

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**TEACHERS' ATTITUDES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAY-  
BASED CURRICULUM IN SAWLA-TUNA-KALBA DISTRICT**



**WILFRED YELELAGEE  
(220012845)**

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of the requirements for the award of the degree of  
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## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

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

**Signature**.....

**Date**.....

### Supervisor's Declaration

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

**Supervisor Name:** Mr. Samuel Richard Ziggah

**Signature**.....

**Date**.....



## **DEDICATION**

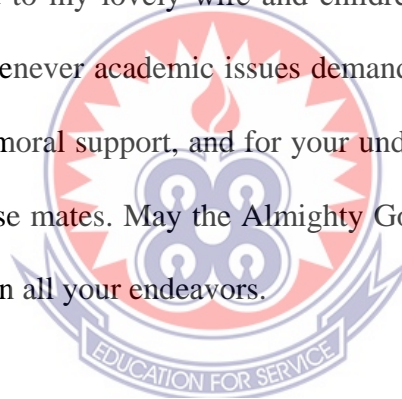
I dedicate this thesis to my parents of blessing memory and all of my love ones.



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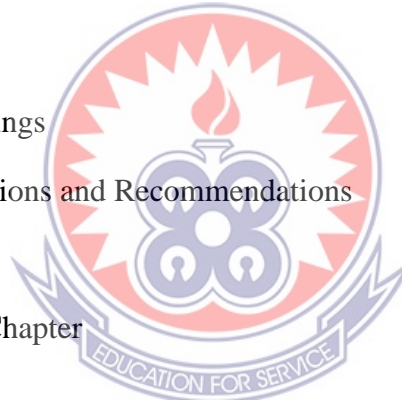
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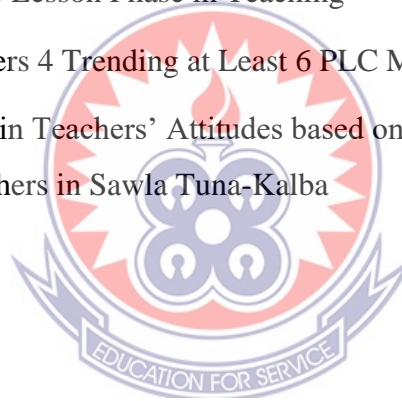
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose, of the study was to find out teachers attitudes in the implementation of the Standards play- Based Curriculum in Sawla -Tuna-Kalba District in the Savanna Region of Ghana in selected Kindergarten (KG) and basic Schools. The target population consisted of seventy (70) public pre-schools with one hundred and twenty-five (125) teachers in the Sawla-Tuna-Kalba district. The study used census sampling techniques to select hundred (100) teachers from the study population. A structured questionnaire was developed in line with the study objectives. Statistical tools of Means, frequencies and standard deviation used to analyze the data. The research design engaged was the descriptive survey was used for a conclusive analysis with ninety -eight (98) percentage returned rate of all questionnaires. The study therefore recommends that for there to be effective implementation of the ECE policy in the country especial Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District, there is the need to ensure that all the teachers and managers are aware of the policy, the required ECE resources are made available to support the program, the teachers are motivated and effectively equipped with the required skills and knowledge to be able to manage the ECE centers and programs and that the community must be well sensitized to ensure that the negative attitudes does not influence the implementation of the early childhood education policy. The findings of the study were beneficial to all the pre-school in the county. The teachers and the ministry of education will also shed light on policy issues that influence the management of the ECE programmes.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

The introductory chapter takes a look at the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions significance of the study, delimitation of the study, definition of operational terms and organization of the work.

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Standards Play-Based Curriculum plays a major role in influencing the belief and attitudes of teachers. In fact, it deals with the sensitive field of human behavior. The Standards-Play-Based Curriculum (SBC) for Kindergarten (KG) to Primary 6 for the early childhood curriculum was developed by National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and rolled out in September 2019. In term one of the 2022 academic year, NaCCA collaborated with Ghana Education Service (GES) and the Reform Secretariat to monitor the attitude of Implementation of the Standard-Based Curriculum.

Change in an educational establishment is a complex phenomenon (GES, 2019). Its success lies in the attitude and perception and experience of the change agents particularly the teacher. Sarfo (2020) assumed that the teaching experience may have a positive effect on the implementation of the curriculum. The results of their study proved that teachers experience did not influence the implementation of standard-based curriculum. Also, Hasan (2019) investigated the effects of teacher professional characteristics on student achievement in Turkey and concluded that teaching experience of school's teachers yielded no significant result. Interestingly, Ndirangu (2020) attributed the successful implementation of a science education curriculum to the positive attitude of teachers and head teachers who had the requisite knowledge

and skills to teach. Therefore, it is argued that the main task of the effective implementation of change is to equip the teacher with the required knowledge and skills. However, due to poor planning, many workers resist changing making it difficult for Policy makers to implement educational reforms successfully. It is argued that educational change in most of the cases takes approximately five years to be completely implemented. This seems to take a long time as policymakers seldom recognize teachers' efforts regarding implementation of change of attitude. This would consequently lead to time-consuming, waste of resources and futility particularly at the initial stage of the implementation.

In consideration of teachers' effectiveness in facilitating change, their attitude is mostly dominated by resistance. Studies have acknowledged the need to identify what kind of resistance that teachers entail and how they could be dealt with (Agyei, 2019). Teachers' Attitude In this study, an attitude refers to the teachers' concern and perception towards the implementation of standards play-based curriculum. The findings of different studies conducted locally and internationally were reviewed in this study on teachers' attitudes. GES (2020) found that teachers with more experience exhibit negative attitudes towards curriculum reform than their counterparts with less work experience. Perhaps this finding was revealed because the study was focused on teachers' attitude in Standards-Based Curriculum, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) where specialization is required. Also, a similar finding was made by GES, (2019) that majority of KG and basic school teachers who had served for many years in the teaching profession in Sawla Tuna-Kalba District (STKD) showed a negative attitude towards a new curriculum. This was revealed because they felt the old curriculum that was operating in 2019 was appropriate than the new one.



Khalid (2019) further found that school teachers' attitude towards education Standards-based curriculum in Sawla Tuna-Kalba District (STKD) was inappropriate. This phenomenon was attributed to the limited timeframe and inadequate resource in the implementation process. A study conducted by Liauh (2019) revealed that the attitude of teachers can be influenced by their gender and level of experience in education. Stanley (2020) asserted that elementary teachers in Sawla Tuna-Kalba District had a positive attitude towards the Danielson model then secondary school teachers.

The reason was attributed to differences in grade level doubled with content specifics. Fox Norwitz (2019) further found that some dimensions of educational leadership alternate the trust level, support system and structure are essential for developing teachers' attitude. Many studies have investigated teachers' attitude towards Standards-Based Curriculum and have concluded that educational reforms which aims were compatible with teachers' attitude were capable of achieving maximum outcomes (Levitt. 2019). Also, Sarfo (2020) examined 'concerns of teachers about the implementation of information and communication technology curriculum in basic education in Sawla Tuna-Kalba District in the Savannah Region of Ghana' and concluded that female basic school teachers have more concerns about the implementation of standard-base curriculum than male teachers. Also, Al shammary (2019't found that female teachers in Sawla Tuna-Kaiba District showed higher concern at collaboration and information stages and low attitude at the awareness stage than their male counterpart.

It can be seen from the foregoing review of related literature that many countries have undergone different curriculum reforms. Many of the studies tax used on teachers' attitude and perception towards the implementation of reform in an educational establishment: However. The researchers did not come across a study that investigated teachers' attitude toward standard-based curriculum particularly in Sawla Tuna-Kalba District in the Savannah Region of Ghana. This suggests that the present study is essential. Perhaps the findings would help the policy makers and the curriculum developers to modify a successful implementation in schools in achieving quality education for all.

Globally, the importance of education cannot be underestimated in a rapidly changing human society and technological advancement. The United States National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines early childhood as the ages before the age of eight. It is a period from birth to age eight (UNESCO, 2014). The early years of a child development are very important not only because they lay the foundation basis for human development but also because experiences children are exposed to during that period have a lasting influence in childhood. Successful early childhood care and stimulation curriculum lay the foundation for creativity, imagination, self-reliance and survival of the child (Craft, 2003). A person future potential is better exploited when proper attention, care and support are accorded as early as possible in one's life. Empirical research findings indicate that the nature of care given to children in the first eight years is directly linked to an individual's health and productivity during childhood and socio-economic development of a society as a whole (Fogel, 2004).

Moreover, the type and quality of education provided, and the level of technological and socio-economic development of a country is highly interrelated. This is because the quality of education influences the level of socio-economic development of a country, (The Smith Institute, 2005) making it imperative for nations to strive to provide good quality education for their citizens at all levels including early childhood. In Ghana and Africa as a whole, Early Childhood Education was previously taken as the responsibility of parents and families and not the state. (Chase-Lansdale, Wakschlag & Brooks-Gunn, 2010). This makes it difficult for one to find tangible document and evidence on how early Childhood Education has evolved over the years. Early Childhood Education interventions in Ghana can however be traced to as early as the 1950s. The focus at that time was largely on the provision of care to young children before starting class one. Ghana and Africa for that matter has a well-organized traditional education and welfare system. The community ensured that every child born was brought up according to its social and values knowledge, skills and attitudes (Cungua, Said, Wallhäger & Ngie, (2003). As a result of the importance the various communities attached to the education of their children, they contributed all the necessary knowledge and skills resources to ensure that the children were well equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills for their lives (Cungua, Said, Wallhäger & Ngie, (2003). To enable them contribute meaningfully to social, economic and technological development of their societies.

The researcher is of the view that these beliefs and values of the traditional set up have broken down due to prevailing dynamic social changes. Many young people do not benefit from what used to be available from the community. In most cases, most parents do not have sufficient knowledge, skills and proper attitudes for bringing up their children. The changing economic climate also forces both parents to rely on

paychecks (salary or wages) from outside has made this problem worse. As a result, children are frequently left alone or in the hands of unskilled babysitters for most of the day. There are no grandparents or other community members to look after their nuclear households. In actuality, there are less or fewer extended families. This prompted the government to get involved in early childhood education as soon as possible and the creation of preschools to serve the children, as well as the necessity for the education of children in the early years of their life.

Contentious efforts were made to kick start Early Childhood Education in Ghana and Africa as a whole. During the early years in the 1950s, UNESCO supported the Early Childhood programmers of the World Organization for Early Childhood Education that focuses on children between the ages of 0 and 8. International initiatives to advance a child's right to education began in the early 1970s, and UNESCO started taking a more active role in the field of early childhood education, particularly in the areas of parent education and pre-primary education. Early Childhood Programs were increasingly seen as a problem outside the purview of conventional education by 1979. Establishing a comprehensive early childhood strategy and cultivating an atmosphere of a child's learning self-expression were given more priority. This led to the coining of the term Early Childhood Care and Education to describe all the activities for preschool children at the UNESCO sponsored international consultation on preschool education in November 1981 (UNESCO, 2014) At UNESCOs 25<sup>th</sup> General conference in 1989, delegates agreed that the organization should embark on young child and the family environment project to coordinate all the activities undertaken by UNESCO to benefit preschool children and their families. This project formed the basis of the early childhood section with UNESCOs Division of Basic Education (UNESCO, 2014). This section has the mission to safeguard and

promote the development of young children and to ensure their smooth transition from home to early childhood centers and later to primary education.

In Ghana, Early Childhood Education was included in the Basic Education system in 2007. Even though there were Early Childhood Education Policies in place to support Early Childhood Education, the majority of Early Childhood Education was managed by private persons before the 2007 Educational Reforms. Private schools and international schools became more prevalent in Ghana as a result, private organizations such as neighborhood association, churches and private providers account for more than half of total Early Childhood Education students' enrolment (García, Heckman & Ziff, (2018). Over time the government has limited control over and no mandate due to the communities and private sector providing Early Childhood Education service on their own. The provision of Early Childhood Education services by the communities and private sector alone created a chaotic situation over the years where the government had very little control or mandate for coordination, control and support of the centers. No wonder challenges of quality and access especially among children in rural communities have continued to the present time (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013).

In Ghana, most of the kindergarten schools were established by private individuals who wanted to do business and some NGOs. This resulted in schools sited in urban communities where enrolment was high and so majority of poor and rural communities did not benefit from their services (Ayebah, 2009). The increase in the number of private schools was partly due to the crumbling nature of public schools in the country at that time and this brought about the urgent need for the government to find an alternative form of education for Ghanaian children. It was observed that

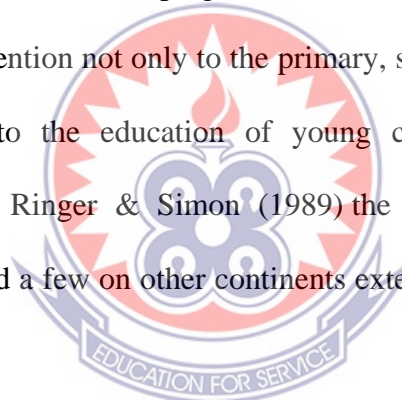
during that period of time there seemed to be no standard curricula or activities, nor was there any guideline from the Ministry of Education on pre-school education in Ghana. Even in the elementary school section these private schools followed no guidelines from the Education Ministry; it was free for all and very chaotic indeed with respect to what is taught and how it is taught.

In January, 2002 the government set up a committee to review the entire educational system of the country with the view to arriving at decisions that would make the educational system responsive to the challenges of the twenty-first century. Working under the theme “Meeting the Challenges of Education in the Twenty First Century,” the Committee came out with a comprehensive report dealing with current issues affecting access to quality and relevant education in the country (Ghana Education Service, 2004). The President’s Education Review Committee was of the view that “The philosophy underlying the educational system in Ghana should be the creation of well balanced (intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically) individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills, values and aptitudes for self-actualization and for the socioeconomic and political transformation of the nation”. The basic education underwent drastic reforms to include the basic compulsory education system (Brunner, 1993). Consequently, education for children aged 4-6 years became an integral part of the formal educational system in Ghana in 2003, following recommendations from the President's Committee on Review of Education Reforms about the importance of early childhood development.

According to Donkor, Early Childhood Education therefore has become an integral part of our basic education for teaching pre-school children and has been made compulsory before proceeding primary school (Moss, 2018). The government in his

bid to enhance quality pre-school education in the country and to improve the developmental readiness for learning of children aged 4-5 years, has mandated the District Assemblies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) churches and communities to provide resources to support the expansion of kindergarten facilities. It was the aim of the government that every child in Ghana has access to quality kindergarten education and to ensure that all primary school children have basic education that is rooted in good kindergarten training.

Pre-school education as the researcher understand aims at helping children in the early childhood stage to develop their skills especially using their hands in making things, thus unearthing and developing their hidden talents. Nowadays, quite many countries have paid attention not only to the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of education, but also, to the education of young children below primary level. According to Müller, Ringer & Simon (1989) the educational systems of many countries in Europe and a few on other continents extend downwards to include early childhood education.



Raffaele and Knoff (1999) also argue that in the modern education system, the child has to pass through nursery, early childhood, primary, and secondary school systems from which he/she extends to colleges and/or university. Curriculum change can be described as the transformation of the curriculum scheme such as goals and objectives, content, design or it could be done in more minor sense by modifying the curriculum, such as changing the learning activities and adding one more topic to the curriculum (Chee, Mariani, Kadir, & Salim, 2015). In fact, to educate society towards the changes in the world, curriculum change is inevitable (Karki, 2014). It can be observed that curriculum change, however, standing alone is not adequate for



providing a high quality of education, rather, I think there is a need for good implementers of those developed curriculums. In that sense, teachers are the principal actors who transfer all that theoretical information into real classroom setting, whenever there is an implementation of a new curriculum, the issue of preschool teachers' attitude in the implementation of the standards play-based curriculum is triggered

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Early Childhood Education is crucial to the government's efforts to give children in this nation, free, basic education that is both required and of high quality. The cornerstone for all education, especially basic education should be early childhood development (Mwai & Maseno, 2003). I therefore think, it is the responsibility of the stakeholders to establish a supportive learning environment for laying a solid foundation for our childhood school with the necessary learning environment and relevant materials to facilitate skills development and successful implementation of early childhood curriculum to ensure easy integration of early childhood children into primary schools. The main aim of early childhood education is to promote the physical, mental, emotional, and social development of young children, thus preparing them for the future of primary education.

Habtamu (1996) has discovered that most of the preschools that are currently functioning have not been built for the purpose of early childhood program, but rather for such purposes as residence, offices, and others, as a result of which they are often overcrowded. Yismaw (2022) also states that the main objective of preprimary education is the all-rounded development of children in order to prepare them for formal schooling. In support of this, World Health Organization, (2018) has stated



that early childhood education requires high investment and trained human power; the teachers should have real affection for children; the educational and recreational materials have to be adequately supplied; and there have to be facilities that allow children to rest when they are tired and hungry.

The ultimate aim of Teachers' Attitude in the Implementation of the Standards play-Based Curriculum in Sawla Tuna-Kalba District in the Savanna Region of Ghana like that of education in general, is the development of the total personality of the individual: cognitive. Affective and psychomotor domains. However, in Teachers' Attitude in the Implementation of the Standards Play-Based Curriculum in Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District instruction, the types of outcomes which, in fact, receive the highest priorities are verbal-conceptual in nature (i.e. cognitive) and psychomotor skills, invariably, in evaluating the outcomes of teaching. The general tendency is to over-emphasize acquisition of knowledge and sometimes skills to the neglect of that of attitudes and values. It is therefore the desire of the researcher to find out the extent to which the affective outcomes of teaching are assessed by the Teachers' Attitude in the Implementation of the Standards Play-Based Curriculum in Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District. Teachers use the affective objectives and follow the appropriate methods of assessing affective outcomes of teachers' attitude.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were to find out teachers attitudes in the effective implementation of the Standards Play- Based Curriculum by head teachers, teachers and curriculum leads and how they were implementing the Standards Play Based Curriculum with 15 sampled schools throughout the Sawla -Tuna-Kalba district.

It focused on four (4) thematic areas:

1. Training on Standards Play Based Curriculum

- Head teachers.
- Teachers
- Curriculum leads

2. Delivery:

- Integration of Assessment for Learning
- Use of creative pedagogies
- Effective use of the phases of lesson delivery

3. Challenges associated with the standards play- based curriculum implementation

**1.4 Research Questions**

1. What attitudes do early childhood and basic school teachers have towards the implementation of the standards Play- based curriculum?
2. To what extent do experience difference of KG and basic school teachers influences their attitudes towards the implementation of standards play-based curriculum?
3. To what extent will qualification of basic school teachers influence their attitudes towards the implementation of the standards play -based curriculum?

Teachers' Attitude in the Implementation of the Standards Play-Based Curriculum in Sawla- Tuna- Kalba District in the Savannah Region of Ghana helps learners to grow in their understanding sensitivity to the physical and social forces at work around them in order that to shape their lives in harmony with those forces. One basic and crucial goal of Teachers' Attitude in the Implementation of the Standards Play-Based Curriculum in Sawla -Tuna-Kalba District in the Savannah Region of Ghana is

citizenship education, where students must learn how citizens in a society make decisions on issues that affect their destiny.

The objectives of Teachers' Attitude in the Implementation of the Standards Play-Based Curriculum in Sawla Tuna-Kalba District in the Savana Region of Ghana can be classified into three categories.

1. Understandings - those that deal with knowledge and knowing.
2. Attitudes - those that deal with values, appreciation, ideals and feelings and
3. Skills - those that deal with using and applying Standards Play-Based Curriculum learning and ability to gain' learning (GES. 2020).

In simple terms, the objectives of the attainment of the basic Standards-Based Curriculum goal of early childhood education cover the cognitive, affective and psychomotor areas the affected area deals with feelings, attitudes, emotions and values. The psychomotor domain is concerned with the development of manipulative skills. Standard-Based Curriculum have to do with the development of the “reflective, concerned and competent citizens” (Martorella, 2020, p.10). The type of content and knowledge. And skills that are stressed in standard- based curriculum generally depends on the affective goals that are considered as central. Therefore, the assessment and subsequent evaluation of the affective objectives (outcomes) are as equally important as the assessment and subsequent evaluation of the cognitive and psychomotor objectives. For any meaningful teaching and assessment to be carried out, the objectives (i.e. what the teacher strives to achieve at the end of any instructional programmer) should be defined in behavioral terms. The knowledge of the taxonomic levels of the cognitive. Affective and psychomotor domains is very essential for the assessment of objective in the three domains. This is because the

teacher has to construct his or her test items to cover all the taxonomic levels of each of three domains

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

It is generally believed that the future of any society is highly dependent upon the extent to which it takes care of its young children. In other words, it is to young children that a society passes down its most treasured values, norms, customs, cultures, knowledge, traditions, etcetera. To this effect, the researcher believes that the investigation into this study might assist in the following ways: The study will help to create awareness of the nature and scope of the Early Childhood Education play-based curriculum among stakeholder in the research area and Ghana at large. Through the analysis of achievements and constraints faced by teachers in the implementation of the ECE play-based curriculum in Early Childhood centers, the study might provide beneficial data for all educational stakeholders inherent in the study. These stakeholders include Curriculum Development NaCCA officials, the Donor community and the Ministry of Education in general.

The findings from the analysis of teachers' attitudes might provide guidance for curriculum implementation in the future and inform stakeholders on the kind of help or support that ECE teachers need from them. It will also enable the educational planners to design appropriate strategies and programme that will help in the smooth and effective implementation of the play-based curriculum. It would also help the government to design pragmatic strategies to educate other stakeholders on the relevance of early childhood education in the region so that they would all put their hands together to ensure successful implementation of early childhood education programme and quality primary education in the region. The findings of the study

would suggest to what extent teachers face problems in the teachers' attitude in standards play- based curriculum implementation. Finally, the findings of the study would add to the existing scholarly literature and to the body of knowledge in the field of ECE curriculum implementation in the Sawla-Tuna-Kalba district and Ghana at large.

### **1.6 Delimitations of the Study**

It is a fact that the issue of affective attitudes and for that matter citizenship education is an important one. This indicates that the study should have been done across the nation. The inability of the researcher to do that was due to time and financial constraints. Again, the researcher finds it better to work within the Sawla Tuna-Kalba District because of familiarity and easy access to teachers. It is hoped that Sawla zone shares similar characteristics as others elsewhere, and for that matter, the researcher is assuming that the findings will enable him to make assumptions and projections about teachers' attitude in the implementation of Standard play Based Curriculum and assessment of the affective outcomes that will have a close relationship to what pertains in other parts of Ghana.

### **1.7 Organization of the Study**

The work is organized in five chapters. Chapter One, which is the introduction, deals with background to the study, statement of the problem. Research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, Limitations, delimitation of the study and organization of the study. Chapter Two which is concerned with the review of related literature, examines in depth both theoretical and conceptual literature related to the study. The literature review takes a look at .the historical overview of Standards Play-Based Curriculum, objectives of instruction in Standards Play-Based Curriculum, taxonomy of affective educational objectives. Defining affective objectives in

behavioral term teaching strategies for affective outcomes. The need to evaluate affective objectives, and methods of assessing affective outcome.

Chapter Three presents the methodology for conducting the study, notably, the sample procedures that were employed to collect and present the data. It concentrated on the research design. Population, sample and sampling techniques, instrument, data collection procedure. And coding and data analysis procedure.

Chapter Four is concerned with findings from the analysis of data collected from the field and the discussions of the findings.

Chapter Five, which is the final chapter is concerned with the summary and conclusions derived from the findings as well as implications based on the findings. Recommendations and suggestions for future research on teaching and assessment of affective outcomes in Standard-Based Curriculum programme are also outlined.

### **1.8 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Challenge:** It is something that, by its nature or character, serves as a call for special effort.

**Curriculum:** It is the planned interaction of pupils with instructional content, materials, resources and processes for evaluating the attainment of educational goals.

**Curriculum Implementation:** It entails the teacher facilitating in the acquisition, by the learners, of the knowledge; skills; beliefs and attitudes outlined in the curriculum.

**Early childhood curriculum:** According to Langenbach and Neskora, (1977) the early childhood curriculum is a product of both long- range and short-term planning.

**Early childhood institution:** The term used in the 2005 Early Childhood Act to describe a setting that provides developmentally appropriate care, stimulation,

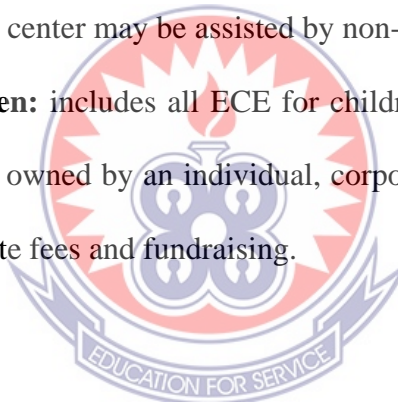
education, and socialization, for children under the age of six years, including day care centers and basic schools.

**Infant school:** Government owned schools which operate under similar Ministry supervision as the basic schools.

**Preschool Education:** The method and theory of guiding young children in group, generally referring to education, as demonstrated in nursery schools; emphasis is placed on the individual's developing capacities and on assisting him/her to meet his/her problems.

**Preschool teacher:** A person trained in child development or early childhood education who is involved in a program for preschool children in nursery school, early childhood, or a daycare center may be assisted by non-professional workers.

**Preschool/Kindergarten:** includes all ECE for children from three to six years old. The school is privately owned by an individual, corporation or faith-based institution and operates with private fees and fundraising.





## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews related literature relevant to the current research topic, the underpinning theory that inform the belief of the study is the social cognitive career theory. The chapter also considered an empirical review including teachers' attitude in standards play-based curriculum implementation, early childhood curriculum, role of teachers in curriculum implementation, readiness of teachers.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

##### **2.2.1 Social Cognitive Career Theory**

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) is a relatively new theory that is aimed at explaining three interrelated aspects of career development: (1) how basic academic and career interests develop, (2) how Educational and career choices are made, and (3) how academic and career success is obtained. The theory incorporates a variety of concepts (e.g., interests, abilities, values, environmental factors) that appear in earlier career theories and have been found to affect career development.

Developed by Lent, Brown, and Hackett in 1994, SCCT is based on Bandura's general social cognitive theory, an influential theory of cognitive and motivational processes that has been extended to the study of many areas of psychosocial functioning, such as academic performance, health behavior, and organizational development. Three intricately linked variables—self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and goals—serve as the basic building blocks of SCCT. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's personal beliefs about his or her capabilities to perform particular behaviors or courses of action. Unlike global confidence or self-esteem,



self-efficacy beliefs are relatively dynamic (i.e., changeable) and are specific to particular activity domains. People vary in their self-efficacy regarding the behaviors required in different occupational domains. For example, one person might feel very confident in being able to accomplish tasks for successful entry into, and performance in, scientific fields but feel much less confident about his or her abilities in social or enterprising fields, such as sales. SCCT assumes that people are likely to become interested in, choose to pursue, and perform better at activities at which they have strong self-efficacy beliefs, as long as they also have necessary skills and environmental supports to pursue these activities.

Self-efficacy beliefs are assumed to derive from four primary sources of information: personal performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences (e.g., observing similar others), social persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. Personal accomplishments (successes and failures with specific tasks) are assumed to offer a particularly compelling source of efficacy information, but the nature of the social models and reinforcing messages to which one is exposed, and the types of physiological states one experiences while engaged in particular tasks (e.g., low levels of anxiety), can all affect one's self-efficacy regarding different performance domains.

Empirical support and practical applications of the SCCT suggest a number of targets at which educational and career programs can be directed. These include efforts to expand interests and nurture career aspirations in children and adolescents, facilitate career goal setting and implementation in adolescents and young adults, and promote successful work adjustment. The researcher is therefore of the view that this can be

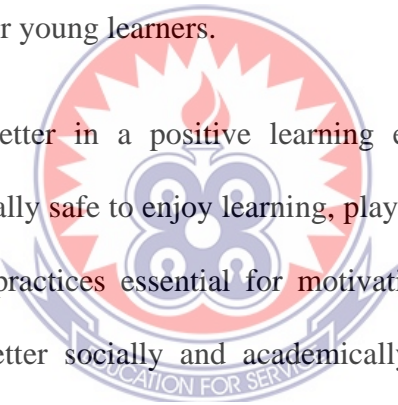
achieve through an effective play-based curriculum implementation at the early childhood education centers

### **2.3 The Early Childhood Curriculum**

The historical process of early childhood curriculum gives us opportunity to see how young children and their way of learning is perceived by the past generations based on religious, ethnic, political and economic pressures of the times (Jackman, 2005). For example, Rousseau, who is famous with his book “Emile”, believed in the idea of unfolding. For him “unfolding” can occur as a result of development according to children’s innate timetables (Erden, 2010). In fact, such an approach is used now as teachers choose their activities according to children’s developmental levels. Moreover, Pestalozzi believed in that children learn through their senses and through this they can achieve their natural potential. “Whole person”, observation and sympathetic approach of teachers were among the significant principles that he contributed to early childhood education (Erden, 2010).

Owen, on the other hand, believed in the importance of environment which has effects on children’s development. This idea is still valid today and early childhood classroom environment helps children to develop their beliefs, behavior and achievement (Morgan & Hansen, 2018). Froebel, known as the father of kindergarten, is another influential figure in early childhood curriculum (Gordon & Browne, 2015). Froebel used planned curriculum which included gifts and occupations to educate children. Today, it is the same with the toys we use when we educate children. The concepts of unfolding and learning through play are among the biggest contributions of Froebel to early childhood curriculum models (Erden, 2010).

The rationale for the Kindergarten Curriculum is to provide through play and use of creative learning and teaching approaches a positive learning experience to learners at this level so as that they are ready for school. The first eight years in a child's life are the formative and the most critical years and require that the learning to which they are exposed are appropriate in enhancing their curiosity, creativity and critical thinking. The kind of physical and psychological environments that are created, the interactions and the experiences adults have with learners influence and have lasting effects on them. Learners generally learn by practice and this is done naturally and best through play. They are very active, curious, and explorative and enjoy listening to stories. This natural tendency should be the basis for designing teaching and learning programmes for young learners.

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central sunburst or starburst design in white and red, set against a blue background. Below the sunburst are three stylized figures or symbols in white and blue. The text 'UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION FOR SERVICE' is written in a circular path around the bottom of the emblem.

Since learners learn better in a positive learning environment, where they feel emotionally and physically safe to enjoy learning, play-based learning this curriculum has at its heart these practices essential for motivating learners to attend, stay in school and perform better socially and academically. An integrated, inquiry and discovery approach to teaching and learning will foster caring, supportive and committed relationships between teachers and learners, as well as between learners and their peers. Teachers become more confident in their practice, feel trusted by learners, and can develop better classroom management and positive discipline practices. Play-based learning further helps to develop the inherent potential of learners and the critical thinking and imagination skills.

It can be recognized that early childhood education has a rich history (Gordon & Browne, 2015) and the history of its development include many figures most of which are developmental theorists. In that sense, foundation of all curricula is developmental

theory regarding how children develop and learn (Beaver & Wyatt, 2003). In fact, those are the ones guiding our view of teaching and supporting children as learners. In other words, in early childhood education, theories of child development have served as the dominant foundation for curriculum development model (Erden, 2010).

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

The Education and Training policy (TGE.1994) states that one of the main objectives of the education system is to develop the physical and mental potential and problem-solving capacity of individuals by expanding education, and, in particular by providing basic education for all. The same policy document also states "early childhood education will focus on all-round development of the child in preparation for formal schooling". To this effect, early childhoods should attempt to give the child an education which is appropriate to his/her stage of development and which can satisfy his/her immediate needs. It should also aim at laying a fertile foundation for the years' ahead (Foster and Headley, 2018). According to Foster and Headley, (2018), the objectives of early childhood education include, among others, to uncover interests and aptitudes; lay foundations for reading, writing and number work; promote children's safety and help them get accustomed to working alone in spite of the presence of others and work and plan with others in groups; give a child broad contacts with other persons like or unlike him/herself; provide the child a situation

where he/she can become increasingly aware of relationships between freedom and responsibility; teach children sources of accurate information; give the child an exposure to a wide range of creative experiences and to encourage him/her to express his/her own ideas through a variety of media; help children accept themselves and learn that they are persons of worth who can accomplish things of importance for which others respect them; help children move as fast as possible towards a solution of their problems and to provide practice and skills in thinking for themselves; inspire children to acquire an attitude of inquiry.

Similarly, UNESCO's World Survey, (2012) of 73 countries on early childhood education shows that the main objectives of early childhood education and care in most of these countries include the total development of the child; intellectual development of the child; preparation for primary schools; language development of the child; childcare, health, and nutrition; Religious instructions, etc. Moreover, in the Ghanaian context, Mensah, (2015) state that early childhoods should accommodate children of age 4-6, and cater towards physical, cognitive, psychological, emotional, and social development of the children, and thereby preparing them for primary education. The same guidelines further state that the objectives of early childhood education are for the development of self-security, respect for work and good morality, respect for human rights, love, and appreciation for society and environment. It can also relieve working mothers of the burden of child rearing activities.

In addition, Agrawal, (2019) has suggested more specific objectives of preschool education, among which are to develop in the child good health, habits and to build up basic skills necessary for personal adjustment, such as dressing, toilet habits,

eating, washing, cleaning; to develop desirable social attitudes, manners and to encourage healthy group participation, making the child sensitive to the rights and privileges of others; to encourage aesthetic appreciation and stimulate the beginning of intellectual curiosity concerning the environment and to help him/her understand the world. On the whole, the main aim of early childhood education is the all-rounded development of children in order to prepare them for formal schooling and develop their confidence in themselves. To that effect, the contents of early childhood program have to be carefully selected.

The early childhood is an educational reception center designed to help the child in his/her adjustment to organized schooling (Smith et al, 2019). These authors further state that most of the activities of the early childhood programs are provided for the purpose of induction and orientation of the child to the school. They emphatically recommend that the early childhood should be able to provide experiences that help the child to increase her/his familiarity with other children, materials, and primary type activities. The authors further recommend that early childhood program be an integral and vital part of the total elementary school program. Moreover, McDowelle, (2021) state that early childhood curricula should focus on areas of cognition, social and emotional development, adaptive functioning, communicative skills, and motor development. They add that specific areas may be emphasized as a result of selecting particular theoretical and philosophical bases. For instance, according to the authors, if the program philosophy and theoretical bases were developed and selected because of social emotional emphasis, then selection of program materials will follow that direction. Hence, the types of curriculum models and all program materials should support and maintain the program philosophy, theoretical orientation, and the program goals and objectives.

With regard to some major learning experiences that an early childhood program should provide, Smith, Kempster and Wenger-Trayner (2019) have stressed, among others, the creative activities, such as painting, finger painting, working with clay, woodworking, etc.; play activities, such as building with blocks, playing house, pretending to be grown-ups, etc.; large muscle activities, such as climbing, lifting, and building with large boxes and boards, enjoyment of literature, such as listening to stories, read, and told, looking at picture books, participation in music, such as singing, responding rhythmically, using musical instruments, experiences in science, such as caring for pets, using magnets, helping plants grow, short trips in to the community, to the grocery stores, forestation, and post office to see a house being built or street being paved, midmorning or mid-afternoon snacks; hot lunch at noon and nap on cots for all-day early childhood youngsters; and rest in a prone position, etc.

According to Morrison, (2001) the early childhood program contains five areas of learning and development that must shape educational programs in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. These areas are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn from relationships.

According to this curriculum, the main content areas are the physical development, personal, social and emotional development, communication and language development, basic mathematical skills development and understanding the world. More specifically, the areas of physical development involve providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. The areas of personal, social and emotional development



involve helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; understand appropriate behavior in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities (Morrison, 2001). It also involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play, and design and technology (Morrison, 2001).

As regards areas of communications, the areas of communication and language development involve giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment, developing their confidence and skills in expressing themselves, and to speak and listen in a range of situations (Bain, James & Harrison 2015). The areas of basic mathematical development involve providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understand using numbers and using mathematical concepts. The areas of understanding the world involve guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, place, technology and the environment. On the whole, the early childhood curriculum of Ghana focuses on the contents that help the children to develop their all-round personalities, and the curriculum content areas should be well scheduled when presented for children Early Contents of Early Childhood Curriculum. The early childhood is an educational reception center designed to help the child in his/her adjustment to organized schooling (Smith, Kempster & Wenger-Trayner 2019). These authors further state that most of the activities of the early childhood programs are provided for the purpose of induction and orientation of the child to the school. They emphatically



recommend that the early childhood should be able to provide experiences that help the child to increase her/his familiarity with other children, materials, and primary type activities. The authors further recommend that early childhood program be an integral and vital part of the total elementary school program.

Teachers' Attitude in the Implementation of the Standards Play Based Curriculum in Sawla- Tuna-Kalba District in the Savannah Region of Ghana. Mainly, it analyzes studies related to curriculum change. Determines teachers' attitude in reform implementation and defines the attitudes of teachers toward changes in the education system. Good understanding of change and clear conception Teachers' Attitude in the Implementation of the Standard-based Curriculum in Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District are necessary conditions for improved implementation of a new curriculum rolled into practice. Teachers over the world are important as they contribute to the success of educational reforms (Spillanc and Callahan, 2019). Teachers played strategic consulting responsibilities in the development, implementation and management of the GES 2018 educational curriculum (Gacoin. 2018). The development and formulation of the 2016 curriculum for basic schools was a co-created document by teachers and experts in Education across Ghana and Managed by the Ghana Education Service for Educating-a group of experts made up of teachers drawn from various fields (GES 2020). The knowledge, Beliefs and perception of teachers are very significant in understanding curriculum reforms (Haney Boateng. 2020).

Characteristically of curriculum change. Work intensifies, paperwork and bureaucracy increased, and teachers are left to feel increasingly dis powered and professionally marginalized (Priestley. 2020). Teachers are not likely to accept the educational curriculum without questions and criticisms when they are not part of the

reform processs (Aboagye & Yawson, 2020). In the light of issues as these, GLS has recommended the need to seek teachers' views when conducting a curriculum reform on Teachers' Attitude in the Implementation of the Standard-Based Curriculum in Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District as the level of satisfaction of teachers with the new curriculum is directly proportional to their motivational levels and theoretically underpinning the Standard-Based Curriculum adoption model. A large and growing body of literature has investigated change and the process of curriculum change and its implementation due to the frequent changes in educational systems occurring all over the world.

According to Kelly (2019), numerous significant alterations have been made in education systems in the last 5-10 years. He considers curriculum change as a natural process taking place in the society that experiences daily changes at all levels. Being a part of this society, educational organizations must respond to these changes accordingly. In this regard, Kelly (2019) states that "The nature and structure of our education system must be changing so extensively at a time when we have been experiencing social change of an equally dramatic kind, much of it prompted by rapid technological advance" (p.5). If all these factors are implemented in the right way, change will be real and proactive. However, not all teachers are ready to accept the new meaning of curriculum which in its turn may cause constraints in reform implementation. Teachers may follow the requirements instructed from the top by introducing new learning materials and teaching strategies which leads to reactive change, but this type of change, according to reviewed literature, will lead to surface change only unless teachers change their beliefs and attitudes.

From the above discussion it is obvious that changes in the curriculum will happen as long as changes occur within the classroom; the key figure in the implementation of this change is a teacher. Therefore, the next Section of literature review will discuss the early childhood teacher and the curriculum.

#### **2.4 Early Childhood Teachers and Curriculum**

Early childhood has many knowledge bases that are rooted in child development, social work, family relationships, anthropology, as well as health, developmentally appropriate practice and special education (Tarim, Xiang, & Schweinhart, 2016). So, teachers need to be skilled at many issues which in turn create a big responsibility in the shoulders of early childhood educators.

In other words, early childhood teachers' roles vary in the classroom. McDowell, (2021) describes the early childhood teachers' role as having the knowledge of twelve areas; foundations, child development and growth, curriculum, health, safety and nutrition, child observation, record keeping and assessment, creating environments for young children, child guidance and disciplines, cultural diversity, special needs, family and community relationships, professionalism and professional development and administration and supervision. On the other hand, The National Association for Education of Young Children (2019) identifies the role of the early childhood educator in five areas: creating a caring community of learners, teaching to enhance development and learning, constructing appropriate curriculum, assessing children's development and learning and establishing reciprocal relationships with families. Moreover, (Reche, Bundi, Riungu & Mbugua, 2012) distinguished the role of the early childhood educator within 6 components: understanding needs and capabilities of the children, creating an environment for social and emotional learning,

accommodating a wide range of abilities, balancing teacher initiated and child-initiated activities, assessing how well the curriculum meets children's needs and developing strong needs with families. The roles of the early childhood teachers can be expanded more however there is a common point in all explanations: the teacher's role in curriculum.

Considering the teacher's role in curriculum, there are various factors affecting it. Both the personal and environmental factors are affecting the curriculum implementation in the real classroom settings. To begin with, characteristic of the teacher might be among the factors. As the teachers are social beings and as they are coming from different backgrounds, they bring their past experience into their classroom practice. Accordingly, the personal characteristics have an impact on the implementation of the curriculum (Opfer, Pedder & Lavicza, 2011). To illustrate, teachers characterized as motivated, responsible, organized and open to new learning opportunities were found high curriculum implementers (Olufemi, 2014) compared to teachers described as unmotivated, not open to changes.

Moreover, the level of support from administrators and colleagues can be explained as one of the factors effecting early childhood teachers' curriculum implementation. Opfer, Pedder and Lavicza (2011) insisted on the support from the school principal as a key factor for successful curriculum implementation. In other words, collaborative environment is a necessity. In the study, it was found that collaborative relationship and networking were detected as positive factors increasing the teachers' attitudes and motivation, as well as their teaching (Opfer, Pedder & Lavicza, 2011). Ogott, Indoshi and Okwara, (2010) supported the necessity of administrative support for a successful curriculum implementation by discussing the fact that teachers need more than just

knowledge and skills, they need encouragement and assistance to reach the goals defined for their children.

In addition to the factors affecting the curriculum implementation, early childhood teachers are facing with the problems when there is a curriculum reform. In one of the studies conducted by Moyo, Wadesango and Kurebwa, (2012) Mexican early childhood teachers' problems and dilemmas was explored after the K-9 curriculum reform. The new curriculum emphasizes "individualism and assertiveness" which are opposed with the Mexican culture and there was a stress on accountability. Data gathered through a qualitative method by interviews, focus groups, document analysis over 8 weeks of period. First problem was the conflict between the school and home. Parents perceive early childhood as a playing ground for the children not as a learning place after the curriculum reform so this creates a barrier between the school and home collaboration. Second, there was a lack of continuity and compatibility between early childhood and some elementary schools. Transition from early childhood to elementary school becomes a problem because children were expected more passive role when they start elementary school.

Third, role expectations from teachers by the schools and the Mexican Department of Education were different. While the department let the teachers to be flexible in terms of activities, the school head teachers wanted them to follow exactly what the manuals and guides tell. Fourth was the lack of resources. Teachers, especially when working in rural areas developed low expectations for children because of the scarce resources. In that sense, teacher explained that this curriculum does not pay attention to regional differences. Final problem was the immigration and migration issues.

Teachers were having difficulty when dealing with children with limited Spanish and do not know how to include those children into the classroom activities.

## **2.5 The Role of Teachers in Curriculum Implementation**

The teacher is a key player in curriculum implementation as it is the one who is responsible for implementing the changes and innovations at the classroom level that are initiated by the policymakers. Hunkins (2019) state that “teachers must be central to any curricular improvement” (p.279): Giroux regards teachers as drivers of program establishment and its application. Pristley in his studies (2020) discusses the concept of teachers’ agency prescribing them the role of curriculum developers and agents of change. The author states that the intrinsic meaning of changes in modern curriculum is a “renewed vision of teachers as developers of curriculum at a school level” (Ibramoya 2019 p.2 16), therefore, changing the role of teachers from passive followers into active curriculum developers. However, in most cases the teachers’ perspectives are often disregarded, though they play an essential role in the teaching and learning process. Many studies indicated that teachers face a lot of challenges on Teachers’ Attitude in the Implementation of the Standard-Based Curriculum in Sawla Tuna-Kalba District while implementing new curriculum as the consequence of the top-down approach (Ibraimova. 2019);

Another obstacle connected with teacher’s attitude is pedagogical legacy, to which most teachers are accustomed (Fullan, 2020). States that most teachers are used to certain pedagogical practices and because of them they do not want to accept new changes. Such teachers prefer to follow their old experiences rather than trying new methods and introducing some changes in their practices. Even if they want to change and start the change, they go back to their comfort zone they are used to. Fullan

(2020) discussed the same phenomenon of teachers' reluctance to change in his study and mentioned the factors that evoke such reluctance and resistance. According to Davis (2019) there are some factors that seriously impede implementation of change and induce certain reluctance among teachers. These factors are fear of the unknown, lack of information, threat to core skills and competence. Fear to fail, reluctance to experiment and let go.

As a solution to such issues different researchers propose different suggestions. Having studied a considerable amount of literature concerning this issue I have identified several factors that stimulate teachers' commitment to any innovation: teachers' readiness, teachers' environment and support. These factors will be discussed further in the next section

## **2.6 Readiness of Teachers**

Lack of teachers' capacity and unpreparedness may cause an "implementation gap" (Minty, 2019, p.40) between the purpose of the reform and classroom practices. Due to this, numerous studies discuss the importance of teachers' readiness to any change. In order to contribute to Teachers' Attitude in the Implementation of the Standard-Based Curriculum in Sawla Tuna-Kalba District on curriculum implementation. Teachers need to have a sense of readiness for this process. They should be provided with necessary knowledge and skills that are usually delivered at various professional development courses, trainings and workshops as well.

According to (Okello 2019) successful implementation of changes in the curriculum needs the capacity of well-trained teachers able to understand the meaning of new initiatives and implement them in a right way. The effectiveness of such courses influences directly on the teacher's engagement in the new curriculum



implementation. Makewa (2020) examined teachers' participation in the curriculum change of Teachers' Attitude in the Implementation of the Standard-Based Curriculum in Sawla Tuna-Kalba District. The results of their quantitative study indicated that teachers were not ready for new changes due to inefficient delivery of professional development trainings and workshops. Consequently, this led to low involvement of teachers in curriculum change.

Raising teachers' capacity through professional development courses is apparently very significant for curriculum implementation. However, there are also other factors that increase a teacher's commitment to be an agent of change. According to Pristley (2019), "teacher's agency is ecological" (p.22) and teachers being agents of change and how they execute their duties by the means of their environment will be discussed below.

## **2.7 Teachers Attitudes toward Curriculum Implementation**

In the discussion on the nature of curriculum change that was mentioned above we have considered several points about surface and real change. In order to make a real change it should be altered at three different dimensions, one of which is the attitude of teachers. The researcher's views such as, Fullan (2019) state that the change of people's attitude is the most challenging component to modify. Otherwise, the change will be superficial only. That is why it is very important to pay attention to the modification of attitudes and beliefs of teachers. The change in people's attitude and beliefs has been a large and growing body of literature. According to GES (2021), the change in any system will be successfully *if* change occurs in people; "Only as their values, understandings, and skills are changed will the curriculum be modified.



Hunkins (2019) state that for implementation of curriculum educators are required “to change not only their knowledge sets regarding curricula and their creation and delivery, but also their mindsets, and perhaps, even their personalities” (p.257). Teaching is a moral profession that is why first, there is a need to change the mindset of teachers, allow them to grow and link their moral purpose that drives them with the tools of change, therefore enforcing attitudinal changes in teachers.

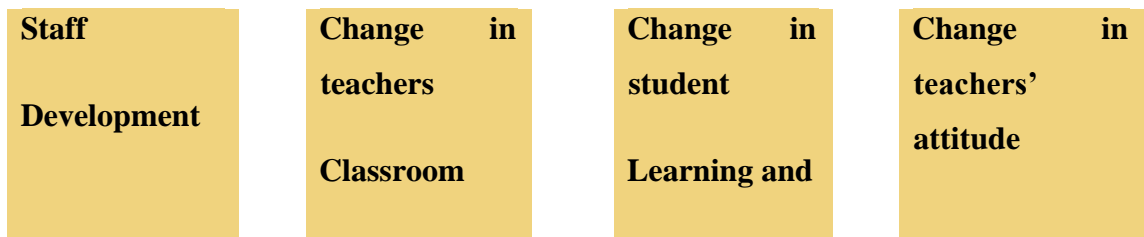
Most researchers accepted that change in teachers’ beliefs is fundamental ingredient for effective implementation of any reform. According to Iskandar (2020),” successful changes in curriculum and its implementation need teachers’ wholehearted cooperation and support” (p.38). However, in most cases teachers do not want to accept new practices and changes within their classroom, as they have already been used to their pedagogical legacies. A majority of studies have indicated this factor as the main barrier of curriculum implementation. There are very few studies suggesting the ways to overcome this challenge. The researcher proposed a simplified model of change that describes the sequence of outcomes in the process of teacher change through staff development efforts, the illustration of the model is shown in Figure 1 below.

According to the model, teachers need to be based on the discussions above, it can be concluded that in order to implement the curriculum change effectively, teachers need to transform themselves from passive curriculum implementers into active curriculum developers for this researcher suggest to empower teachers with more autonomy and become active change agents. However, due to old experiences and pedagogical legacies, most teachers refuse to change and accept new practices. This consequently leads to a lower commitment of teachers in the curriculum change process. It was

suggested to pay more attention on teachers' preparation and readiness as well as environmental support organized by school administrators. The results of the studies also confirmed that schools in the Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District in the Savannah Region of Ghana with good preparation of teachers and high environmental support achieve success in implementing changes in the curriculum. Otherwise, teachers implement the curriculum change, but without understanding its core meaning. This means that teachers change their practices but not their beliefs and attitudes. The next section of the literature review explores changes in teachers' attitudes and beliefs respectively.

The researcher proposed a simplified model of change that describes the sequence of outcomes in the process of teacher change through staff development efforts. The illustration of the model is shown in Figure 1 below. According to the model, teachers need to be prepared to curriculum change in the first place. As was stated before, good professional development trainings will allow teachers to enhance their pedagogical practices and learn new teaching strategies and skills. Once teachers master new knowledge, they will be able to apply it within their classrooms. The author of the model suggests that teachers will be able to change their perceptions only when they can see the improvement in students' learning outcomes. Such positive change in the students' performance is expected to come from certain changes in classroom practice. For instance, such as using of new teaching approaches and strategies. Assessment tools, new courses and learning materials introduced in the curricula as well as just simple modification in the steps of teaching.

The illustration of the model is shown in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1: A Model of the Process of Teacher Change**

“Teachers need to know the learning Intentions and success criteria of their lessons, know how well they are attaining these criteria for all students, and know where to go next in light of the gap” (Fullan, 2019,), they need to feel new practices and apply them effectively.

The researcher explains that attitudes and perceptions about teaching are determined by classroom experience. If the new teaching methods and strategies work and demonstrate achievements in students’ performance, teachers are more likely to perceive the change as a positive practice and start implement them in their daily experiences. Positive learning outcomes of students shape positive attitude of teachers. If the activities introduced in the new curriculum do not work, teachers will drop out them from their practice and not perceive the change accordingly.

At the same time, Guskey (2020) informs us that students’ improvements can be observed not only in the final scores, but also in students’ behavior, level of classroom participation as well as motivation for learning. This suggests that learning outcomes contain considerable evidences that teachers can utilize to assess the efficiency of the curriculum innovations. Finally, teachers reached full understanding when the mastery of all program parts was achieved. The reviewed literature helped me to understand the nature of change as well as the teachers’ role in the Teachers’ Attitude in the implementation of the Standard-Based Curriculum in Sawla-Tuna-

Kalba District process and curriculum implementation. Several factors that lead to change in teachers' practices were discussed. However, the implementation of new practices does not mean the change will result in success. Real change happens when change occurs in teachers' attitudes. In the next chapters of the thesis, the methodology of the study as well as findings of the study will be presented

## **2.8. Self-Concept Activities**

If attitude-and-value learning is to constitute an important outcome of Standards Play-Based Curriculum instruction, unplanned and incidental experiences alone cannot be relied on as satisfactory means of teaching them. Instead, a planned program of teaching situations needs to be devised. The most fundamental beliefs and attitudes that students wrestle with are those related to self these are commonly referred to as self-concepts. Planned learning activities that encourage students to reflect on their views toward self can be used to introduce the examination of - attitudes and values. These activities are referred to as self-concept activities. Three types of self-concept activities that are appropriate if handled well by teachers are; sentence completion, self-statesmen's and fantasy. Fantasy exercises are very potent. Through fantasy, children are often able to express their beliefs and attitudes they otherwise might find difficult to discuss. It also can serve as a highly effective vehicle for gaining insight about our attitudes toward self and others.

## **2.9 Attitude Inventories**

One of the ways students can systematically examine, compare and discuss attitudes toward objects other than themselves is through the use of attitude inventories. Depending on the topic and the capabilities of the students they may be able to organize their own surveys and collect and analyze the results. An attitude inventory is constructed by first identifying some attitude object. Along with the object, pairs of

objectives are selected that express opposites, for example, happy-sad, rich-poor, good-bad. Any set of adjectives that make sense in relationship to the attitude object being analyzed may be used. The suggested number of pairs is no fewer than five and no more than ten. At the top of the sheet is placed the topic,

### **2.10 Semantic Differential**

Another technique for surveying attitudes is the semantic differential. The technique measures the attitudes of an individual or group toward any object, individual, place or event. This attitude toward any object can be measured by making six-point scales anchored by adjective opposites. Numbers from one to six are assigned to responses, with six being the most positive rating.

### **2.11 Dramatization**

Dramatization is the most structured dramatic activity. It requires a prepared script, memorization of set lines, rehearsal and an audience. It is principally used to show historical events, to represent in another period or demonstrate some problem of living. And to represent growth of a movement or idea. It is also like used to assist pupils to identify themselves with persons, activities and situations that are being studied. Dramatization helps sharpen the pupil's power of observation. It gives one insight into the feelings of others by putting oneself in their place. It provides experience in democratic living and can contribute to the development of positive values, attitudes and appreciation of man's struggle for freedom.

### **2.12 Role Playing in Standards Play-Based Curriculum**

Role-playing is described as “a group problem-solving method which enables young students to explore human problems in spontaneous enactment followed by guided discussion”. (GES 2020) defines role-playing as “an attempt to make a situation clear

or to solve a problem by unrehearsed dramatization”. Role-playing, then, is a spontaneous acting out of a situation arising from inter-personal relations by two or more people to show the emotional reaction of the people in the real situation. It is used to stimulate discussion, to depict a social problem for study, to train in leadership skills, human relationship skills, to acquire insight, sensitivity. And awareness, and to train in more effective problem-solving; do them; they might know that, but not necessarily know how (Mathews, 2019).

However, if the aims of the school include Teachers’ Attitude in the Implementation of the Standard-Based Curriculum in Sawla -Tuna-Kalba District then it has the obligation to follow by the set of adjective pairs placed at the opposite ends of a continuum that allows seven rating options. In scoring a completed attitude inventory, each point on the continuum is assigned a number from one to seven, with the space next to the positive adjective being assigned the number seven. The space in between is numbered accordingly. After students have completed the inventory, it is possible to measure whether each individual’s attitudes toward the object are positive or negative. Evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum in forming those behaviors. If it does not evaluate them, it has no evidence on which to base modifications of its curriculum and teaching methods, failure to evaluate leads to eventual disregard for the affective aspect of education and an overemphasis on verbal-conceptual instruction.

### **2.13 Curriculum Methodologies Used in Early Childhood Education**

Throughout the history of early childhood education, diversity in early childhood curriculum can be seen. For example, Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Head Start, High/Scope can be given among the well-known early childhood curriculum models.

Today, principals of those models are appreciated in many early childhood education settings (Marundu, Okwara, Marundu & Bantu, 2011). In many parts of the world, Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Head Start and High scope schools applying the principals of those models can be found.

### **2.14 Montessori**

The name itself comes from Maria Montessori, an Italian medical doctor whom was affected from Pestalozzi. Pestalozzi thinks that a teacher must have a special training combining both intellectuality and the ability of touching the hearts by feeling respect and sympathy for the children (Laura, 2011). Montessori followed the ideas of Pestalozzi and she focused on the process of normal development to discover how human beings could reach their potential more fully than they did in traditional schools. Montessori worked with younger children before elementary schools. Montessori began her experiment in January 1907. She viewed her schools as laborites in which to study how children learn best (Grove & Montgomery, 2000).

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



1. **Motor education:** Montessori classroom is designed in order to provide children's free movement during the day. Children's fine motor skills are enhanced by the sensory materials as well as the work in the area of practical life. In addition, as children learn pouring materials, sweeping, polishing shoes, they have opportunity to foster both large and fine motor skills.
2. **Sensory education:** Manipulative and didactic materials are used for sensory education. The sensorial curriculum includes a large number of sets of materials that promote seriation, classification and conservation activities in a variety of media. The materials are sequenced according to difficulty with control of error being a primary objective.
3. **Language and intellectual education:** The sensorial materials are part of intellectual education. The teacher involves in careful pronunciation of words as he or she talks to the children and during teaching a concept, it is common to use physical dimensions of the objects such as big, thin, large and small. On the other hand, there is a three-part lesson and when learning, for example, concepts of large and small, the teacher would first say, "This is the small ball". Second the teacher wants the child to show the small ball and finally, the teacher wants the child to name the object.

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



## **2.15 Reggio Emilia “The Reggio Emilia Approach”**

### **2.15.1 The Reggio Emilia Approach**

Complementing Montessori’s philosophy, the ideas and practices articulated by the Reggio Emilia Approach set forth the physical classroom as the “third teacher” (Domike and Odey, 2014). According to this view, the classroom environment is not only a space for learning, but a space for living in which students, teachers, families, and community members collaborate in the learning process (Dilley, 2009). Elements of the Reggio Emilia Approach include aesthetically pleasing displays of materials, furniture arrangement which encourages social learning, lighting designed to focus attention on learning opportunities and school, community, and familial collaboration. The approach asserts the space and environmental elements of a classroom should be used as a means of communicating to students a message from the teacher of what is expected in that environment. Children in Reggio Emilia are given the opportunity to express their knowledge and ideas in several forms of symbolic representation or languages (e.g., painting, drawing, sculpting, dramatic play, etc.). The importance of the physical environment is based on the belief children acquire meaning of the world around them through complex and varied experiences with the materials and people within the environment (Chidiebere, 2016).

### **2.15.2 Head Start 1960**

Head Start is a publicly funded program. Developed in the 1960s for intervention with at-risk minority and low-income children, it is a comprehensive program that addresses the educational, nutritional and social needs of such children. It can be associated with public school districts or conducted as a separate program through a community agency.

These programs are the largest publicly funded educational programs for infants and toddlers (Early Head Start) and preschool children. They include health and medical screening and treatment, required parent participation and involvement, and comprehensive services to families. “Today there are Head Start programs in every state and territory, in rural and urban sectors, on American Indian reservations, and in-migrant areas” (Banchi & Bell, 2018). From its inception in 1965, Head Start has sought to provide classroom-based and, most recently, home based comprehensive developmental services for children from low-income families.

The large number of children served by Head Start has increased in recent years. In 1993, 36% of at-risk children had been served. An increase of \$550 million for Head Start in fiscal year 1994 enabled tens of thousands of children to be added to the Head Start program (UNESCO, 2014). In 1999, over 800,000 children were being served by Head Start programs, representing about 50% of the children who were eligible (UNESCO, 2014).

An essential part of every Head Start program is the involvement of parents in parent education as I think the country have greatly considered, program planning and operating activities. Many parents serve as members of policy councils and committees and have a voice in administrative and managerial decisions while others participate as volunteer or paid aides to teachers, social service personnel, and other staff members. Head Start programs have a low child-staff ratio, with 10 percent of the enrollment in each state available for children with special needs.

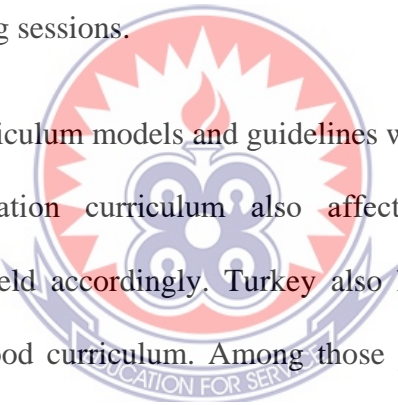
### 2.15.3 High/Scope

High scope is a cognitively oriented curriculum (Dilley, 2009) when it is first developed in order to serve 3 and 4 years-old children from poor neighbors in Ypsilanti, Michigan, in 1962 so it helps children to become independent thinkers and problem solvers (Australian Children Education and Care Quality Authority, 2011). However, through the four decades of working, the curriculum has evolved to the model that is used today. There are principles of the curriculum (Morrison, 2001).

1. **Active learning:** Active learning is the most crucial way for children to make sense of their world because as they interact with the real world, as they have immediate first-hand experience, they are able to build their own understanding.
2. **Key experiences:** Interacting with people, materials and ideas through a creative and ongoing way helps children to enhance mentally, emotionally, socially and physically.
3. **Plan-do-review process:** Children have right and time to plan their own activities, perform them and at the end, reflect on what they had done.
4. **Parent component:** By offering ideas about child development and learning, teachers make home visits.
5. **Child-adult interaction:** Adult is the supporter in High-Scope Preschool program. Positive interaction strategies such as focusing on children's strengths, sharing control with children, forming an authentic relationship with children are highly valued in High- Scope classrooms. In other words, when dealing with every situation in the classroom, the teacher is the guider and supporter which creates a harmony in the classroom.
6. **Learning environment:** Environment is significant in this model and it is arranged into different areas to foster children's different developmental levels.

Many kinds of activities can be carried out in High-Scope classroom by the wide variety of materials.

7. **Daily routines:** Active learning is also supported by daily routines. Consistent routine is important. Plan- do- review session, small group and large group times when teachers also engage in, are crucial part of a typical High-Scope preschool classroom.
8. **Assessment:** There is a special observation record used for assessing the children's progress, The High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) because observation is the major tool to understand children's development and learning. While observing and interacting with children, teachers also keep daily anecdotal records and planning sessions.



As early childhood curriculum models and guidelines were enhanced throughout time, countries' early education curriculum also affected by the innovations and developments in the field accordingly. Turkey also had gone through many ways regarding early childhood curriculum. Among those principles, active learning and key experiences form the core of the High Scope Model. In fact, the four elements, child-adult interaction, learning environment, daily routines and assessment are the ones support active learning. It is very important and critical for every teacher to understand the reasons for adopting the integrated approach of teaching in the early year of school instead of the subject-based approach. An integrated thematic curriculum model is the organization of a curriculum around big and broad "real life themes" instead of subject topics. A theme is a central idea around which teaching and learning is designed. Integrated curriculum is an educational model for decreasing instruction in isolated academic subjects. This is a way of teaching and learning, whereby many areas of the curriculum are connected together and interwoven within

a selected broad theme. The focus is no longer on teaching the individual subjects in isolation but rather connecting the knowledge in one discipline to another in an attempt to solve a real-life issue. As we have read from our philosophy statement earlier, the integrated thematic approach to organizing curriculum is based on the idea that learners acquire knowledge best when learning experiences are coherent, holistic, practical, authentic and in real-world context. Integrated learning encourages students to see the interconnectedness and interrelationships between the curriculum areas rather than focusing on learning in isolated curriculum areas.

The integrated thematic approach was adopted for the Early Years curriculum because of these five major reasons: As international research has shown, it is closely related to how learners and adults learn in the real world, it promotes holistic and in-depth study of a topic, In the real world, learners learn better when they are interested in a particular topic, they do not learn in bits and pieces because their brains are not compartmentalized. It encourages meaningful learning, during thematic instruction, students construct their own meaning, gain new insight about themes and sub-themes they are studying and use the new knowledge meaningfully outside the classroom in the real world. It promotes transfer of concepts and across different disciplines, Learners make connections between different disciplines they are learning instead of perceiving them as individual and isolated disciplines. It minimizes forgetfulness of key issues in education through the process of planned repetition. It promotes higher-order skills and critical thinking in learners because the learners are actively involved in the learning process, formulating their own problems and finding solutions to them. An integrated classroom is a learner-centred classroom where learners are actively involved in their own learning.

## **2.16 The Importance of Early Childhood Education**

Early childhood education, within the last few decades, attracted attention from different fields such as developmental psychology, cultural psychology, childhood studies, cultural anthropology, history and philosophy (Ajibola, 2018). This was because recent studies showed that babies and young children are born with the capacity to understand (Smit, 2005). In other words, their brains are ready to learn when they came to the world and during this process; both the environment and genes take an important role which in turn, builds the brain (Shade & Stewart, 2000). This view regarding children, perceiving them as competent learners rather than empty slates changed the disciplines' way of looking at the education of children or early childhood education. The readiness of the children to learn immediately after birth triggered the ideas of necessity of early childhood education both for the individual child and for the society as a whole, in a broader sense.

Longitudinal studies have showed that early childhood education is the period when children's development was rapid and when children were affected more from environmental factors. In addition, two thirds of the brain development is completed between the years of 0-4 (Rahman, 2018). Therefore, education in this crucial period is significant for the development of children. In a study conducted by (O'Toole, 2010). it was found that getting an early childhood education provided an increase in the IQ level of children in the short term and in the long term; it increased the child's school achievement. Early childhood is a crucial time period for the development of children's mental functions. This development, including the emergence of language, motor skills, psychosocial, cognitive, and learning abilities, is now known to be greatly influenced by exogenous factors, including the educational environment to

which a child is exposed during the first 6 to 8 years of life (Corcoran & Goertz, 2010).

Early childhood education becomes more beneficial especially, for the children coming from low socio-economic background. Bradshaw and Mundia, (2016) identified benefits of being exposure to early education for the children coming from low-income families as cognitive growth and school readiness. Besides children from low socio-economic background, good quality of early childhood education provides early reading and math skills to children from high and middle socio-economic status.

Early education cultivates children in terms of socialization rather than purely academic enhancement such as math and reading. Webb (2003) elaborated on the fact that children learn cooperation through education in child care centers and such skills help them to obey rules and stay safe in a society. Regarding socialization, parents also share the same perspective. In the study of O'Donnell, (2013) it was revealed that one of the biggest reasons for parents sending children to early childhood education center is to get them socialized. In fact, in a longitudinal study, Sheridan, (2009) explained that children who received early childhood education became emotionally and socially more competent adults compared to the ones whom did not receive early education. In addition, research results which supported the fact that the earlier children are exposed to good quality of experience, the more the connections in their brains develop, triggered early childhood education to gain greater importance in the society. Such results opened the way to start education of brains as early as possible.

In one study conducted by Wobman and West, (2016) it was elaborated that developmental flexibility of brain wiring or its ability to change due to influences of experience were affected by both genes and early environmental factors. So, it



became necessary for educators, policy makers and others in the society helping children to construct their initial brain architecture by providing education for them in their early years. Findings of longitudinal and cross-sectional studies (Domike, & Odey, 2014; Openheim & MacGregor, 2002; Reynolds, 2004) concerning the benefits of early childhood education provided logical reasons to emphasize on early education for a better society. Besides all, in the last twenty years, sociocultural changes such as getting into the information age and changes in the world order through globalization triggered early childhood education to be the concern of many societies including Ghana and must be seen as an integral part of the curriculum in preschool with modalities to ensure its proper implementation by teachers to enhance proper understanding among preschool children.





## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces and justifies the research methodology employed in this study to explore the teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of the standards play-based curriculum, to research the factors that support new curriculum implementation as well as factors impeding its implementation. More specifically, this chapter elaborates the selection of research design, the study respondents and research site. It also provides a detailed description of research procedures, instruments and methods that were used for data collection and analysis. Further, the chapter presents a section on methodological limitations of the research as well as ethical considerations.

#### 3.2 Research Approach

To address the research purposes and to get detailed answers to each research questions, this study applied the mixed-methods approach. Which combines and integrates both quantitative and qualitative data within one research. This approach is a relatively new one in social and human sciences that was applied for the first time around the 1980s and 90s. That is why different studies indicated it by various terms such as integrating, multi-method or mixed methodology; however, in the recent research studies, it was nominated as the mixed methods (Creswell, 2019). Creswell (2019) emphasizes the value of the given approach at three levels: i) at a general level, it is because it draws on both quantitative and quantitative research, ii) at a practical level, comparing with other approaches it is considered to be more sophisticated and complex approach, and iii) at a procedural level, it gives an opportunity to understand the research questions more deeply. Taking into account all the advantages of this approach. The choice of research design stopped on mixed methods.

There are several types of mixed methods strategies, the choice of which depends on the nature of the integration of quantitative and qualitative data. If two different databases are going to merge with each other, it is better to use convergent mixed methods approach. If one set of data is supposed to inform the second data collection, it means that the type of design here is sequential one. As for this study, it was carried out in the explanatory sequential design that involved two stages of data collection and analysis. According to Creswell (2019), “it involves a two-phase project in which the researcher collects quantitative data in the first phase, analyzes the results, and uses the results to plan or ‘build on to’ the second qualitative phase” (p.224). The study also states that the given design allows the researcher to study and understand the research problem in depth.

At the same time, there are challenges of mixed methods approach that researcher may face during the inquiring process in the Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District, as it requires more time for expanded data collection and its analysis. Also, the inquirer needs to have sufficient knowledge and understand the nature of both quantitative and qualitative types of research.

### **3.3 Research Design**

This section presents the plan and procedure adopted in conducting the study. It entails the population. The sample and sampling procedure, tools for data collection and how the collected data was analyzed. The details are presented as follows.

### **3.4 Target Population**

This subsection describes the site, population and sampling selection procedures, including the process of recruiting respondents for two different stages of the research.

### 3.5 Site Selection

The study was conducted in three zones Sawla, Tuna and-Kalba zones in order to know the perceptions of teachers working in public schools. As was mentioned before, all mainstream schools of the Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District have been implementing the Standard Play-Based curriculum, more commonly known as “upgraded curriculum” since 2019; therefore, the school had more than two years of implementation experience by the start of the data collection process. Having identified the site selection. I proceeded to gaining access to the mainstream school. This process took a significant amount of time. This procedure was a kind of challenge for me as all public schools required permission from the District Director of Education (DDE) to conduct the research within their schools. First, I tried to negotiate directly with principals of two different schools providing introductory letter issued by University of Education Winneba (Appendix A). However, my appeals were met with refusal, as the only valid document for them was permission letter from DDE. Then I filed a written application for conducting research to DDE and maintained permission after two weeks. With the permission letter. I was allowed to enter the KG/Primary schools and start my data collection.

### 3.6 Sampling

The sampling procedures for this study included two main stages, where the first one was related to the quantitative part of the research followed by sequential qualitative part of the inquiry. For the quantitative section of the study the sample was selected based on the total population sampling. According to Creswell “total population sampling is a type of purposive sampling technique where you choose to examine the entire populations that have a particular set of characteristics”. (Creswell p.8): the study also state that this type of sampling strategy is used for small-sized populations.

In our case, the survey was distributed among all teachers teaching in KG/Primary schools according to the upgraded curriculum, the total number of which was 15. Ninety-nine (99) teachers out of 102 responded to the survey, but three respondents filled the survey incorrectly. Therefore, the answers of 96 teachers were considered for data analysis

### **3.7 Population. Sample and Sampling Procedures**

Based on the 2018-19 GES data, the population of interest for the FOI was determined, which consisted of 15 schools that have both kindergarten and primary levels, out of the total of 135 public basic schools in Sawla, Tuna and Kalba. Out of the sample frame of 15 schools, 11(73.3%) were located in rural localities while the remaining 4 (27%) were schools in urban localities. Similarly, schools in deprived zones constituted 8 (53.3%) of the school population considered in the sample frame.

Each zone was randomly sampled for five (5) schools, summing up to fifteen (15) schools across the Sawl-Tuna-Kalba District. Within each zone, Schools were sorted into two groups based on their deprivation (deprived/non-deprived zones) status. Out of the 15 schools studied, 4 (27%) were from rural areas, while the remaining 11(73.3%) were from urban areas.

### **3.7 Data Collection**

Data collection instruments included three sets of questionnaires for head teachers, teachers and curriculum leads. For evidence, the following documentation was requested from the head teachers of the participating schools to show the state of implementation. These included minutes of curriculum Lead meetings, records of attendance, action plans and log books. Interviews and observations were conducted on head teachers, teachers, and curriculum leads. The questionnaires were uploaded

on the Zones Collect Application on questionnaires for data collection. Respondents were assigned to Sawla, Tuna and K alba zones and schools to collect data on head teachers, teachers and curriculum leads using the Zones Collect Application tool. To facilitate data collection, all curriculum leads were given questionnaires the data collection process was quality assured by officers from Sawla Tuna-Kalba zones

**Table1: Sampled School by Location**

Rural schools	Urban schools	Total	Schools in deprived zone	School in non-deprived zone	Total
34	16	50	16	38	54

Consequently, the sample was drawn from a sampling frame based on the 2018-2019 Education Management Information System (EMIS) data that contained a census of all primary schools

### 3.7.1 Head teacher Questionnaire Items (HQI)

The head teacher questionnaire focused on ensuring the effective implementation of the SBC' at the school level. Questions on head teachers' knowledge of the SBC, training of head teacher on the SBC. Vetting of teacher's lesson plans. Use of creative pedagogics by teachers and participation in PLC Activities were collected.

### 3.7.2 Teachers and Curriculum lead Questionnaire Items (TCLQI)

The teacher questionnaire covered the following areas: training on the SBC. Preparation on lesson plans. Use of phases of a lesson, use of creative pedagogics. Time on task, organization of and attendance to Respondents meetings.

### 3.8 Demographic Background of Respondents

#### Number of respondents

Zone	Teachers	Head Teacher	Curriculum leads
Sawla	40	5	4
Tuna	40	6	4
Kalba	22	5	3
Total	102	16	11

Table 2 revealed that headteachers were short by 2 out of 16 expected respondents representing 97% return rate for all zones while Curriculum Leads had a shortage of 2 respondents out of 11 representing 81.8% return rate. For teacher respondents, the return rate was approximately 94

### 3.9 Interview

The research instrument for collecting qualitative data was a semi – structured interview. Interview are considered to be a powerful tool allowing extracting more detailed data or deep understanding of the subject. That is why after the survey was completed, the study continued with qualitative interview in order to understand the reason to initial response and know teacher opinion about initiative introduce within framework of the upgraded program such as new curriculum, textbooks and new textbooks and new principles of assessment.

The format of semi-structured interviews allowed me to prepare some questions in advance and add more questions or skip some of them during the interview depending on the interviewee's responses and interview context. All interviews were conducted in quiet and private classrooms selected by interviewees so that they could feel comfortable and open to speak. One of the challenges of conducting interviews was an arrangement of time. As both of us, interviewer and interviewee were teachers

working in different schools with different timetables. There were cases when interviewees had to change the time of interviews due to unforeseen factors such as substituting their colleagues because of their absence at work. So, it took us long to find a mutually suitable time.

I conducted one interview with each of the eight respondents. The GES language was used in conducting the interviews based on the respondent's preference. The interviews lasted from 25 to 35 minutes. Continuing with informal talks. All valid data told during these talks were recorded in the notebook for further data analysis. Before the start of the interview, all respondents received informed consent forms in Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District (STKD) (Appendix C) describing in detail the purpose of the study. The procedure for conducting (the studies and informing about the role of the participants. their rights, and the possible risks in the study.

When designing the interview questions, I referred to the model proposed by GES. Who differentiated 3 stages of the interview: Focused life of history? that allowed me to get some background information about interviewees; 2) the details of experience, that let me to know about present experiences of teachers related to upgraded curriculum: and 3) reflection on the meaning, at this stage participants shared their reflections related to their current and old experiences. During the interviews, I tried to use only open-ended questions to get rich information answers and avoid close-ended Questions that may lead to short responses (Glesne, 2011). The sample of interview questions is given in Appendix D as well. As the format of the interviews was semi- structured, I also asked the follow-up questions where necessary. Note - taking was also used in order to record the key points for follow up questions.



During the interviews, I noticed that more experienced teachers tend to speak much and give more details to each question, while less experienced teachers preferred to answer quickly without more in-depth explanations. Also, there was a case with one experienced teacher, who was very positive about changes in the curriculum when the interview was recorded. However, when the recording of the interview stopped, she was more critical about the reform. This means that still, some teachers are afraid to report against the initiatives launched by authorities.

Overall, I interviewed eight teachers of different classes that allowed me to triangulate the data from different perspectives and improve its validity. According to Fox (2020), diversity of respondents admits to get a wide range of attitudes and draw conclusions based on a broadly representative sample” (p.8) even if they do not show the average view. On the other hand, a wide range of attitudes may minimize the amount of researcher’s bias that is considered as one cause of invalidity, because it allows the inquirer to regard the research topic from different angles. To sum up, I was pleased to interview the teachers and know more about their experiences. I expressed my appreciation and gratitude to every interviewee at the end of our conversations.

### **3.10 Data Analysis**

In explanatory sequential mixed methods approach the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the data are analyzed separately (Creswell, 2019). As the results of the quantitative part were supposed to identify the participants for the qualitative part. I started to analyze the quantitative data after survey completion. SPSS data management and statistical analysis tool was used to analyze the quantitative database



and find out prevalent Patterns and differences in teachers' attitudes towards the upgraded curriculum.

Basically, the descriptive analysis was used to identify the backgrounds of teachers and their attitudes towards new practices introduced within the framework of the implementation of curriculum. To be more precise, background characteristics of teachers. Their attitudes towards standard-based curriculum in the curriculum content, assessment system, attitudes towards teachers' competence and workload and attitudes towards support were briefly reported in terms of frequencies, percentages and means that were demonstrated in tables. In order to examine the possible relationships among experience of teachers and their attitudes towards changes in the curriculum, data obtained from the survey was also analyzed employing cross tabulations. I decided to use this statistical method, as it allows looking at the relationship between nominal (which is experience) and ordinal (agree", disagree" statements) variables. I checked the relationship between the variables through obtaining observed and expected counts in each cell, the different means of which may refer to the relationship between the variables. If there is no relationship, the cells should have the same number of observed and expected counts. The measures of association with GES were used to identify the effect size of the relationship if it was found between the variables.

As for the analysis of open-ended questions aimed to find out the aim, advantages and disadvantages of the upgraded curriculum as well as recommendations proposed by teachers, the data were coded under appropriate themes considering the survey questions. The analysis of quantitative data helped to build the next phase of the study and identify eight participants for the qualitative interview to preserve the integrity of

the interviews, they were recorded and then transcribed for data analysis. To separate them from each other, all interviews were given different marks. Then I transcribed verbatim all interviews that was really time-consuming. However, during this writing process, I had a chance to recall the information obtained during the interviews and reflect on their analysis.

Having transcribed all interviews, I proceeded to the next step of data analysis. I carefully read all the interview transcripts and generated line-by-line codes. This was the first cycle of coding (Saldana, 2019) that employed mainly two coding techniques such as descriptive coding, which summarizes the chunk of data in a word or short phrase, which represent direct quotations of participants (Saldana. 2019). All generated codes were examined more thoroughly in the second cycle of coding and divided into a smaller number of categories. The same was done with the notes that were taken during the interviews. Then I merged categories developed from each interview transcripts and interpreted them in my findings.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

#### **3.11.1 Permission to Conduct Research**

The researcher sought ethical clearance from the University to collect data on human beings on the topic teachers' attitude toward the implementation of the standards play-based curriculum. In addition, consent was sought from district education office and from respective school headteachers to administer the questionnaires with teachers of ECE in the respective public primary schools. To make the research participants aware of the purpose of the research, the researcher held discussions with the participants before beginning data collection. By so doing, the researcher made everything clear for the research participants that the data gathered were used to examine Lie status of early childhood education in Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District of the

Savannah region, Ghana. In addition, the researcher informed the participants that they have the right to express their ideas on the topic without any restriction, and differences of opinion, anonymity and confidentiality of their information will be respected.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter deals with the results and discussions of the study. The results and discussions have been presented sequentially as outlined in the objectives of the study.

#### 4.1 Characteristics of Respondents.

##### 4.1.1 Demographic

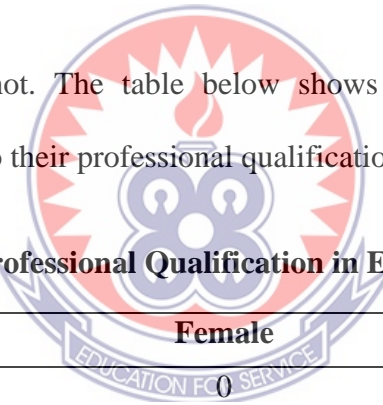
##### Participant's Professional Qualification in ECE

The participants were requested to indicate their professional qualifications in ECE.

This was important in this study to show whether the teachers handling ECE were

properly qualified or not. The table below shows the frequency distribution of participants according to their professional qualifications in ECE.

**Table 2: Participant Professional Qualification in Early Childhood Education**



Qualification	Female	Male
Masters in ECE	0	0
Degree in ECE	10	0
Diploma in ECE	12	2
Certificate in ECE	3	1
Other qualification	72	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>3</b>

The findings revealed that none of the participants had a master's degree in early childhood education, 10 teachers have bachelor's degree, 14 teachers have diploma in ECE, 4 teachers have certificate and 73 teachers have other qualification. Only twenty-seven (27) teachers signifying 27% indicated that they had a certificate in ECE. Further the findings of the study revealed that seventy-three (73) teachers

representing 73% had other qualifications. This is an indication that most of the teachers who taught ECE were not qualified to teach ECE.

The objective of the demographic characteristics was to find out more about the respondents. Therefore, the results on the demographic characteristics covered the number of schools, sex, number of years of teaching and highest academic qualification of the respondents.

**Table 3: Distribution of Sex of Respondents**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Female	46	45.0
Male	56	55.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: field survey (2023)**

Table 1 represents the sex distribution of the respondents which was 46 females as against 56 males. The result gives a good picture of the population of male teachers as compared to the females in the teaching of Standards Play-Based Curriculum.

In this chapter I present the findings of my research on teachers' attitude towards the implementation of the upgraded curriculum. As the research methodology was a mixed study, first I present results of descriptive statistics followed by the findings from the qualitative part of the study. I first present the descriptive analysis of teachers' attitudes towards the standard play-based curriculum. The survey results describing teachers' opinions about the content of the new curriculum and new assessment practices are presented in this section as well as findings related to teachers' competence and 'workload after implementation of the standards play-based curriculum and support that teachers get during its application.

Further, the chapter covers the analysis of qualitative data and is organized around three main themes identified during the data analysis: 1) teachers' attitudes in implementing the standards play-based curriculum: ii) factors enabling curriculum implementation; iii) factors impeding curriculum implementation.

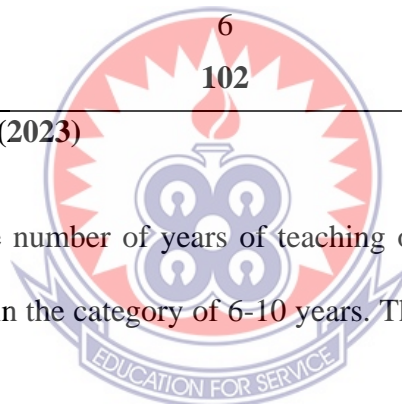
#### 4.2 Quantitative data

**Table 4: Distribution of Number of Years of Teaching**

Number of Years	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-5	32	32.5
6-10	37	37.5
11-15	17	17.5.
16 – 20	7	7.5
21 and above	6	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Survey (2023)**

Table 2 represents the number of years of teaching of respondents. Majority of the respondents were within the category of 6-10 years. The frequency of 37 representing 37.5%.



#### 4.2 Training on the Standards Play-Based Curriculum

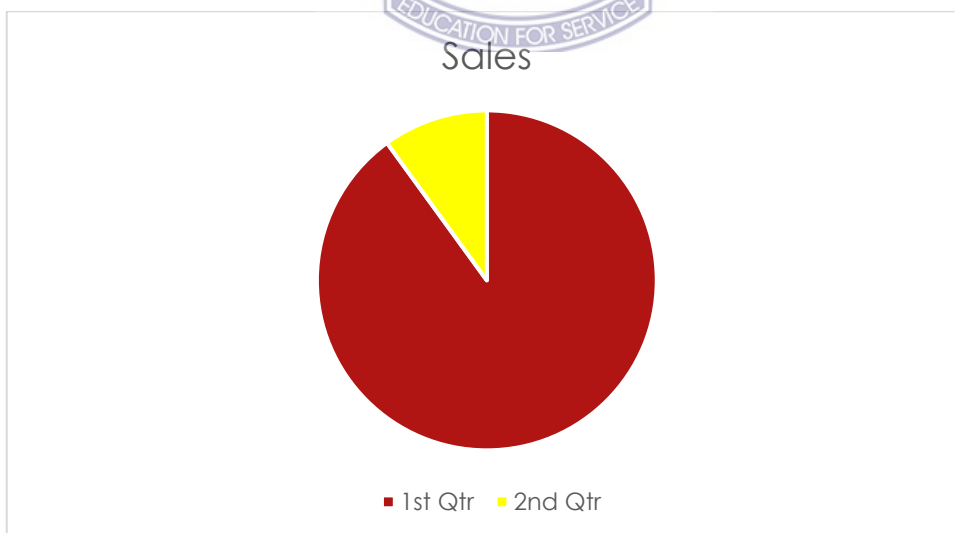
Group (6-10yrs) had the highest percentage of teachers Trained on Standards Play-Based Curriculum.



**Figure 2: Training in Standards Play-Based Curriculum Headteacher's**

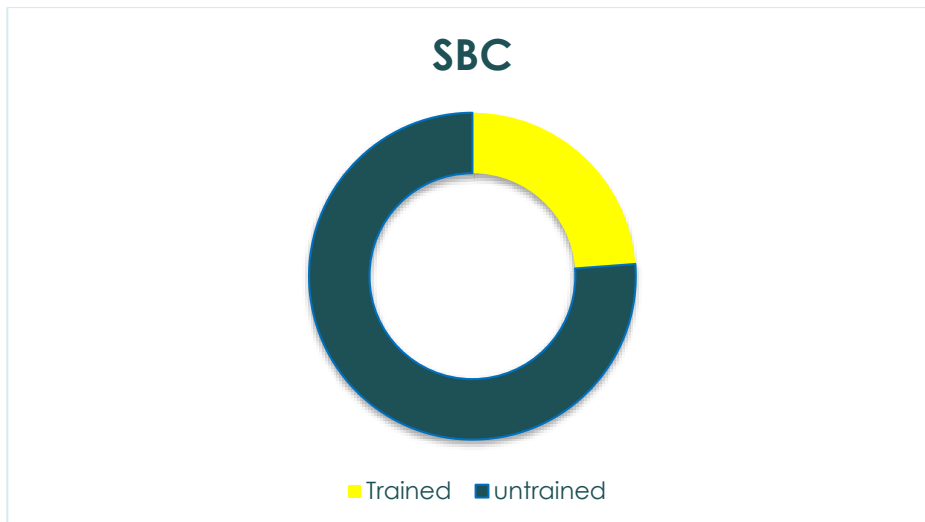
Figure 2 represents data on the percentage of headteachers who have either received training in the Standards Play-Based Curriculum or not. Out of the 16 headteachers, 3 representing 5% have not been trained on the Standards Play-Based Curriculum curriculum.

The results were presented in Table 4.



**Figure 3: Percentage of Teachers Trained on the SBC**





**Figure 4: Percentage of Curriculum Leads Trained on the SBC'**

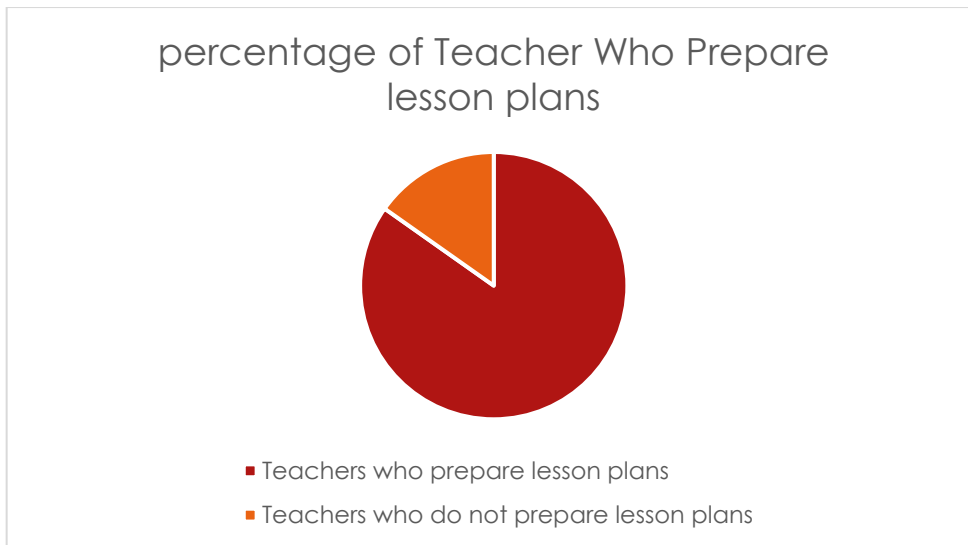
Figure 2: Teacher trained on SBC Figure 2 represents the result of teachers trained on the SBC. Out of 92 teachers, 37 (15%) have not been trained on the SI3C while 74 (85%) have been trained on the SBC. The 15% who have not been trained will have difficulties in implementing the SBC. On the other hand, teachers who have been trained on the SBC requested refresher tr2

*Figure 4: (curriculum, leads Trained on Standards- based Curriculum,*

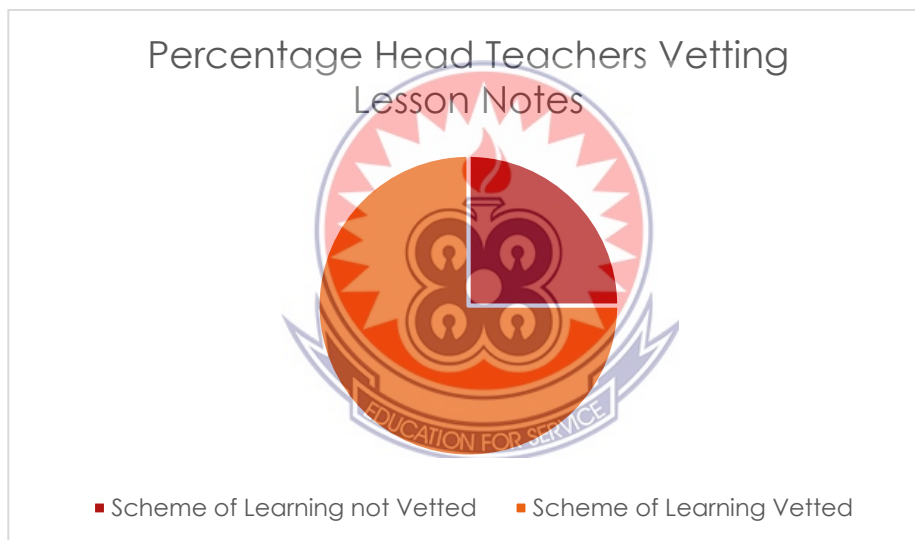
Figure 4 shows result of Curriculum leads trained on SBC. Of the II Curriculum leads data received. 2 (8%) of them have not been trained on the SBC. This may also highly affect the implementation of the SBC. As the CLs are strategically placed to provide leadership and technical support for PLC meetings.

#### **4.3 Planning- Preparation and Vetting of Lesson Plan**

As part of preparation for lesson delivery teachers are expected to prepare weekly lesson plans while the headteacher vets them.



**Figure 5: Percentage of Teachers Who Prepare Lesson Plan**



**Figure 6: Percentage of Headteachers Vetting Lesson Note**

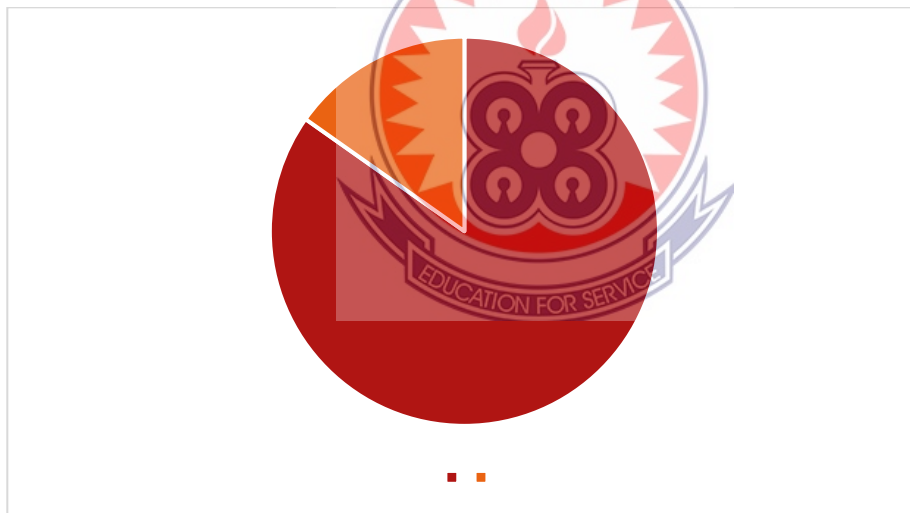
Figure 5 shows result of teachers who prepare lesson plans. Of the 92 teachers interviewed, 82 (89%) of them prepares lesson plans based on termly schemes of learning. This demonstrates that teacher's are committed to the development of lesson plans. However, 10 (11%) teachers do not develop lesson plans. This could also have an impact on how they teach in class. The vast majority of the lesson plans that were seen were obtained from the internet.

Figure 6 depicts result of headteacher who vet lesson notes. Lesson plans and termly schemes of learning are not vetted by 4 (%) of the 16 headteachers. This could have an impact on learning outcomes. However, 82 (89%) examine lesson plans and termly schemes of learning. This demonstrates the commitment of school headteachers to provide high-quality instruction in their schools.

#### **4.4 Delivery. - Integration of Assessment for Learning and Creative Pedagogies in Delivery**

On this indicator, the focus was on three areas: Integration of Assessment for Learning, use of creative pedagogies and Effective use of the phases of lesson delivered.

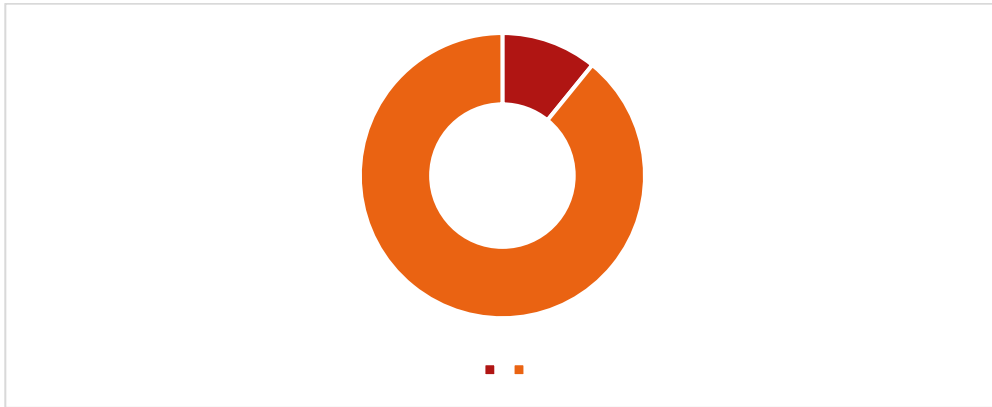
Percentage of Teachers Who Integrate Strategies in Instruction (GES 2020)



**Figure 7: Integration of (GES) into Teaching**

Figure 9 depicts teachers who integrate strategies in their lesson delivery. Of the 92 teachers. 78 reported they use assessment for learning approaches in their lessons. Accounting for 98% of the total. As indicated by 10 (99%) of headteacher data provided, teachers use assessment for learning methodologies in their Lesson delivery.

### Percentage of Teachers Who Use Creative Pedagogy in Instruction

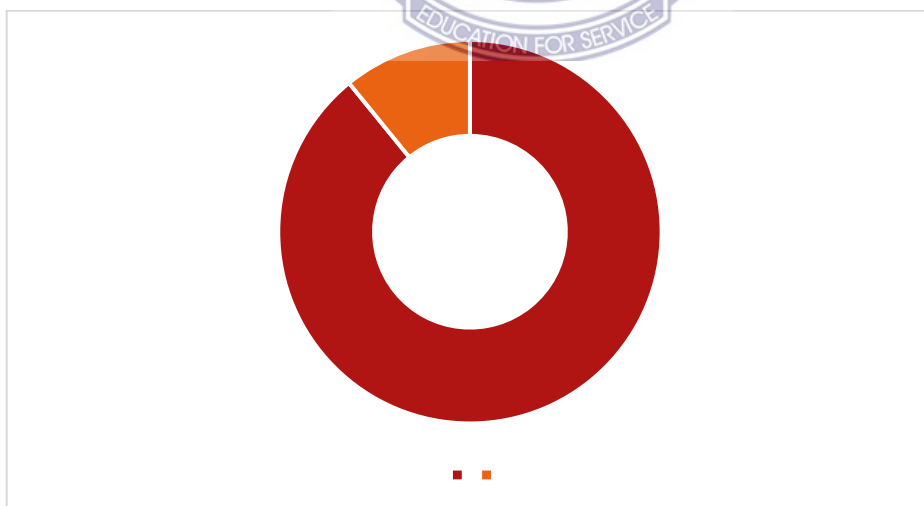


**Figure 8: (No of 'Creative Pedagogies)**

Figure 10 shows results of teachers who use creative pedagogies in teaching. Of the 92 teachers polled, 10 (3%) do not use creative pedagogies. Although, the percentage of teachers not using creative pedagogies is minimal, there is the need for all teachers to use this approach for effective learning and teaching.

### 4.5 Use of Lesson Phases in teaching

#### Percentage of Teachers Who Use Phases in Lesson Delivery



**Figure 9: Teachers who Use Lesson Phase in Teaching**

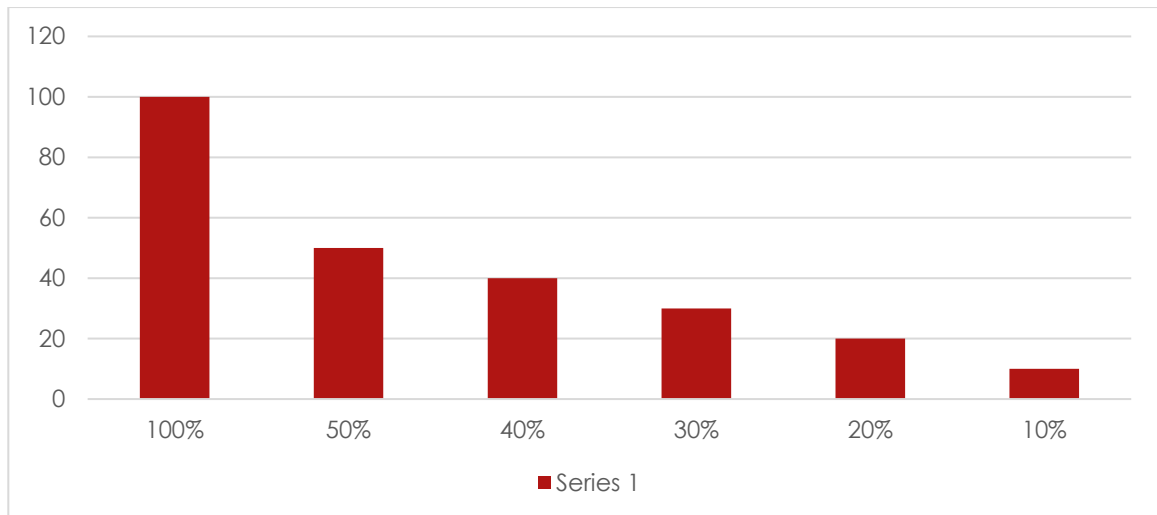
Figure 11 represents the results of teachers who use phases of a lesson in teaching. Of the 92 teachers polled, 89 (98%) of the teachers said they use the three phases of lesson delivery (starter, Main lesson, and plenary / reflection) their lesson. which were observed School improvement Support Officers (SISOs) backed up this claim The three phases of lesson delivery are not used by 25 (2%) of teachers. This shows that these teachers do not effectively plan their lessons, which could have a detrimental impact on learners' learning outcomes.

#### **4.6 Organization of PLC Meetings within a Term**

A greater proportion of the Curriculum Leads 9 (98.6%) does not hold PLC meetings on a regular basis in their schools. (Benchmark set at 6 or more). Evidently, out of the total 16 headteachers interviewed, 14 respondents representing 97% do not organize PLC meetings regularly. The teacher data revealed that 89 (98 %) of respondents were not regular in PLC meetings. A further discussion with some head teachers indicated that they were unaware PLC meetings should be organized weekly.

##### **4.6.1 Attendance to PLC Meetings by Teachers**

In a term of twelve (12) to fourteen (14) weeks, the teachers are expected to attend PLC meetings regularly within the term. Figure 12 below shows the results of the attendance at PLC meetings. Number of Teachers Who Are Regular at PLC Meetings



**Figure 10: Number of Teachers 4 Trending at Least 6 PLC Meetings**

The results show the number of teachers attending the minimum number (6) of PLC meetings per term.

#### 4.6.2 Challenges of Curriculum Lead

**Table 5: Other challenges enumerated by the Curriculum Leads**

- 
- Not organizing PLC meetings and has just taken over duties
  - Difficulties in bringing resource persons
  - Low knowledge on SBC/ inadequate knowledge / I don't have enough training
  - Newly posted teachers with no training in PLC
  - No relevant teaching and learning materials
  - Indifferent attitude of teachers towards PLC
  - Teachers do not see the need for it
  - Difficulty in identifying individual teacher problems
  - Teachers leaving school before school closing
  - One hour duration is not enough
  - Difficulty in funding resource persons
  - Some teachers are sometimes not willing to facilitate due to a lack of confidence
-

#### 4.6.3 Challenges of Teachers

**Table 6: Problems Associated Teachers with the Implementation of the SBC**

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Inadequate knowledge of the SBC
Insufficient curriculum in the school
Lack of textbooks for early childhood and primary
Lack of teaching and learning aid
Difficulty getting materials and resources

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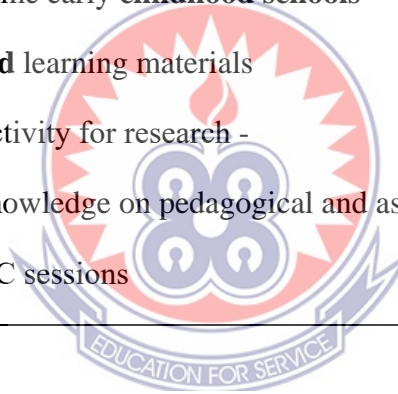
#### 4.6.4 Challenges Headteachers Face in the Implementation of the SBC

**Table 7: Challenges Headteachers Face in the Implementation of the SBC**

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Inadequate <b>staffing</b> in some early <b>childhood schools</b>
• Inadequate teaching <b>and</b> learning materials
• Lack of Internet connectivity for research -
• Inadequate Teachers knowledge on pedagogical <b>and</b> assessment strategies
• Inadequate time for PLC sessions

---



#### 4.7 Recommendations

It is highly recommended that:

1. GES in collaboration with NaCCA should develop a tailor-made content module for headteachers and SISOs to have an understanding on the rudiments of the SBC and equip them with the requisite competencies for supervisory role.
2. GES in collaboration with NaCCA should identify teachers who are not trained on the SBC and provide training for them to enable them implement the SBC effectively.



3. The Curriculum leads provide leadership and technical support during PCL meetings therefore their in-depth understanding of the SBC is needed to enable them lead. In order to play their role effectively, they **must** be trained.
4. Headteachers should ensure that teachers prepare their own lesson plans for the early childhood. It was found that teachers download lesson plans from the internet. These are substandard lesson plans that are developed by faceless individuals whose technical expertise are unknown, It is apparent that, these rogue websites influence what should be taught and how it should be taught in various classrooms across Ghana. This report recommends that, the rogue website uploading 'cooked' substandard lesson plans should be brought down.
5. DEOs and S (SOs should hold headteachers accountable for vetting lesson plans including yearly and termly schemes of learning. This requires strengthening school level accountability by the districts.

#### **4.7.1 Teachers' Attitudes towards the Upgraded Curriculum**

As was mentioned above, the second section of the questionnaire included 30 statements about curriculum change. All these statements were divided into thematically categories depending on the topic of questions such as attitudes towards the content of the upgraded curriculum, attitudes towards assessment, support and attitudes towards teacher competence and development. First, descriptive analysis was used to calculate the percentages, numerical mean and standard deviation for each statement and those statements were tabulated in descending Order. The findings then expanded with four open-ended questions that were also included in the questionnaire (these questions asked for advantages and disadvantages of the upgraded curriculum and recommendations).

#### **4.7.2 Attitudes towards the Content of the Upgraded Curriculum**

Regarding the teachers' attitudes towards the content of the upgraded curriculum, the survey results indicated that little more than half of the teachers (52.4%) agree that the new curriculum gives an opportunity to develop more skills than the old one

#### **4.7.3 Differences in Teachers' Attitudes towards Upgraded Curriculum**

According to mean scores of the Statements, it can be concluded that overall, the teachers are of positive opinion about the new curriculum. However, if we look at the standard deviation of most answers, we can notice that *it's* quite large which means that the values in the data set are farther away from the mean, on average. This reflects a variation of answers. Consequently, the attitudes of teachers. That is why I decided to look at the differences in teachers' attitudes according to the subjects they taught and years of their teaching experiences. As was mentioned before the survey included some open-ended questions aiming to find out the advantages and disadvantages of the upgraded curriculum as well as challenges that teacher's face in its implementation. Besides, teachers were asked to express their suggestions regarding the new curriculum. Before analyzing the responses for open-ended questions in general.

First, I wanted to review the answers of teachers with less than 15 years of experience and more than 16 years of experience separately. For this. I selected each group of cases and regarded them apart. This procedure allowed me to compare the answers of two different group of teachers and find out similarities and differences in their attitudes that are presented below. According to answers, the upgraded curriculum allows students to develop their critical thinking, research skills and ability to express their thoughts freely. They also admitted that the content of the program is interesting for students and that most tasks are connected with real-life situations. Another advantage of the new curriculum indicated by teachers is high participation of students.

According to the upgraded curriculum, students learn to work in groups which also ensure the full engagement of all students in the learning process and create the condition for the development of collaboration skills. Those teachers with less than 15 years of teaching experience indicated as one of the advantages of the upgraded curriculum new assessment system that is criterion-based assessment. They answered that it helps to evaluate the knowledge acquired by students at the appropriate level. However, it is interesting that the majority of experienced teachers that have been teaching for more than 16 years reported that the given criterion-based assessment is the main disadvantage of the new curriculum. They stated that it is difficult to track students' performance without the traditional grading system. One of the teachers also reported that such situation leads to misunderstanding between pupils and teachers. Also, the lack of teaching hours and learning resources hinder the efficiency of the learning process. Some teachers are not in favor of grouping methods stating that it becomes too noisy on the lessons, while others consider that this method is not appropriate for their classes (SBC) where mostly individual work of students is preferred.

Also, some teachers complained that the tasks given in the textbooks do not correspond to the age level of students, and as a result, they fall behind their classmates. While young teachers reported that the upgraded curriculum simplified the workload of students by reducing the amount of homework, experienced teachers regarded it as a threat due to which students began to neglect their studies? It was also interesting that 8 young teachers reported that they do not see any difficulties in the implementation of the upgraded curriculum.

According to the answers above, it seems like teachers' perceptions about the new curriculum vary depending on their years of experience. While most of the teachers with less than 15 years of experience see only advantages of the upgraded curriculum and support the new initiative of policymakers, more experienced teachers express their resentments against the upgraded curriculum. The main difference in the attitudes of teachers was mainly about assessment. In this regard to make more profound analysis, I run cross tabulations between statements on assessment and the years of experience of teachers (Table 5). These tables allow us to look at and examine the relationship between two discrete variables more closely.

**Table 8: The Relationship between Two Discrete Variables**

Criterion	-based	Strongly disagree	Count	Experience	16	years	Total
				1-15 years			
Assessment students Knowledge	show Real	Strongly disagree	Count	4	1	5	
			Expected count	2,6	2,4	5,0	
			% within experience	18,2%	5,0%	11,9%	
		Disagree	Count	8	7	15	
			Expected count	7,9	7,1	15,0	
			% within experience	36,4%	35,0%	35,7%	
		Neither agree nor disagree	Count	0	5	5	
			Expected count	2,6	2,4	5,0	
			% within experience	0,0%	25,0%	11,9%	
		Agree	Count	10	7	17	
			Expected count	8,9	8,1	17,0	
			% within experience	45,5%	35,0%	40,5%	
Total	Count	22	20	42			
	Expected count	22,0	20,0	42,0			
	% within experience	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%			

#### **4.7.4 Qualitative Data Analysis**

Having analyzed the answers on the survey about the upgraded curriculum. Eight teachers were selected for the qualitative interviews. The main criterion for their selection for the interview was connected to the identification of teachers with different attitudes towards the upgraded curriculum. They were also supposed to represent different classes, and they should have different years of teaching experiences. All the interviews were transcribed and analyzed by hand using codes which allowed me to organize and systemize the findings into following themes: (1) teachers' attitude in implementing the standards play-based curriculum; (2) factors that support implementation; (3) factors that impede implementation.

#### **4.7.5 Teachers' Attitudes of Implementing the Standards Play Based Curriculum**

As mentioned above, the implementation of the upgraded curriculum includes the changes in three main components of the curriculum such as content, assessment system and teaching approaches. These themes were also revealed from the interviews, where teachers expressed their perceptions of how they experience the changes in these components while implementing the new curriculum. In addition, as most of the interviewees were class teachers, they also shared their perceptions of teaching and regarded this new initiative of trilingual as a part of the upgraded curriculum. Thus, this sub-section is going to present the findings related to the following themes: I) attitude of upgraded content; ii) attitude of new assessment; iii) changes in teaching approaches and IV) attitude of teaching SBC.

#### **4.7.6 Perceptions of the Standards Play-Based Curriculum Content**

All interviewed teachers acknowledged that the upgraded curriculum is aimed to increase the quality of education and prepare pupils who will be able to contribute to the development of the country in the future. Another advantage that was recognized by the teachers is an opportunity to develop open-minded students free to express their thoughts and opinions. This feature of the upgraded curriculum was also noted by most school teachers in the survey answers. It's not surprising that the teachers decided to highlight this skill mainly because the old curriculum inherited from Soviet times was focused more on factual knowledge and memorization skills. Other skills that were mentioned by the teachers are critical thinking skills, creative skills, research skills and independent learning. Based on these answers, it can be concluded that all the participants are aware of the goal of implementing the standards play-based curriculum.

As for the content of subjects. All the teachers reported that they now have to introduce the learning objectives at the beginning of every lesson that takes approximately five minutes, therefore allowing students to set the learning objectives for the lesson. The students work in order to achieve the learning objectives during the lesson. However, Laura, one of the teachers, stated that “pupils do not even pay attention to learning objectives”.

Overall, from the findings above it can be concluded that teachers understand the benefits of implementation of standards play-based curriculum and express positive thoughts about changes in the content of learning materials and tasks that allows students to save their time and enhance knowledge from different perspectives. However, some teachers have concerns about the amount of information provided in the textbooks.

#### **4.7.7 Factors that Support Curriculum Implementation**

In order to implement the new curriculum, teachers need to be ready and well prepared. Moreover, the application of new practices should be reported at different levels. This subsection is going to report on the factors that support the implementation of the new reform.

#### **4.7.8 Teachers' Collaboration**

Not only professional development courses and training organized at the regional and city level can assist teachers in the implementation of the standards play-based curriculum. Another supportive factor is teachers' collaboration within the school. All teachers reported that there is a strong collaboration between teachers that is reflected in the form of workshops, mentorship and joint lesson planning.

##### **i. Workshops**

As was mentioned before. Not all teachers were trained at professional development courses. However, they can learn about the content of those courses through delivering the training sessions in the form of workshops. Usually, newly certified teachers and trainers organize different workshops and master classes, which are very helpful for young teachers.

##### **ii. Mentorship**

Another form of teacher collaboration is a mentorship program. Usually, more experienced teachers are assigned mentees. Whom they should guide and provide methodical support. Such help is highly appreciated by young teachers that allow them to discuss and receive constructive feedback and learn insights of the teaching profession. As one of the young teachers commented. I got a lot of inspiration from my mentor. When I observe her lesson. I try to keep in mind her teaching style and



techniques. It was pleasant to learn that not only assigned mentors, but also other schools teachers share their experiences with young teachers. As Aidana shares: ‘All experienced teachers are always ready to share their knowledge with me’.

### **iii. Joint Lesson Planning**

Not only less experienced teachers need methodical support. As the initiation of reform has started recently. Teachers still have challenges related to lesson planning and assessment techniques. In order to solve these issues, teachers prefer to gather and plan the Lessons together. Such joint lesson planning helps to clarify learning objectives, cross-curricular links, create success criteria and descriptors for formative assessment.

### **iv. Methodical Support**

Along with professional competence that is enhanced through the factors mentioned above, one more thing that improves teachers’ readiness to implement the new curriculum is methodical support. All interviewed teachers shared their positive attitudes towards class resources such as texts books, teachers guide, and lesson note books and syllabus. These first one helps teachers to prepare the lesson plans and find all necessary teaching materials, the following website allows teachers to organize and conduct lessons in the interactive form. Respondents’ answers show that teachers are aware of using online resources and teaching documents, that provides substantial methodical help in the implementation of the standard-based curriculum.

#### **4.7.9 Factors that Impede Curriculum Implementation**

This sub-section presents the factors hindering the implementation of the standards play-based curriculum that was mentioned by teachers in the interviews. Many teachers indicated as the obstacles the following factors: a) poor educational resources, b) big

size classes and diversity of students, c) d) poor parental involvement, c) lack of time and workload.

#### **4.7.10 Poor educational resource**

In order to support and implement the curriculum, the school should provide appropriate educational support and resources. The interview results show that the provision of educational resources is inferior in KG/Primary school. The (first concern of class teachers are classroom equipment that is outdated and not well maintained to support the learning objectives. Teachers reported that all teaching materials are in short supply and due to this they have to use their mobile phones in order to fill the material gap. According to classroom teachers, the content of the curriculum requires to conduct a lot of practical works such as experiments and demonstrations in a well-equipped classroom which they do not have at all. Such situation deprives pupils an opportunity to perform measurements and observations, collect data and carry out data analysis. Also, teachers reported about the difficulty of applying some active teaching methods in the classroom due to class sizes and old furniture.

The space in most classrooms is filled by students' desks that are hard to move, therefore not allowing easy movement around the classroom that consequently leads to inhibition of pupils' participation in the proposed activities. Parents play a significant role in the life of every early childhood and should be directly involved in their educational process. However, the answers of respondents demonstrate that nowadays, parents are very busy and pay less attention to the education of their children. They shifted full responsibility for their children's education onto teachers and consequently did not control their studies at home. As one of the teachers commented: "Now parents do not sit at the table with their children discussing their school life. On the contrary,

they ask children to sit quietly to drink their cup of tea and relax after a long working day” (Sarfo). Teachers also reported that now parents prefer to give their children to various paid educational centers as they do not understand the new program and cannot help their children. Also, one of the young teachers stated that they don’t receive any support from the parents. The last ones prefer to blame teachers in low performance of their children.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATION

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the summary of the findings of the study, conclusions drawn from the results and recommendations made for the study.

In the previous chapter, I described the findings drawn from the survey and interviews. The purpose of this chapter is to interpret the findings of the study through analyzing them in relation to the reviewed literature and research questions.

#### 5.2 Summary of Findings

##### 5.2.1 The Nature of the Standards Play- Based Curriculum Implementation.

According to teachers, the modern world requires people to have more skills than before, and that is why it is essential to develop in students the skills of 21st Century such as critical thinking, communication, research and collaboration skills that are emphasized within the framework of the standards play-based curriculum. Particularly teachers highlighted the development of communication skills in students stating that now learners express their thoughts freely in comparison with the previous generation educated according to the old curriculum. This finding is in the lines of earlier literature that criticized the previous curriculum influenced by GES for being rigid and knowledge-based.

However, the most striking result to emerge from the data is that even in Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District at times, teachers used practical work in the curriculum implementation and differentiated pupils according to their abilities, which contradicts the previous studies on Standards play-based curriculum stating that early childhood education did not teach children to apply their knowledge in real life and that it was inaccessible for

low performing students. Results of the study also revealed four main changes that teachers have experienced since implementation of new reform: 1) changes in the content; 2) changes in the Implementation 3) changes in pedagogy and 4) introduction of trilingual education this tells us about the complex nature of the standard-based curriculum that corresponds to the description provided by Fullan (2019). He describes the nature of curriculum implementation as a multidimensional process manifested through changes in the learning materials, teaching approaches and teachers' beliefs, if changes in the content of the upgraded curriculum can be related to new learning materials, alterations in assessment, pedagogy and introduction of trilingual education can pertain to changes in the teaching approach. As for the third dimension represented by modification of teachers' beliefs the results of the survey and interviews revealed that not all teachers have positive attitudes of the standards play-based curriculum which means that their attitudes have not been changed yet. Teachers reported that they apply new teaching methods and learning materials as they are required to do so, which confirms that teachers still play the role of technical deliverers of guidelines and schemes" (Goodson 2019, p.23).

However, it does not mean that their perceptions have been changed as well. Such behavior of teachers can be explained as "reactive change" (Adjei 2020) that implies the implementation of change as a response to demands coming from the authorities. The fact that not all teachers have changed their attitudes towards the new reform indicates that implementation of the upgraded curriculum went only through two dimensions of change (Fullan, 2019; unless all three components are modified, the change in the curriculum will be superficial only. On the other hand, we cannot state that changes taking place in the kindergarten and primary schools are only surface change, as there were also teachers who had positive perceptions of the standards play-

based curriculum. Mainly, these were teachers who had from 1 to 15 years of teaching experience. During the interviews, these teachers excelled in a high commitment to implementing the new practices within their classroom. This means that along with reactive teachers, there are also proactive teachers, who are enthusiastic in the improvement of teaching and learning process. We should also take into account that it is only the third year since the phased implementation of the curriculum has started, which is not an extended period. According to reviewed literature, successful implementation of any reform takes longer time unless people understand the meaning of change (Fullan, 2019). Implementation of the standards play-based curriculum.

### **5.2.2 Teachers' Perceptions and Factors Influencing on their Attitudes towards the Curriculum**

All findings were interpreted through the GES model of change in teachers' attitude that guided this research. According to GES). Change in teachers' perceptions is a linear process that is based on the set of outcomes. To change the attitude, first teachers need to go through professional development and raise their qualifications. Then they should apply new practices within their classrooms and observe if these new classroom experiences lead to positive results in pupils' outcomes that can be reflected either in their final scores or in their behaviour during the lessons. Finally, having witnessed the positive improvements in pupils. Teachers will be able to change their attitudes in the Sawla Tuna-Kalba District of the Savannah Region in Ghana.

However, not all teachers participated in my study suited this model. The model was applicable only to more experienced teachers who had been trained at professional development courses and practicing new methods. Most of these teachers reported that due to a new assessment system, which does not evaluate the performance of pupils,

except the results of pupils' preparedness to the lessons dropped. Consequently, this led to the negative outcomes in pupils' performance that was a great concern to teachers, therefore, impeding the change in teachers' attitude towards the implementation of the standards-based curriculum. Also, the diversity of students' abilities and the big number of students in one class did not allow implementing the content of the standards-based curriculum effectively, that again led to poor pupils' performance. However, pupils' performance was not the only reason of negative attitudes of teachers. Another factor that constrained the change in their beliefs was connected with the pupil-centered approach, where mostly learners were supposed to be encouraged to study independently. More experienced teachers were mainly accustomed to teacher-centered approach and regarded it as the only effective way to deliver the knowledge. This fact refers to the pedagogical legacy of teacher that was described by Fullan (2019) as one of the factors disrupting the change in the teachers' perceptions.

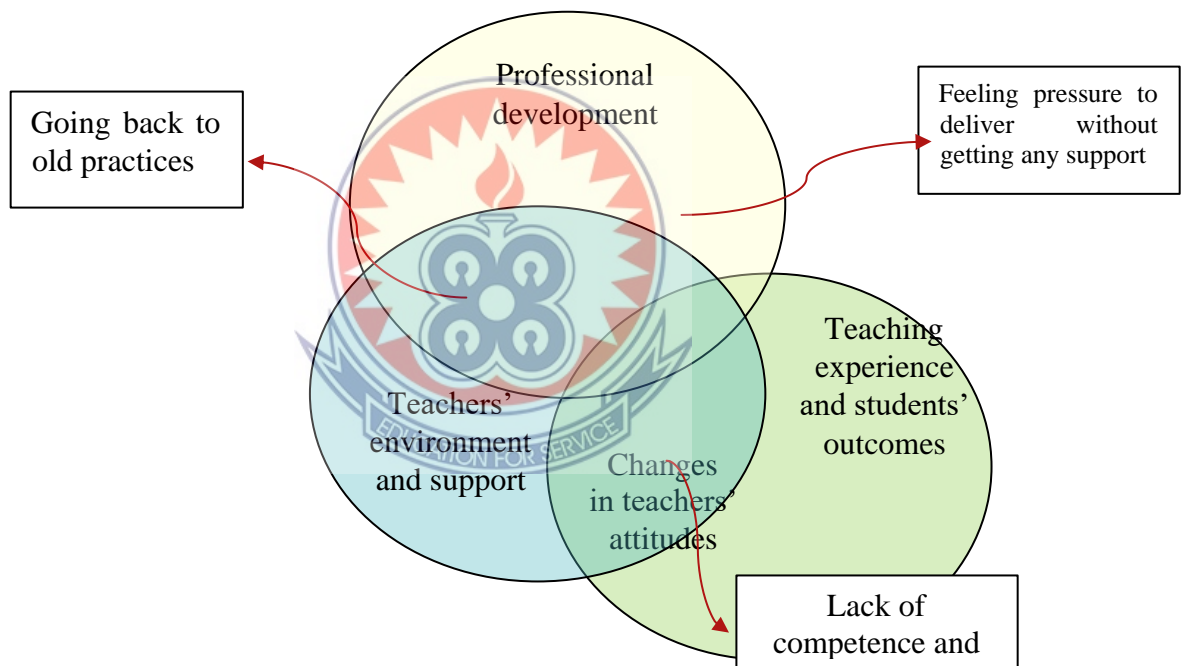
On the other hand, in my findings, there were less experienced teachers who still had not been trained at professional Standards-Based Curriculum courses, but despite this fact, they had positive beliefs in the standard play-based curriculum. Their positive reaction to the change was based upon the new role and attitude of teachers as facilitators of learning process prescribed to them by the standards play-based curriculum as **well** as positive pupils outcomes followed from **their increased active** participation during the lessons. It was interesting that less experienced teachers were pleased with their new role while more experienced teachers regarded it as an inefficient teaching approach. At the same time, less experienced teachers expressed their wishes to be trained and enhance their pedagogical competence and understand the reform purpose better in order to feel themselves more confident in the implementation of the standard-based curriculum. The present findings also support



GES, who concluded that successful curriculum implementation requires well-trained teachers able to comprehend the sense of the change. Regarding the preparedness of teachers, the findings also revealed that even some experienced and trained teachers were not sure in their skills due to ineffective professional Standards-Based Curriculum courses that they had been trained at. The similar results were obtained in the study conducted by this researcher) on curriculum change in Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District where teachers were not ready for new curriculum because of incompetent teacher training. Among participants, there were also trained teachers effectively implementing new practices and getting good results from pupils, but complaining about the lack of educational resources and support from administration. As a result, these teachers had increased workload because they had to spend too much time in search of necessary learning materials for their lessons.

As we can see, teachers' attitude of implementing the standards play-based curriculum split into two. If some teachers had positive beliefs regarding new practices. Some teachers expressed negative concerns about the implementation of the standards-based curriculum. The different reaction of teachers can be caused by the factors that impede implementation of the upgraded curriculum, which are not taken into account in GES model. In this regard, the research findings support the criticism came from Peter (2020) against the GES model slating that there are more interacting factors like knowledge, professional experiences, the outcomes, sources of information and support. The teachers who responded in my study stated if all obstacles were addressed and solved, the implementation of the Standards-Based Curriculum would be easy for them. For teachers, the upgraded curriculum is associated with an empty house without any living conditions. First, there is a need to create appropriate conditions for curriculum implementation. And only then launch the reform. Having analyzed all the

findings and compared them with the GES model of teachers' change, I developed the new model of change in teachers' attitude based on the perceptions of Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District school teachers in (Figure 3). This model explains how change occurs in teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of the standards play-based curriculum. According to findings of this study, teachers' perceptions and attitudes are determined by three main components which are: 1) professional development that includes professional competence and skills of teachers; 2) teachers' environment and support, that stands for all education all educational resources and support both methodical supports.



**Figure 11: Model of Change in Teachers' Attitudes based on the Perceptions of KG/Primary Teachers in Sawla Tuna-Kalba**

Having analyzed all the findings and compared them with the GES model of teachers' change. I developed the new model of change in teachers' attitude based on the perceptions of Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District school teachers in (Figure 3). This model explains how change occurs in teachers' attitude towards the implementation of the

standards play-based curriculum. According to findings of this study, teachers' perceptions and attitudes are determined by three main components which are: 1) professional development, that includes professional competence and skills of teachers; 2) teachers' environment and support. That stands for all educational resources and support both methodical support and from administration; and the last one 3) teaching experiences and pupils' outcomes that include daily practices, experiments of teachers' reflection in pupils' performance and behavior. All these components are closely interconnected with each other Teachers will change their attitudes if the change occurs in all three components. If one of the components is not established, it will lead to adverse outcomes that affect the change in teachers' attitudes. For instance, if teachers are well trained and have successfully implemented the new practices demonstrating the improvement in learners' performance. But at the same time, they do not get any support from administration or lack appropriate learning resources, this will result in an increased workload and pressure on the teachers. If teachers are well trained and provided with all necessary support and learning materials, but they fail in applying new methods and do not see any pupils' improvements, they will go back to their old practices. If the teachers have enough educational resources and effective new practices but not enough qualifications, in this case, teachers will feel the lack of pedagogical competence and self-efficacy. So, every component plays a vital role in the establishment of positive attitudes of teachers towards standard-based curriculum educational change in the Sawla Tuna-Kala District.. Therefore, the challenges occurring in one of the components should be addressed immediately.

### **5.2.3 What are Teachers' Perceptions of Implementing the Standards-Based Curriculum?**

Teachers' attitude **of the implementation of standard-based curriculum varies depending** on the teaching experience of educators. If less experienced teachers have more positive attitudes towards the changes in the content and teaching approach implemented within the framework of the upgraded curriculum, more experienced teachers express their resentments against these changes stating that their previous practices were more beneficial in regard of teaching and learning process.

The findings also show that the most challenging component to apply is criterion-based assessments that is misunderstood and misinterpreted by all stakeholders. Surprisingly all Standards-based curriculum teachers have positive attitudes towards trilingual education according to which they should instruct the lesson in English. Despite the lack of speaking **skills, teachers still regard** it as an opportunity for **the** professional growth **of** teachers **and the** opportunity to enhance the language proficiency for pupils.

### **5.2.4 What Factors Influence Teachers' Attitudes towards the Standard-Based Curriculum?**

The study found that changes **in teachers' attitude** towards the **SBC occur** due to three main components that are professional development **of** teachers, teachers' environment and support and teaching experiences reflected in student outcomes. The factors that **impede** implementation of the upgraded curriculum such as lack of educational resources, diversity of students, big class sizes, poor parental involvement, lack **of** time and increased workload

### 5.3 Research Implications and Recommendations

This study in the first step has gone some way towards enhancing our understanding of teachers' attitude on the standard-based curriculum implementation that is going on all over Sawla Tuna-Kalba District and is considered as the major curriculum reform implemented in the district. Given the topicality of the research, this study presents several implications and recommendations for policymakers and schools:

Most teachers reported that the lack of educational resources dampens their enthusiasm for implementing the standards play-based curriculum. There is a need to update classroom furniture to be suitable to apply new teaching methods so that learners could move their desks to arrange the group work during the lessons. Also, schools should ensure the availability of computers, Printers, interactive whiteboards and projectors in every classroom so that teachers could use them during the lessons. Teachers reported that it is difficult to conduct lessons in big size classes. Division of pupils into two groups can be a perfect solution to this problem.

Gradual implementation of trilingual education; Despite the positive attitudes of teachers towards the trilingual education, teachers think that this initiative should start in a gradual application from the first grade. Only thus, teachers, as well as learners, will be ready to speak fluently in English. But now they are not prepared. To promote the parent-school relationship; the findings revealed that parents are less interested in the studies of their children due to the misunderstanding of the upgraded curriculum that may cause conflicts between teachers and parents. It is suggested that more family community engagement should be organized where all teachers and parents could participate together and discuss the current educational issues. I believe that the results

of this study may improve the knowledge about the nature of curriculum implementation and the process of change in teachers' attitudes.

#### **5.4 Limitation**

The self-report nature of the questionnaire, the major instrument used for the collection of data from the respondents was the main limitation. This was so because there was the possibility of the respondent making some false declaration to impress the researcher even though the questionnaire contained inbuilt mechanism to forestall such situations. Due to limited time and financial constraints faced by the researcher, it became evident that he could not cover all the desired schools in Sawla-Tuna-Kalba where standard-based curriculum SBC was taught. The selection of only forty (40) teachers from each of three zones was a weakness that can be attributed to time and financial constraints. This weakness has been a major limitation to the researcher's work throughout the period.

#### **5.5 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter discussed the main findings, described the nature of standards-based curriculum implementation in a Kindergarten/Primary Schools as well as teachers' perceptions of the implementation process. The chapter also discussed the factors affecting change in teachers' attitudes through (the conceptual framework of GES model of teachers' change. The study showed consistency with the reviewed literature considering the nature of curriculum implementation and teachers' role in this process and some of the factors supporting and impeding the implementation of the curriculum change such as Preparedness of teachers, teachers' environment, and teachers' legacies.

## 5.6 Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the current study on teachers' attitude towards the implementation of the standards play-based curriculum in the KG/Primary schools in Sawla Tuna-Kalba District in the Savannah Region of Ghana. The purpose of the research was to examine KG/Primary school teachers' perceptions of the standards play-based curriculum and factors influencing the change in their attitudes towards its implementation on early childhood education. The final chapter includes three sections. The first section provides the overall overview of the results related to research questions. The second section describes the implications, whereas the third section offers limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.





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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### Questionnaire

#### TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STANDARDS PLAY- BASED CURRICULUM IN THE SAWLA TUNA-KALBA DISTRICT

The study is purely for academic purposes. **You** will be contributing to its success if you **answer** the item as honestly as **possible**. Your response will be **kept** confidential. Moreover, your anonymity is assured by not indicating your name.

#### General instruction

Tick the appropriate bracket ( ) or column or fill in the blank spaces where necessary.

#### BACKGROUND DATA

1. Name of school.....

2. Sex: female [ ] Male [ ]

3. Highest academic qualification: Cert A post sec 3yr L I  
Bachelor's Degree [ ]

4. Professional qualification:

P.G.D.E. [ ] PGCE [ ] DASE [ ]

any other

[Specify].....

5. Number of years of teaching:

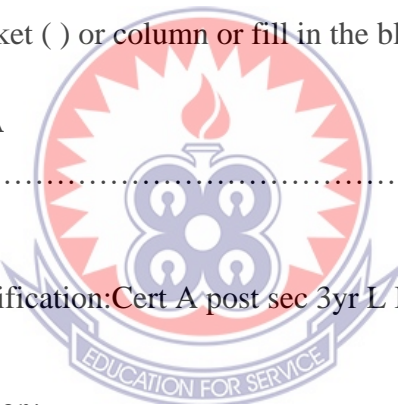
1-5 years [ ] 6-10 years [ ] 11-15 years [ ] 16-20 years [ ] 21-  
25 years [ ] 26 years and above [ ]

6. Number of years spent in teaching standard-based curriculum:

1-5 years [ ] 6-10 years [ ] 11-15 years [ ]  
16-20 years [ ] 21 years and above [ ]

7. Did you have any training in teaching in method of teaching standard- based curriculum during your pre-service training?

Yes [ ] No [ ]



8. How many in-service courses in methods of teaching standard-based curriculum have you attended'?

Nil  1  2  3

9. How many in-service courses in education measurement and evaluation have you attended?

Nil  1  2  3

### TEACHING THE STANDARD-BASED CURRICULUM

**How often** do you teach directly in standard-based curriculum (i.e.

10. objectives

which describe changes in interest, attitudes and values)?

Never  Rarely  Occasionally  Regularly

11. Do you define your affective objectives in behavioral terms? Yes  No

12. Give reason for your response to question above.

.....  
.....

13. The affective taxonomy arranges objective along a hierarchical continuum. Do you have adequate knowledge about the five [5/ level

{Categories} of internalization of this continuum arranged in order of degree? Yes  No

14. Arrange the categories of the standard-based curriculum, which have been listed in alphabetical order according to how they should occur in the classification. (Mark 1 as the lowest order through to 5 as the highest order)

Category	Order of degree
Characterization	[     ]
Organization	[     ]
Receiving	[     ]
Responding	[     ]
Valuing	[     ]

15. How often do you use each of the following teaching / method of teaching for standard-based curriculum outcome? (Tick the appropriate)

Co-operative learning Dramatization (   )

Field work Role-playing Simulation ( )

Value-clarification Discussion ( )

Lecture ( )

Inquiry ( )

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Regularly

16. Rank the following instrument in order of usage *I* used most (Mark 1 as the lowest order through to 5 as the highest order)

Instruments:

Observation

Interview

Essay type and objective test Questionnaire

Socio-metric

Regularly	Rarely	Occasionally	Regularly

17. Which techniques do you use to ascertain the attainment of desirable democratic values of your pupils?

Sentence-completion [ ]

Essay question [ ]

Role-playing [ ]

Any other [ ]

18. Which of the following techniques do you use for finding out your pupils feeling about the behaviour of others?

Observation techniques [ ]

Role playing [ ]

Sentence completion [ ]

The Attitude scale. [ ]

Any other specify [ ]

19. The following are some problems faced in the construction of affective instruction. Rank the extent to which you face them. [Mark 1 as the lowest order through to 6 as the highest order].

20. Do you need in – service training in the Problems Ranking

Problem	Ranking
- How to choose the best instrument?	[     ]
-The type of material to use	[     ]
-Lack of materials on the subject	[     ]
- Difficulty in using various instrument in measurement	[     ]
- Not applicable. Construction of Affective instruments?	[     ]

21. Give reason {s} for your response to question 21 above.

.....  
.....

22. How many times in a term do you test your pupils in the standard-based curriculum

.....  
.....

23. How often do you devise situations/techniques which allow your pupils to show desired effective behaviour?

Very often [   ]   Often [   ]   Not often [   ]   Not at all [   ]

24. I-how often do you assure your pupils that their performance in the test for Standard-based curriculum will not be criticized

Never ( ) Rarely [ ] Occasionally [ ] Regularly [ ].

25. Their results will be treated in a confidential manner by the school authorities?

i. Regularly [   ]   ii occasionally [   ]   iii rarely [   ]   iv. Never [   ]

26. What method do you use in scoring your essay question for affective outcomes?

[Tick only one i.e. the right one]

a. Reading the whole essay through and based on your impression you award the mark (holistic method).

b. Using a marking scheme in which the idea and points allotted them are clearly stated (Analytical method).

26. Which of the above do teachers prefer in using to assess affective early childhood development?

## APPENDIX B

### Letter of Introduction



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA  
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES  
**DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**  
P. O. Box 25, Winneba, Ghana [ecce@uew.edu.gh](mailto:ecce@uew.edu.gh)  
+233 (020) 2041072

FES/DECE/I.1

15<sup>th</sup> December, 2022

The Director  
Ghana Education Services  
Sawla-Tuna-Kalba  
P. O. Box 20  
Sawla-Savannah Region

Dear Sir/Madam

#### INTRODUCTORY LETTER

We write to introduce to you **Mr. Yeclagee Wilfred** with index number **220012845** who is M. Ed student in the above department. He was admitted in 2020/2021 academic year and has successfully completed his course work and is to embark on his dissertation on the topic: *“challenges facing the implementation of early childhood education curriculum in Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District of the Savannah Region, Ghana”*.

**Mr. Yeclagee** is to collect data for his dissertation, and we would be most grateful if he could be given the needed assistance.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Subbey'.

**DR. MICHAEL SUBBEY**  
**AG. HEAD OF DEPARTMENT**

