

55

The data in Table 4.5 show that item 9 (Expect that their children should be able to acquire basic employable skills), 6 (Think that their children should be able to live independent lives in future), and 7 (Think that their children should also contribute to national development) are the key expectations of sending their wards with disabilities to school. Items 9, 6 and 7 had mean scores of 4.05 (SD=0.88), 3.99 (SD=0.87) and 3.89 (SD=0.85) respectively. Based on its score on the 5-point Likert Scale, parents indicated they send their wards with disabilities to school to acquire basic employable skills, so their children can live independent lives and also, contribute to national development.

This was further collaborated by parents of CWD and their children with disabilities themselves. For instance, 66.7% (20 parents) indicated they send their children to school to be able to acquire employable skills' while 33.3% (10) gave 'self-help skills' as the rationale for sending their CWD to school. Also 60.0% (18) of CWD indicated they go to school 'to acquire knowledge and skills. Parents expect their wards to take appointments as teachers, musicians, mechanics and farmers. Whereas CWD also expect to be medical doctors, security officers (police), drivers, teachers and artists.

Results from the same table also indicate parents of children with disabilities send their wards to school because they think their wards should pass (item 4) and know their children need special treatment (item 1). These items 4 and 1 had means scores of 3.74 (SD=0.82) and 3.53 (SD=1.02) respectively. The score of these items on the Likert scale is closer to 'Agree', which has a score of 4; than 'Uncertain' which has a score of 3.

Parents also indicated that, they send their children with disabilities to school to acquire knowledge as well as certify it and also acquire and internalize functional relationship skills to fit into the society particularly the rationale for sending them to schools where inclusive education is practiced. Parents of CWD collaborated results gotten from teachers. The majority of parents, 96.2% (29) indicated they are aware of their children's condition. Primarily parents send children to normal school because it is the only option they know and also because special school is far away making it expensive. According to parents, they send their CWD to normal schools because their children prefer to be in those schools. In a discussion with a parent who was not seeing his expectations in his ward made the following comments.

> *"Frankly speaking I must admit that my ward needs more than I am doing now, but she does not impress me at all in her academic performance and that makes me think she may not improve no matter what, because the teachers have made me to believe that her situation is permanent so I have decided to rather focus on her other siblings who I think can be of help to her in future. The teachers keep saying she can be helped to acquire some skills, but still I don't see any skills she is learning, she is always been assisted by the others so why don't I support them rather so that they can use their skills acquired to continue to help her when they grow and I am no more?"*

Results from the study showed that parents are 'Uncertain' about items 2 (are satisfied with the treatment given their wards with disabilities in the school), 3 (are not satisfied with the teaching provided for their children in school), 5 (expect their children to develop their potential like any other child without disability) and 8 (Regard their children performance as satisfactory). This means parents are not clear about these statements; are satisfied with level of treatment given their children with disabilities in schools, teaching provided to their children, capacity of their children to develop their potentials like any other child and 'regard their children performance as

57

satisfactory'. To some extent parents are confused about how to handle the condition of their children. At the focus group discussions, a expressed her frustrations by making the followings comments.

> *"I have been thinking a lot about my son's education but one thing I can't get right is they learn a lot of things in the school but my ward seems not to be grasping anything apart from the songs they are been taught. The teachers always complain about my child's progress and this make them repeat him in one class for many years. I know I am to make enquiries about a possible way or ways to make him improve but how? Now that the teachers are equally worried, who do I need to seek advice from? Will they even listen to me.* Parent 5

Worse still it occurs some of the teachers are not well prepared to handle some of these issues appropriately. Consequently, some teachers rather worsen the frustration of parents rather coaching them on best approaches to handling their wards difficulties. For instance, in the interview with parents, one 49-year-old father said this.

> *"I love my child so much, he is my last-born child and I am not happy that this condition has befallen him, in fact I will do everything to help revive him but the teachers seem to only focus on the other children whom they claim have no problem. The more I get closer to them to find out any possible way of handling my ward the more the discourage me. One of the teachers once told me to forget of my ward's improvement since the condition is very permanent and rather redirect my resources to my other children without disabilities. This makes me hate the teacher and I am thinking of changing a school for him, but will I get a teacher who is caring enough to handle my son.* Parent 3

Parents indicated, their CWD condition will be better with normal system of education with 66.7% (20) while 33.3% (11) think otherwise. Consequently about 73.3% (22) of parents have ever tried any cure for their child's condition while the 26.7% (8) have never tried any form of cure for their CWD. The majority of CWD,

with 64.0% (16) indicated they did not have problems with their teachers while 36.0% (14) however, indicated they have problems with their teachers.

According to the pupils; first they do not understand their teachers well enough 20.0% (6); they like canning them 33.3% (10); the teacher won't let them speak in class with 20.0% (6); the teacher complains a lot about CWD performance with 16.7% (5) and finally, no response 10.0% (3). In addition, a slight majority of parents, 55.8% (16) also confirmed that their CWD cannot cope with normal teaching strategies while a minority of the parents, 44.2% (14) indicated their wards with disabilities can cope with normal teaching strategies.

Another issue that came up during the focus group discussions is lack of skill on the part of parents on building their expectations for their children based on the interest of the children particularly for the children with disabilities. Many parents have plans for their children without considering the interest and capabilities of their children. This creates a lot of inconvenience between parents and school going children. These situations have often led to dissatisfaction among parents and children. In these cases, either children are forced to do what parents want and eventually not perform well or children stick to what they have passion for and in those cases lose the support these pupils were getting from their parents. Many parents have expressed their frustration in their inability to address these mismatch interest between what parents want as career for their children and what these children are also passionate about. This is where professional advice of the teachers is needed to effectively guide pupils and their parents or guardian.

Overall, parents expect their children to acquire basic employable skills with mean score of 4.05 (SD=0.88); which is supposed to help these children live independent

lives in future with mean score of 3.99 (SD=0.87) and ultimately contribute to personal and national development also with a mean score of 3.89 (SD=0.85). Furthermore 70.0% (21) indicated they send their children to school 'to be able to acquire employable skills' while 16.7% (5) gave 'self-help skills' as the rationale for sending their CWD to school. Also 56.3% (18) of CWD indicated they go to school 'to acquire knowledge and skills. Consequently, parents expect their wards to take appointments as teachers, musicians, mechanics and farmers. Whereas CWD also expect to be medical doctors, security officers (police), drivers, teachers and artist.

4.3 Parental contribution to learning outcomes of CWD

Parental contribution in influencing the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities was also measured using 5-point Likert-type scale. Subsequently, the variable (parents contribution to the learning outcomes of children) was investigated using Likert-type scale where "1" represented "Strongly Disagree", 2, 3,4 and 5 represented Disagree, Uncertain, Agree; Strongly Agree respectively. The results of the nine-point descriptive statics are presented in the table below.

Table 4.6: Parents contribution to the learning outcomes of children

No	Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
	Parents:					
1	provide the educational needs of their wards as required	30	1	5	2.69	1.16
2	are always ready to buy exercise books and pens for their children are ready to pay extra classes fees for their	30	2	5	3.19	1.10
3	children provide teachers more information on how their	30	1	5	2.33	1.12
4	children should be taken care of	30	1	5	2.42	1.08
5	Provide reading books for their children pay PTA levies promptly	30	1	5	2.49	1.09
6	are always ready to undertake self-project for the development of the school	30	1	5	2.23	1.35
7	provide First Aid drugs for their children with disability	30	1	5	2.21	0.99
8	motivate teachers with incentives to better teach their	30	1	5	2.06	1.17
9	children with disabilities	30	1	5	1.91	1.11
	Valid N (listwise)	30				

Total

Source: field survey, 2023

The parents do not contribute in influencing the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities. All the statements were disagreed by the respondents with exception of item 2 (parents are always ready to buy exercise books and pens for their children)

61

which had mean score of 3.19 (SD=1.10) meaning the respondents were uncertain about that statement. This clearly explains that parents minimally contribute to the learning outcomes of the children with disabilities. The provision of exercise books and pens is not adequate to positively influence the learning outcomes of pupils. It can also be inferred that the parent rarely provide uniforms and footwears for their wards. This can be explained by the tattered nature of the clothing of many of the children with disabilities in our schools.

The respondents strongly disagreed with item 9 (motivate teachers with incentives to better teach their children with disabilities). This was further collaborated by the parents and CWD. Similarly, majority of parents contributes to learning outcomes by providing stationery with 50.0% (15) and school uniforms with 20.0% (6) as well both with 30.0% (9) to their children. A male participant in the in mid-fifties said,

> *"It is worrying that as a parent I myself think I am not doing much for my ward with disability. It is partly because sometimes I am not clear and confident about how to handle some of the issues. Truly I am supposed to engage with my wards teacher but I don't do it. I scarcely visit him at school. Even I can't recollect I went back to the headteachers office. Its true that our children need more than the usual but I do not personally do much in the form of by simply even saying thank you to my ward's teacher. I will have change towards the way I engage with the teachers".*

In one instance a parent indicated he used to pay some money to the headteacher so they could provide additional tuition to his child with disability. According to the parent despite the fact that he was honouring his side of the bargain for about a year the service was not quite forth coming and so he had to stop along the line. He said the following during the interview.

62

"All what the teachers request is "money", "pay this or pay that", yet still I don't see any improvement. I quite remember the headteacher told me to make some payment for him to assign one particular teacher to assist my ward to somehow overcome the situation which I did, but I have stopped paying, because after paying for almost a year there was no any sign of improvement. The teacher said he will be coming to the house to for a follow-up but that has not happened and every complaint I personally made was not attended to. I can feel their frustrations about child's performance but what can do?"

Teachers disagreed with items 1 (parents Provide the educational needs of their wards as required), 3 (are ready to pay extra classes fees for their children), 4 (provide teachers more information on how their children should be taken care of), 5 (Provide reading books for their children), 6 (pay PTA levies promptly), 7 (are always ready to undertake self-project for the development of the school) and 8 (provide First Aid drugs for the their CWD). With the exception of item 1 which had a mean score of 2.69 (SD=1.16), the remaining items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 had mean score below 2.5 as they had mean score of 2.33 (SD=1.12), 2.42 (SD=1.08), 2.49(SD=1.09), 2.23 (SD=1.35), 2.21 (SD=0.99) and 2.06 (SD=1.17) respectively. This suggests that parents do not contribute to the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities as respondents disagreed with all the statements that make up the objective three, which is parents contribute in achieving the learning outcomes of their children.

Some supporting issues from the discussions include the following. First parents confirmed that although they provide some needs but there are many other needs of CWD that are left unattended to. According to them they provide food and books. However sometimes they find it difficult to provide the children with the prescribed school uniforms and other basic learning materials (with the exception of pens, pencils and exercise books) that will facilitate learning of children in the homes and also keep them busy. Many of the participants explained they usually find it difficult

63

to pay bills awarded to parents. In a discussion with the headteacher he explained that usually subventions and support from stakeholders come late and so sometimes they require some support from the PTA, which sometimes even take longer before they get that help. The headteacher and the parents both acknowledge parents minimally contribute to teaching and learning of children with disabilities and therefore to the learning outcomes of their children.

Similarly, many of the parents indicated that because of the weak relationship between them and the teachers they are not able to provide more information of their children to teachers. They quickly added that teachers equally do not provide them with information about their children. Additionally, they do not provide reading books for the wards. A reasonable number added that they pay PTA levies sometimes they pay it late. As a result of their payment of PTA levies, they concluded they take part in the development of project for their respective schools. The findings from the discussions confirm the data generated with the Likert-type scale.
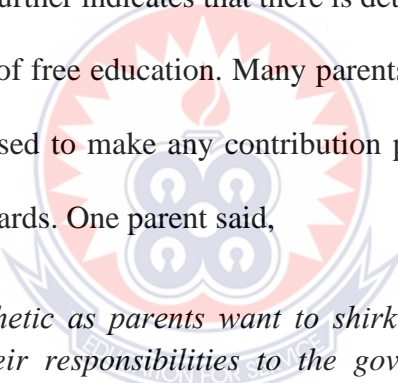
The finding generated from the qualitative study aspect of the study on this objective affirms that the parents do not contribute to the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities as the majority of them largely limit themselves to the provision of exercise books and pens while they leave out equally important responsibilities like the provision of reading and playing materials, descent uniforms, prompt payment of PTA levies and provision of additional information on their wards to teachers.

This confirmed that they do not provide information to teachers. According to 78.2% (23) of the parents, they do not provide the information on their wards to teachers because according to them, it is not necessary and besides the teachers do not demand

for it. Seven (21.8%) indicated although they provide information to the teachers, these teachers do not show interest in it.

Further, parents confirmed item 3 (parents are ready to pay extra classes fees for their children) with a slight majority of parents with 56.7% (17) indicating they pay for extra classes to support their ward's academic performance while 43.3% (13) indicated they do not pay for extra classes. Parents indicated that regular payment of school fees, provision of information about their wards, implementation of suggestions from both parents and teachers, parents' provision of educational needs of their wards will help to enhance the relationship between parents and teachers.

Information generated further indicates that there is deterioration in learning outcomes particularly in the face of free education. Many parents are now getting brain washed that they are not supposed to make any contribution particularly financially towards the education of their wards. One parent said,

> *"In fact, is pathetic as parents want to shirk all responsibilities and to shift their responsibilities to the government and other stakeholders. For instance, if you wait here some time, you see what I mean. School pupils wear very tattered uniforms, pupils that wear slippers and some cases no foot wear at all. In some other situations the pupils or pupils do not have proper uniforms. There are other times when parents provide their wards with money to buy needs like water, food and in the case of those who stay very far away from the school to transport themselves to and back from school. They don't even check on their children whether they come to school or not. In many cases parents do not know the teachers of their children let alone know the class in which their children are located".* Parent 1

The result from the field indicates that parents poorly contribute to the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities. Parents only rarely provide exercise books and pens for their children. Largely, however, parents do not provide required

educational needs of their CWD, fees for extra tuition, additional information on their children, delays in payment of PTA dues resulting in low support for the school, first aid for CWD and incentives for teachers.

4.4 Parent-teacher collaboration in the education of CWD

The third research question, 'how do schools and parents of children with disabilities collaborate to support the education of children with disabilities in the Wa Municipality of Ghana?' was explored qualitatively. The rationale was to understand the areas where parents and teachers could collaborate to assist children with disabilities. The results from this research question are presented in the subsequent paragraphs.

The first issue that came up strongly was poor communication between parents and teachers. Whereas teachers were of the view that the parents do not provide them with adequate information about their wards, parents also accused teachers of not being attentive to them. Consequently, teachers did not have adequate information about pupils. Also, the parents did not get feedback about the progress of their wards from teachers. This was collaborated by data from teachers, parents, CWD and the discussions. A teacher said,

> *"When parents bring their wards and they are admitted. That is the end of it. They will never appear in the school again. Sometimes I don't understand whether parents don't want people to know that it is their ward. They don't know who the child's teachers are and don't also know the class in which the child has been placed. In fact, children with disabilities require a lot of maintenance. And maintenance has cost implication. Parents don't support schools and teachers with the basic logistics to facilitate the training of their wards. It is just difficult. Government already has so much on its hands and so it does not commit resources to vulnerable. So, it gets to a point where we no longer have much time for these children with disabilities. There is a particular girl*

66

in this school with mental disability. Currently she simply roams around the whole school and beg for money from teachers. It's like nobody has time for her including her own parents" Parent 3

The parents also raised some concerns about poor communication of teachers between parents of children with disabilities. One of the parents said,

"Most of the time the teachers seem busy. Many of them don't know our children. There are many instances I have to introduce myself to these teachers. I got bored and so I stopped visiting the teachers. I simply bring my child to school and when it is time for closing I go and pick my child again. The teachers are not able to communicate with us because they don't build good record about our children. They made us to buy files, so they can keep all related information about the progress of our children in it but they seem not be able to maintain good information base about our children. So that is the very reason why we keep introducing ourselves and our wards to them" Parent 6

Another participant added that although he is in good terms with the teachers and also, we have one another's' phone lines and so we talk but I don't see progress in my ward. Most of the things we talk about are not professional issues that help in the development of my child. This was taken up by another participant who said,

"We agree that as parents we are not doing much but we can't do anything that the teachers ask us to do because they are the professionals and they know about handling of children particularly those with disabilities. In fact, anytime I talk with my wards teachers I expect himself to tell me progress about my ward (specific child is mentally retarded) but it is always about money or how complains about how my child misbehaves towards other children. As a result, this time I don't feel like talking to him but I don't get any promising information from them (school and the teachers)" Parent 7

Similarly, data from teachers and parents confirmed that PTAs and SMCs were not effective and so the formal channels for addressing stakeholders' concerns are ruined. The study established that there is poor communication between stakeholders particularly parents and teachers. One of the parents said,

67

"There is poor communication between teachers and pupils with disabilities. Unlike in the past where we used to receive terminal reports from schools about the performance of our wards, it does not exist any longer. We don't get terminal reports for our children without disabilities let alone to talk about our children with disabilities. PTA meetings are scarcely organized and if it happens, the organization is so poor it does not even allow parents to express their concerns. In fact, PTA meetings have barely been reduced to levying of parents and nothing more. You are levied to construct walls, build structures and vehicle for the schools but not basic things like dedicated phones lines to link up with parents, efficient reporting and even use of social media to communicate with parents. The last time I went for a PTA meeting all the talking was done by the teachers rather than parents. It even takes so long for PTA meetings to be organized". Parent 2
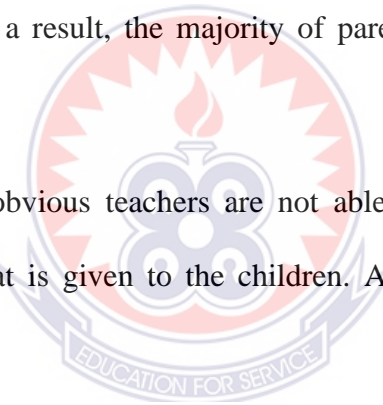
The study also assessed the parent-teacher collaboration in the area of learning outcomes of the CWD. The teachers indicated that although parents have interest in educating their wards, their actions were contrary. According to the teachers many parents do not provide the basic needs of their wards at home to enable to these children with disabilities to learn. They further added that the majority of parents do not support their wards to do their homework or inspect the homework that are given to their children. Parents and CWD also indicated their parents do not facilitate learning at home. In a discussion a mother of CWD said,

"What can we do? If the place to sleep soundly is a problem to my family and so, how can I have time to check on the studies of this mine with disability. Even where the situation is a bit better, I am not educated and so I am not able to do much. It is true that we don't check on what our children learn let alone the task they have brought from school to the house. We have not even guided by the teachers on how to handle these children with disabilities. But you they are the professionals and so they are supposed to guide" Parent 6

Data and statements from the study also confirmed the statement that, parents are not able to provide appropriate guide and support to their children with disability to

68

enhance their knowledge and skills at home. For instance, a female explained that their family stays in the family house and they have access to only two rooms in the house. Consequently, they do not have much control over what their children can or cannot do. Besides the room in which they stay is not adequate for them and so how possible can they look for appropriate place of their CWD. Furthermore, they explained that in the family house where siblings and other extended members stay it is difficult to separate and do certain for them. Such behaviour not encouraged and it is tagged as divisive attitude and so parents try to avoid such actions that attract negative reactions from family members. In conclusion the study established parents are not able provide the encouraging atmosphere at home to enhance the learning outcomes of CWD. As a result, the majority of parents are not able to assist their wards to do homework.

From the results it is obvious teachers are not able to engage parents on how to enhance the support that is given to the children. A female parent indicated in an interview that,

> *"The teachers always look like they are quarrelling with someone. This makes it difficult to talk to them, more so, when the majority of us are not educated in the formal educational system. If you are not careful you will be tagged as 'too known' and this might further worsen your position and the care that your ward receives. It's a bit difficult for us as parents. You don't know exactly what to do or not do. Frankly sometimes I am confused as what is best thing, I can do my ward. In most times I feel I am not doing much for her"* Parent 5

A teacher in one of the focus group discussions confirmed that teachers do not engage parents of pupils so they can support with the upbringing of the children with disabilities. The teacher attributed this state to two conditions. First is poor management in most basic schools and secondly, poor capacity of teachers on

69

handling of children with disability and more in the practice of inclusive education. This was supported by other participants in the focus group. This issue of poor management in basic schools and lack of refresher for teachers came up in four out of five focus group discussions held for this study. With poor management of schools, it was explained that basic resources required to manage the schools are not available. In addition, the teachers explained that basic sanitary resources like soap and other petty that are required for effective care of the children are lacking most of the time. Consequently, there are many instances where basic things like trying to clean a mess caused by one of CWD takes so long to fix. Similarly, they also explained the teachers are not given regular refresher training on how to practice inclusive education. Poor handling of the program does not only draw the children with disability back but also children without disability. The poor knowledge and skills of the teachers result in ineffective and efficient handling of both children with and without disabilities.

The respondents explained many of the headteachers at the basic have not received professional training on effective management and so they are not able to deploy their human resources to meet the needs and concerns of children with disabilities as well as their parents. Just like the weak capacity of headteachers cum administration at the basic level so are the skills of many of the teachers at that level poorly sharpen to handle emerging trends in the educational issues including handling of children with disabilities. For instance, data retrieved from the background information confirms this as many teachers have not received any form of professional training since they completed training colleges. Besides the training the inadequate skills are various facets of the work of these school headteachers. Some of the facets include human resource management, financial management, poor school tone or culture thereby

70

watering down effective teaching and learning in the school, poor networking for funding and other forms of support for the effective and efficient administration of the school.

It also emerged from the focus group discussions that, PTA meetings have virtually been reduced to state for taxing of parents and nothing more. This observation and practice by the school authorities and the leadership of PTAs have also weakened the interest in parents in attending meetings that will create space to bring about collaboration among these stakeholders. However, there were slight differences in the opinions of these respondents. Other respondents indicated in some cases they simply tell them what they want parents to pay for them to provide some services to the children without putting out for discussion. Some verbatim statements captured on these issues are indicated below. First a male participant said the following.

> *"This time anytime they call you for a PTA meeting then you are sure to go for bills to pay. Some of these bills are not even put for discussion, they simply ask us to pay for them to provide some services to our children. Although most of the time the bills are fair as the amounts that are requested by school authorities for parents to pay are not so much. I am saying this because we hear of the amount of money paid by parents of their children in other private schools. Sometimes we pay so much for our other children in private schools. As a result of these monetary responsibilities that are on us, some parents sometimes deliberately avoid or dodge some of these meetings. I am sure that is part of the reason contribute to poor PTA meetings organized by these schools."*
> *Parent* 4

Similarly, some other parents explained they do not think parents have much problem with amount required of them to pay. However, they explained that they do not get the sense that their children are actually getting required mentoring, tuition and services from the teachers and the school authorities. The parent explained that they

71

want their children to grow in the best of adults. He explained besides it is their responsibility take good care of their children. He further made this statement;

> *"I do not have much problem with the amount that we are supposed to pay as fees. But we should be seeing value of the services in our children. When you the value of the services in your children in terms of their academic performance and their attitude, you are even motivated to do more for the school. But where you can see your child is not regular to school because of the way the child is always dressed, his or her attitude and the child don't even full complement of exercise books for notes and class exercises, no papers are presented to showing his or her performance in end of terms exams and worse still there is no form of terminal report that gives progress report on these children. These things do not motivate parents to participate effectively in PTA meetings* Parent 7

Overall, results from the field indicate a weak teacher-parent collaboration to support children with disabilities in the Wa Municipality. Teachers and parents do not collaborate to create innovative ideas to enhance the learning space for CWD. Teachers do not engage parents and so parents have also quietly maintained their distance to the detriment of the children with disabilities. Parents do not also guide their CWD to do their homework and learn their books. In addition, teachers do not make recommendations to parents on best practices of managing the conditions of their wards and in cases there are suggestions recommended by teachers, parents find it difficult to implement. Finally, teachers do not work with parents to identify special needs of their CWD. However, parents support to prepare their children early for school and as well as provide affordable means of transport for their wards.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

In this final chapter, the researcher provides a summary, the key findings, conclusions of the study and finally implications of the study and offer some recommendations.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out parental involvement in the education of children living with disabilities in the Wa Municipality of Ghana. To achieve this purpose, the following research objectives were formulated to guide the study:

1. explore the expectations of parents in the education of their children with any form of disabilities in the Wa Municipality of Ghana.

2. assess the contributions of parents of pupils with disabilities in enhancing learning outcomes of CWD in the Wa Municipality.

3. find out how the partnership between schools and parents supports in the education of children with disabilities in the Wa Municipality.

5.2 Key Findings

The results from the findings revealed that parental expectation of their CWD was largely not met. Secondly, there are poor contributions of parents in inspiring and influencing the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities because of ignorance, weak institutional structures including poor parent teacher collaboration as far as the education of children living with disabilities are concerned.

Finally, it was also revealed that there is poor collaboration between teachers and parents in providing services to CWD. Overall, gaps in legislations, ignorant parents or un-empowered parents, inadequate skills of teachers were responsible for low

73

involvement of parents in decision making, poor influence on the learning outcomes of the CWD and poor collaboration between parents and teachers to enhance services provided to CWD.

5.3 Conclusion

This section of the chapter projects the conclusion made per each objective. It is presented in logical order starting with objective one through to the last objective.

The objective one sought to explore the expectations of parents in the education of their children with any form of disabilities. Overall, parents expect their children to acquire basic employable skills which are supposed to help these children live independent lives in future and ultimately contribute to personal and national development. The study further observed that with the passage of the disability act in Ghana, it provides some framework of what parents of CWD can expect from the immediate family, the community, service providers including schools and the nation as a whole. However, stakeholders tend to be ignorant about many issues related to expectations of parents, teachers and others in provision of services to parents and CWD.

The second objective assessed the contributions of parents of pupils with disabilities in enhancing the learning outcome of children with disabilities. The result from the field indicates that parents poorly contribute to the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities. Parents only provide exercise books and pens for their children. Largely, however, parents do not provide required educational needs of their CWD, fees for extra tuition, additional information on their children, delays in payment of PTA dues resulting in low support for the school, first aid for CWD and incentives for teachers. The study observed poor parental visits to schools and poor support to

74

academic work of CWD at home is largely responsible for poor contribution of parents to learning outcomes of their children with disabilities.

The study accesses how collaborations between parents and teachers could be enhanced to support children with disabilities. Overall, results from the field indicate a weak teacher-parent collaboration to support children with disabilities in the Wa Municipality. These issues were confirmed by parents and children with disabilities. The poor teacher and parent relationship is as a result of weak engagement among the various stakeholders. Poorly empowered parents with low levels of knowledge on issues of disabilities are also contributory factor for the poor relationship and also responsible for this state of poor teacher-parent collaboration.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the study findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were therefore made. The study recommends that parents of CWD should guide and assist their wards to ensure they are not left behind their peers in the classroom and home settings.

The study further recommends that, government need to put in place policies which will look at the needs of children with disabilities as well as provide mechanisms for addressing these issues. This will make these parents become active partners in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities and children in general.

The study recommends that there should be public advocacy to educate the general public on meeting the needs of children living with disabilities. Teachers should undergo continuous professional development to ensure that they are abreast with issues regarding teaching and learning of children living with disabilities.

5.5 Suggestions for further studies

Future researchers can conduct a long-term study to assess the sustained impact of parental involvement on the academic achievement of children living with disabilities kin the Municipality.

Future researchers can investigate the perceptions and attitudes of parents and community members towards the education of children with disabilities within the Wa Municipality and explore how these perceptions may evolve over time and their influence on enrollment, support, and the success of inclusive education.

Future researchers can conduct a research project focused on identifying effective strategies and best practices for overcoming the challenges that children living with disabilities as well as their parents may encounter in their educational journey in the Wa Municipality
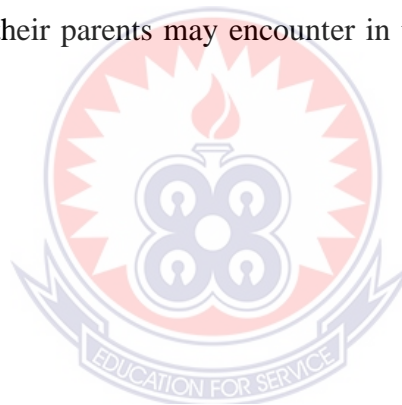
REFERENCE

Abang, T. B. (1992). Special Education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Disability*, Development and Education, 13-18.

Ainscow, M. (2005). Understanding the development of inclusive education system. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 5-20.

Artiles, A. J. (2019). Fourteenth annual Brown lecture in education research: Reenvisioning equity research: Disability identification disparities as a case in point. *Educational Researcher*, *48*(6), 325-335.

Astin, A. (2016, February 14). Student Development Theory. Retrieved December 30, 2017, from Student Development Theory Website:https://studentdevelopmenttheory.weebly.com/astin.html

Astin, A. W. (1984). Student Involvement: A Development Theory for HigherEducation. *Journal of College Student Development*, 517-529.

Awini, A. (2010). Observation of pupils with blindness at the Ghana National Basic School in Cape Coast. *Journal of Special Education*, 40(3), 180-192.

Babbie, E. (2001). *The Practice of Social Research* (9th ed.). Wadsworth.

Babbie, E. (2001). *The practice of Social Research*. New York: Baabarab Britton.

Bakere, C. A. (1992). Integration in Education: The case of education for the learners with disabilities. *International Journal of Special Education*, 225-260.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: W. H. Freeman and Company.

Barnes, M. A., Guttered, D. L., Satter, E. E., & Farrer, S. (1986). Early identification of mental retardation: Recommendations for a national plan. *American Psychologist, 41*(8), 938-944.

Barnyak, N. C., & McNelly, R. J. (2009). Principals' and teachers' perceptions of parental involvement and their influence on the level of parental involvement: A trend analysis (1999-2003). *Educational Administration Quarterly, 45*(2), 268-295.

Bernstein, R. E. (1993). *Parenting the mentally retarded child: A handbook for the effective family*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Blok, H., Peetsma, T. D., & Roede, E. (2007). Increasing the involvment of parents in the education of special-needs children. *The British Journal of Developmental*

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2017). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101.

Bryan, T. (1997). Classroom interactions of students with visual impairments in general education settings. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness, 91*(1), 38-50.

77

Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Caulcrick, E. O. (1998). Handicapped children: Early detection, intervention and education; selected case studies. Paris.

Chavkin, N. F., & Williams, D. L. (1993). *Families and schools in a pluralistic society*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Crumley, R. L. (1991). The prevalence of hearing impairment and reported hearing disability among adults in the United States. *In ASHA* (Vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 137-147).

Doll, E. A. (1994). *Mental retardation: A clinical guide for parents and professionals*. London, England: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Eccles, J. S., & Harold, R. D. (1992). *Parent school involvement during the early adolescent years.* Teachers College Record, 1139-1151.

Epstein, J. L. (1991). Effects on student achievement of teachers' practices of parent involvement. In S. Silvern (Ed.), *Advances in Reading/Language Research: A Research Annual* (Vol. 5, pp. 261-276). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Epstein, J. L. (1992). *School and family partnerships. In A. M, Encyclopedia of Educational Research* (6th ed., pp. 1139-1151). New York: Macmillan.

Epstein, J. L., & Becker, H. S. (1982). Teacher practices and parent involvement in inner-city elementary schools. *The Elementary School Journal, 83*(3), 289-305.

Eskay, M. (2001). *Cultural perceptions of speical education administrators in Nigeria*. Chicago: Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation.

Fan, X., & Chen, M. (2001). Parental involvement and students' academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 13(1), 1-22.

Fan, X., & Chen, M. (2001). Parental involvment and pupils' academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychological Review, 13*, 1-22.

Feuerstein, A. (2000). Parent involvement and school responsiveness: Facilitating the educational process. *School Community Journal, 10*(2), 71-89.

Gadagbui, G. Y. (2010). Inclusive Education in Ghana: Practices, Challenges and the future implications for all stakeholders. *Ghana National Commission for UNESCO,* 45-53.

Georgiou, S. N. (1999). Parental attributions as predictors of involvment and influences on child achievement. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 69*, 409-429.

Ghana Education Service. (2010). *School Managment Committee; Resource Hnadbook.* Accra: Ministry of Education, Ghana.

Greenwood, G. E., & Hickman, C. W. (1991). Research and practice in parent involvement: Implications for teacher education. *Elementary School Journal, 91(*3), 279-288.

Griffith, J. (1998). School climate as group evaluation and its relationship to student achievement and other outcomes. *Journal of Educational Research, 92*(6), 341-357.

Griffith, J. (2000). School climate as group evaluation and its relationship to school outcomes. *Review of Educational Research, 70*(1), 273-320.

Grolnick, W. S., & Slowiaczek, M. L. (1994). Parents' involvement in children's schooling: A multidimensional conceptualization and motivational model. *Child Development, 65*(1), 237-252.

Gronlick, W. B., & Slowiaczek, M. L. (1994). The ecology of parental involvement in schooling. *Educational Psychologist, 29*(1), 27-35.

Groove, R. M., Couper, M. P., & Tourangeau, R. (2004). *Survey Methodology*. New Jersey: Wiley-Interscience.

Grossman, H. J. (1983). *Mental retardation: An introduction to intellectual disability* (Vol. 7). Elsevier.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1995). Parental involvement in children's education: why does it make a difference? Teachers College Records. *Journal of Educational Research, 97*, 310-331.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1995). Parental involvement in children's education: Why does it make a difference? *Teachers College Record, 97*(2), 310-331.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? *Review of Educational Research, 67,* 3-42.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? *Review of Educational Research, 67*(1), 3-42.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Bassler, O. C., & Brissie, J. S. (1992). Explorations in parent school relations. *Journal of Educational Research, 85*, 287-294.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Walker, J. M., Jones, K. P., & Reed, R. P. (2002). Teachers involving parents (TIP): Results of an in-service teacher education program for enhancing parental involvement. *Teaching and Teahcer Education, 18,* 843-867.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Walker, J. M., Sandler, H. M., Whetsel, D., Green, C. L., Wilkins, A. S., & Closson, K. E. (2005). Why do parents become involved? Research findings and implications. *The Elementary School Journal, 106*(2), 105-130.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Walker, J. M., Sandler, H. M., Whetsel, D., Green, C. L., Wilkins, A. S., & Closson, K. E. (2005). Why do parents become involved? Research findings and implications. *The Elementary School Journal, 106*(2), 105-130.

Hughes, D. C., Huang, S., Rundle, A. G., Licht, B. G., & Rundle, A. (2005). Parental perceptions of school safety: A research note. *Urban Education, 40*(1), 98-107.

Huss-Keeler, R. L. (1997). Teacher perception of ethnic and linguistic minority parental involvement and its relationships to children's language and literacy learning: A case study. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 13*, 171-182.

John Rowntree Foundation. (2001). Retrieved July 25, 2016, from findings: *www.jrf.org.uk*

Kahn, J. H. (2018). *Multivariate Statistics*. Routledge.

Karma, R. (1999). *Research Methods*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Kirk, S. A., Gallagher, J. J., & Anastasiow, N. J. (1993). *Educating exceptional children* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Kirk, S. A., Glagher, J. J., Anastasiow, N. J., & Coleman, M. R. (2006). *Educating exceptional children* (10th ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Kothari, C. R. (2005). *Research Methodology Methods and Techniques*. New Age International Publishers: New Delhi.

Kreuger, L. W., & Neuman, W. L. (2006). *Social Work Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches with.* New York: Research Navigator, Pearson Educational, Inc. USA.

Kumar, R. (1999). *Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners*. Sage Publications.

Kwame, A. (2002). *Views of teachers on inclusive education*. Accra: Unpublished Dissertation of Master of Education.

Levy, P. S., & Lemeshow, S. (2013). *Sampling of Populations: Methods and Applications* (4th ed.). Wiley.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage Publications.

MacDaniel, C., & Gates, R. H. (1996). *Marketing Research* (5th ed.). Wiley.

Mcbride, R. (2010). *Education and training policy support programme: Inclusive education policy in Botswana, Draft Report*. Lesotho: Unpublished manuscriptsubmitted to Minsitry of Education and Skills Development.

McDaniel, C., & Gate, R. (1996). *Contempoary Marketing Research* (3rd ed.). New York: West Publishing Company.

Mcgonigel, K., Kaufman, P., & Johnson, L. (1991). *Individualized family service plan: A handbook for parents and service providers*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

Michigan Department of Education. (2011). "*Collaborating for Success" Parent Engagement Toolkit. Michigan: Parent Engagement Committee, Michigan Department of Education.*

Ministry of Education. (2001). *Special Policy on Special Education in Nigeria*. Abuja: Ministry of Education.

Mittler, P. (2005). The global context inclusive education: the role of the United Nations. In D. Mitchell, *Contextualizing inclusive education* (pp. 22-36). London: Routledge.

Montgomery, K. C. (2009). *Generation digital: Politics, commerce, and childhood in the age of the Internet*. MIT press.

Nwaogu, P. O. (1988). The provision of the national policy on speical education in Nigeria. Ibadan: Fountain Books Ltd.

Obiakor, F. R. (2001). Cultural and socio-economic factors affecting speical education. *International Journal of Special Education*, 271-278.

Ocloo, D., Wartemberg, E. J., & Mensah, M. (2002). Understanding the reactions of parents to the birth of a visually impaired child. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness, 96*(8), 563-575.

Onwuebgu. (2001). *Parents, their children and schools*. Ibadan: Westview Press.

Paul, P. V., & Quingley, S. P. (1990). Classification of hearing impairment. *The Laryngoscope, 100*(10), 1106-1111.

Proctor, T. (2000). *Essentials of Marketing Research*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

Pryor, J., & Ampiah, J. G. (2003b). Listening to voices in the village: Collaborating through data chains. In B. Swadener, & K. Mutua, *Decolonizing educational research* (pp. 30-38). Albany: New York State University Press.

Russell, F. (2003). The expectations of parents of disabled children. *British Journal of Special Education,* 144-149.

Sanders, M. G., & Epstein, J. L. (2000). Building school-family-community partnerships in middle and high schools. In G. S. M, Schooling pupils placed at risk: *Research, policy and practice in the education of poor and minority adolescents* (pp. 339-361). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Schneider, B., & Coleman, J. (1993). *Parents, their children, and schools*. Boulder, CO.

Schrick, J. (1992). *Building bridges from school to home: Getting parents involved in secondary education*. Domican: Unpublished Masters Thesis.

Selcuk, R. S. (2018). *Understanding Pragmatism in Research: A Practical Approach*. Sage Publications.

Sheldon, S. B. (2002). Parents' social networks and beliefs as predictors of parent involvement. *The Elementary School Journal*, 102(4), 301-316.

Singh, Y. (2007). *Fundamental of Research Methodology and Statistics*. New Age International.

Snow, J. (2007). The importance of inclusion and the need to belong: Comparative insights from Ghana. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 99(3), 564-578.

Sopeneh, M. A. (2006, December). *PTAs handover of school block to school authorities*. Retrieved February 30, 2016, from www.ghanaweb.com

Spera, C., Wentzel, K. R., & Matto, H. C. (2009). Parental aspirations for their children's educational attainment: Relations to ethnicity, parental education, children's academic performance, and parental perceptions of school climate. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 38*(8), 1140-1152.

Spivak, L., Sokol, H., & Marquardt, T. (2000). Early detection and intervention of hearing impairment in children: Newborn hearing screening. *Early intervention for hearing impaired children, 10,* 1-8.

Teddie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (1998). *Mixed Methodology: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Sage Publications.

Thwala, S. K., Ntinda, K., & Hlanze, B. (2015). Lived Experiences of Parents' of Children with Disabilities in Swaziland. Swaziland: Redfame.

Tredgold, A. F. (1937). *Mental deficiency* (3rd ed.). London, England: Balliere, Tindall & Cox.

UNESCO. (2000, December 12). *Dakar Framework for Action. Education for All: Meeting our Collective Committments*. Retrieved September 11, 2010, from unesdoc.unesco.org: http://undesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/00121147e.pdf United Nations. (1998, February 21). All human rights for all. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948-1998). Retrieved June 20, 2008, from www.un.org: http://www.un.org/overview/rights.htm

Walker, J. M., Wilkins, A. S., Dallaire, J. R., Sandler, H. M., & Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. (2005). Parental involvement: Model revision through scale development. *The Elementary School Journal, 106*(2), 85-104.

Washington, A. (2011). *A national study of parental involvement: Its trends, status, and effects on school success*. Western Michigan University, 1-206.

Welman, J. C., & Kruger, S. J. (2004). *Research Methodology for the Business and Administrative Sciences*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

World Bank. (2009). Decentralized decision making in schools: The theory and evidence and in school-based management. Washington DC: *The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development /* The World Bank.

World Health Organization. (n.d.). Grades of hearing impairment. WHO/PDH/91.1, 6.

Young, C. (1981). *Cooperatives and Development: Agricultural Politics in Ghana and Uganda.* Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press.

Ziebart, B. (2005). *Supporting parents as active partners in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities. Adelaide: Department of the School of Education at Flinders University.*

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

TOPIC: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.

I would appreciate it very much if you answer these questions frankly. The purpose of this study is purely academic. I assure you that your responses will be treated as confidential and completely anonymous (you will not be identified in any way). Whatever information you provide will only be used for the purposes of this study and thus will not be used for any other purpose. Thank you

INTRODUCTION: Please read the following questions and answer them appropriately by either a tick or a brief answer.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Gender 1) Male 2) Female

2. Qualification 1) Professional 2) Non professional

3. No of years teaching experience………………………………

4. Class…………………………………………………………………

5. What kind of methodology do you employ in teaching children with any of the disabilities? …………………………………

84

SECTION B: PARENTAL EXPECTATION IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

1	2	3	4	5			
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree			

No.	Statement	Scale				
	Parents:					
1	know that their children need special treatment	1	2	3	4	5
3	are satisfied with the treatment given their wards with disabilities in the school	1	2	3	4	5
4	are not satisfied with the teaching provided for their children in school	1	2	3	4	5
5	Think their children should pass	1	2	3	4	5
6	Regard their children as having the same potentials as any child without a disability	1	2	3	4	5
7	Think that their children should be able to live independent lives in future	1	2	3	4	5
8	Think that their children should also contribute to national development	1	2	3	4	5

9	Regard their children performance as satisfactory	1	2	3	4	5
10	Expect that their children should be able to acquire basic employable skills	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	Disagree	uncertain	agree	Strongly agree	

No.	Statement	Scale				
	Parents:					
1	Provide the educational needs of their wards as required	1	2	3	4	5
3	are always ready to buy exercise books and pens for their children	1	2	3	4	5
4	are ready to pay extra classes fees for their children	1	2	3	4	5
5	provide teachers more information on how their children should be taken cared of	1	2	3	4	5

86

6	Provide reading books for their children	1	2	3	4	5
7	Pay PTA levies promptly	1	2	3	4	5
8	Are always ready to undertake self-project for the development of the school	1	2	3	4	5
9	Provide First Aid drugs for their children with disability	1	2	3	4	5
10	Motivate teachers with incentives to better teach their children with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: PARENTAL COLLABORATION WITH TEACHERS IN THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN

1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	Disagree	uncertain	agree	Strongly agree	

No.	Statement	Scale				
	Parents:					
1	Collaborate with teachers in the education of their children	1	2	3	4	5
3	Collaborate in the form ideas to the education of their children	1	2	3	4	5

87

4	Always respond to the call of the teachers	1	2	3	4	5
5	Guide their children in doing their exercise	1	2	3	4	5
6	Implement suggestions from teachers	1	2	3	4	5
7	Ensure that their children read their books before they sleep	1	2	3	4	5
8	Prepare their children early for school	1	2	3	4	5
9	Provide affordable means of transport for their children	1	2	3	4	5
10	Work with school authorities to identify children's special needs so as to address them	1	2	3	4	5
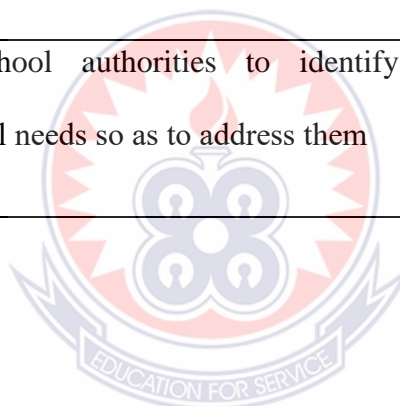
APPENDIX B

GUIDE FOR PARENTS

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Age of respondent …………………..

2. Gender of respondent 1) Male [ ] 2) Female [ ]

3. Educational level of respondent: 1) Non-formal [ ] 2) Primary [ ] 3) Middle/JHS [ ]

4) S.H.S [ ] 5) Tertiary [ ] 6) None [ ]

4. Marital status of respondent: 1) Single [ ] 2) Married [ ] 3) Separated [ ]

4)Widowed [ ]

5. Number of children with disabilities 1) one [ ] 2) two [ ] 3) three and above [ ]

SECTION B: PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS WITH REGARDS TO ACADEMIC OUTCOMES IN THE EDUCATION OF THEIRCHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.

6. Are you aware of your child's condition? ……1) Yes[ ] 2) No [ ]

7. What kind of disability/challenge is your ward having? (Mental) (Visual) (Hearing)

other...

8. Have you ever tried any cure for the child's condition?......1) Yes [ ] 2) No[ ]

9.Do you think your child's condition will get better with the normal system of

education? 1. (Yes) 2, (No)

89

10.   Why   did   you   send   your   child   to   the   normal

school?..

11. Do you think your child will pass his or her examination in view of his condition?

1.Yes [ ] 2 No [ ]

12. Have the teachers suggested any other options for your child's education? 1. Yes
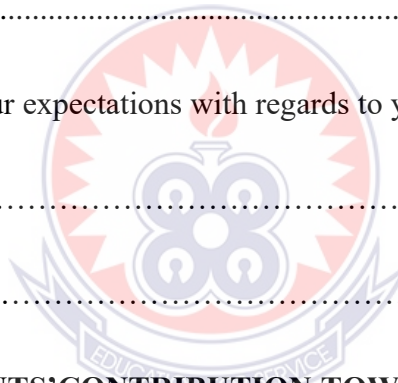
2.

No.

13. What job opportunities do you expect for your ward in

future?...

14. Please what are your expectations with regards to your child's academic

performance?……………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

SECTION C: PARENTS'CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THEIR CHILDRENS'

EDUCATION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

16 What kind of school is your child attending? 1) Private [ ] 2) Public [ ]

17 Do you pay school fees for your CWD? …………1) Yes [ ] 2) No [ ]

18 Do you contribute towards the development of child's school? 1) yes [ ] 2) No [ ]

19 What are you expected to provide with respect to your ward' education?

....

20 Do you provide information about your child to the teachers? 1) Yes 2)No

21 Do you assist or seek for someone to help your ward with his/her homework? 1,

Yes 2, No

22 How do you motivate your ward to enhance academic successes in the school and

in the home?

....

SECTION D: COLLABORATION BETWEEN TEACHERS AND PARENTS

23 Do you visit your ward when at school? 1) Yes 2) No.

24 Do you suggest to the teachers how you would wish your child to be handled?

1), Yes 2), No

25 Do you think your child can cope with the normal teaching strategies?

1), Yes 2), No.

26 What kind of issue about your child do you wish to discuss with the teachers?

....…………………………….....................................

27 Is there some form of collaboration between you and the teachers to bring about a

positive learning outcome in your child? 1) Yes[ ] 2) No [ ] 2, No

28 Does your ward demonstrate or put into practice what is taught at the school?

1, Yes 2, No

29 Do you pay extra classes' fee for your ward's educational performance?

1, Yes 2, No

30 What do you think can be done to improve the existing relationship between you

and the school authorities? …………………………………………………

APPENDIX C

GUIDE FOR PUPILS

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PUPILS WITH DISABILITY

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. What is your name?...

2. How old are you?...

3. What is your disability?

4. How long have you been in this school?..

5. In which class are you?..

SECTION B: PUPILS EXPECTATIONS IN SCHOOL.

6. Why are you in this school? ………………….…………………………………..

7. Do you always do the same exercise with your peers? 1)Yes ( ) 2)No ( )

8. Do you have friends in the school? Yes ( ) No ( )

9. Have you been having problems with your teacher? 1)Yes ( ) 2)No ( )

10. What about your teacher that you don't like?

11. What do you want to become in future?...

12. How do you think you can achieve that?...

SECTION C: IMPROVING TEACHER/STUDENT RELATIONSHIP.

19. What is your teacher's behavior towards you? 1) Good. 2) Bad.

20. How do you please your teacher in class? ....

21. What do you think can be done to improve the relationship between you and your teacher? …………………………………………………………………………

22. Gender of respondent. 1.) Male 2.) Female

92