

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**ISSUES EMERGING FROM INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PRACTICES IN
PILOT BASIC SCHOOLS IN AGONA SWEDRU TOWNSHIP IN THE
CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA**

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central sunburst or starburst design in white and yellow, set against a red background. Below the sunburst are two blue circular motifs. The entire emblem is surrounded by a blue border containing the university's name in both English and Akan. The text 'UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA' is visible in the upper part of the border, and 'UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA' is visible in the lower part. The logo is semi-transparent and serves as a background for the author's name.

BLESS DIVINE DEFOR

**A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION, FACULTY
OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES, SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF
GRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARD OF
THE MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (SPECIAL EDUCATION) DEGREE**

JUNE, 2017

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Supervisor's Declaration

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

SUPERVISOR'S NAME: DR. ANTHONY MENSAH

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DATE:

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DEDICATION

To my family for their understanding, support and commitment during this study and to all the teachers and children with special educational needs in Pilot Basic Schools in Agona Swedru Township in the Central Region of Ghana.



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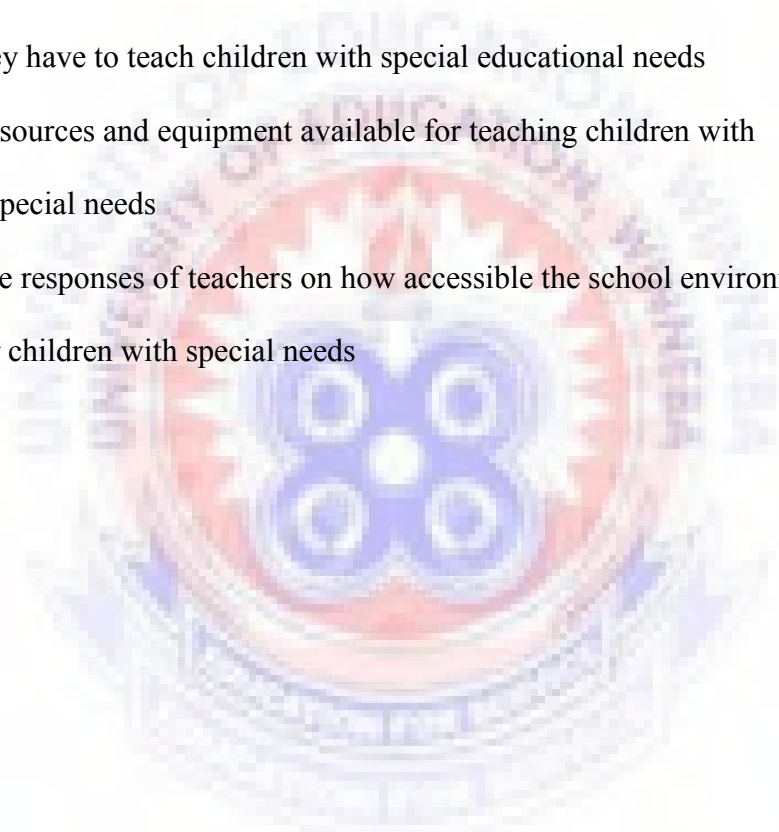
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the issues emerging from the inclusive practices in three pilot Basic schools in Agona Swedru Township in the Central Region of Ghana. The study considered teacher collaborations with parents who had children with special educational needs and other specialist, teacher preparation and experience, availability of resources and equipment and the physical environment of the inclusive schools under study. The reliability co-efficient of the instruments used in this study was 0.94. Questionnaire and semi structured interview guides were the main instruments used to collect data for this study. Simple random sampling was used to select teachers who took part in the study and purposive sampling for parents of children with special educational needs because they have information that was relevant to the study. Data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages and content analysis using themes and comments from questionnaires and interview data. Findings from the study revealed among others that: most parents were involved in decision making for their children with special educational needs in the three pilot inclusive schools in Agona Swedru township. Again some support services such as in class remedial teaching, sensory screening, and resource room clinical teachings were provided to children with special educational needs within the Pilot Inclusive Settings. Among the recommendations is the need for Stakeholders to provide support services as well as resources such as assistive devices and teaching and learning materials for all pilot basic inclusive schools for effective inclusion to take place. It was also recommended that the physical environment, or school building and compound of inclusive schools must be accessible to ensure easy movement in and around the schools.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In Ghana, the educational sector has seen reforms and policy initiatives by successive governments in attempts to bring about the desired changes in the sector. Among the educational reforms and policy initiatives are Kwapong Educational Reforms (1966), Dzobo Educational Reforms (1974) as well as Anamuah Mensah Educational Reforms (1987). The significant aspects of these reforms and policies have been focused on provision of access to education for all persons with special needs. Thus, education for special needs children for example, did not receive much attention. Avoke (2004) believed that the beginning of special education in Ghana is traced to the initiative of the missionaries. Although formal education started in Ghana in the 18th Century, the education of children with special needs started around 1936 when one Reverend Hiker initiated some form of education for the blind. Following this initiative many institutions for various categories of special needs children were subsequently established. Therefore there are schools for children who are blind, deaf and intellectually disabled in various parts of the country. Thus Ghana has since operated a dual educational system which is general education and special education. However, a wind of change began to blow around the world making education inclusive for all categories of children. One major factor that influenced the shift towards inclusion was the promulgation of the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994).

The Salamanca statement states:

All children have fundamental rights to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain acceptable level of learning. Therefore, education systems should be designed and educational programs implemented to take account of the wide diversity of characteristics and needs that exist among children because all children can learn including those who are exceptional (UNESCO, 1994 p132).

The Salamanca statement cited above implies that children with special needs should be given the same kind of education as their non-disabled counterparts. This implies that special needs children should attend local schools they would have attended if they were not disabled.

Article 25(1) of the 1992 constitution of the Republic of Ghana, for instance, states that all persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities. With the view of achieving the full realization of the draft inclusive education policy, basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all. The Education Strategic Plan (2010 -2020) also stipulates that the Ministry of Education shall provide education for those with physical and mental impairments, orphans, and those who are slow or fast learners, by including them, wherever possible within the mainstream formal system or, only considered necessary, within special units or schools. The objectives of the Education Act (2008) is to provide for the establishment of an educational system intended to produce well-balanced individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills, values, aptitudes and attitudes . Yekple and Avoke (2006) contend that inclusive education is the official position for educating persons with disabilities in Ghana as enshrined in the government of Ghana's Educational Strategic Plan 2003, which argues for inclusion for all children with disabilities by 2020.

The policy amendment emphasized that children with disabilities must meet the same content standards as other students do, and special education teachers must align themselves with curriculum, instruction and assessment in ways similar to general education teachers. Similarly, general education teachers must become more conversant with the special education curriculum and ways to implement it. Teachers in a regular classrooms must present and assess knowledge and examples of differentiated instructions, then “promote the necessary individual adaptation methods and practice opportunities in these skills” (Shade & Stewart, 2009, p.40). This change in policy has major implications for teachers’ preparation. Formally, teachers were prepared to adhere to a standard curriculum, teach learners in a class as a whole, and place high premium on the orderly progress of classroom routine. In conformity to the educational paradigm shift, they are now expected to make provisions for conspicuous individual differences, for example, learning styles or achievements (Downing, 2002).

From the early 1990’s, the colleges of education in Ghana introduced a course in Special Needs Education into the curriculum to provide teacher trainees with some knowledge about special Needs Education in classrooms (Ghana Education Service, 2005 have limited knowledge concerning the education of special needs children. Expanding that knowledge level is essential if teachers are to be successful in teaching a wide range of pupils with diverse abilities present in typical today’s inclusive classrooms.

Abosi and Brookman-Amissah (2007) observed that education is synonymous with teachers. Teachers are therefore at the heart of every educational process. In an attempt to equip teachers with some knowledge about exceptional children, the study of special education was made part of the training of teachers in Ghana. There are good reasons for this. One of the reasons is that, most teachers would some point in

their teaching career encounter children who have some degree of special needs. Another is the realization that when children with special needs are given effective teaching from general education teachers they can develop to productive individuals.

In attempt to implement inclusive education by Ghana Education Service by 2015 and now 2020, Special Education Division of Ghana Education Service, developed Education Strategic Plan, 2003-2015. In view of this, some schools were selected to pilot the programme. According to Gadagbui and Danso (1998) Regions that were selected include Greater Accra, Eastern and Central and the districts that were selected also include Ada, Amansaman and Metropolitan schools in Greater Accra region. In Central Region, Swedru Municipal, Cape Coast, Winneba Municipal, and in the Eastern Region, Somanya Koforidua and Oda districts were selected making a total of 10 districts implementing inclusive education on pilot basis. Offei (2006) further noted that inclusion and inclusive practices are being espoused throughout the world over and in Ghana inclusive schools are being piloted in some selected educational district.

Since the ratification by government of Ghana of the Salamanca statement, policy and framework of action on special needs education and its implementation on pilot basis, not many efforts have been made to evaluate or research into the inclusive education practices of the pilot basic schools to ascertain its effectiveness. There is also perception that parental involvement as well as other specialists that normally constitute multi- disciplinary team in inclusive education is at minimal level, as teachers attitudes towards special needs children is still problematic as a result of their inadequate knowledge and skills about special needs children.

The teacher parents' collaboration among other things is also a huge challenge. The issues enumerated above necessitated the researchers desire to research into the

perceived ineffectiveness of inclusive education practices in the pilot basic schools in Agona Swedru township.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The 1994 Salamanca World Conference and Action Frame Work on Special needs children and the 1990 United Nations Convention on the Right of the child stipulates that every country must provide equal access to education for every child of school going age. Although, the declarations has been followed and implemented by some countries including Ghana, the provision of education for persons with special needs is still confronted with some challenges. From a casual interaction with teachers it appears that teachers had reservations about the low levels of parental and other professionals“ involvement in the education of their children with special educational needs in the Pilot Basic Inclusive Schools.

Also it seems significant number of teachers do not have adequate preparation and experience that will enable them to teach in inclusive schools. Again, children with special needs require support, equipment and adequate resources to be able to actively participate in inclusive classrooms but it looks like these resources for children with special needs are either woefully inadequate or completely lacking in the pilot inclusive basic schools under study.

Finally, an observation of the physical environment of the Pilot inclusive schools appears to give indication that, the environment is not friendly for most of the children with mobility and visual challenges. Most of the schools had very steep wheel chair ramps and very rough walkways that created mobility challenges for many of the students with low vision and physical impairment in these schools. These seeming

challenges underscores the need to find out how children with special educational needs are being educated alongside their regular peers in the same classroom.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine issues emerging from inclusive education practices in three pilot basic schools in Agona Swedru township in the Central Region of Ghana.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to;

- Find out the extent of collaboration between teachers in inclusive schools with parents and other specialists in dealing with issues concerning children with special needs.
- Find out whether teachers in the regular schools have requisite experience and special training to enable them teach in an inclusive classroom.
- Identify resources and support services that are available for teachers in teaching children in the inclusive classroom.
- Find out how accessible the school environment is for children with special needs.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated as a guide to the study;

1. To what extent do teachers in inclusive schools collaborate with parents and other professionals in decision making?
2. What requisite experience and special training do teachers in Basic Schools have to teach in the inclusive classroom?

3. What resources, and support services are available for teachers in teaching in the inclusive classrooms?
4. To what extent is the school environment accessible to students with special needs?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study which was to examine the issues emerging from inclusive education practices in selected pilot inclusive basic schools in Agona Swedru township is significant for the following reasons. The findings would inform stakeholders in the educational sector about the state of inclusive schools in Agona Swedru township. This would enable both the school authorities and policy formulators to find ways of improving inclusive education practices in Agona Swedru Township. In addition, the results of the study will help in finding out the resources available and their adaptability by teachers for effective inclusive education practices in Agona Swedru Township. Again, the results of the study will help in finding out the availability and the suitability of school facilities such as play grounds, classrooms, urinal toilets among others in pilot inclusive schools in Agona Swedru township. Furthermore, the result of study would help in providing information on the collaboration that exist among teachers, specialist, parents and non-governmental organizations interested in development of children with special needs and inclusive education. Also the results of the study would add to existing literature and serve as a foundation for further research work.

Finally, the findings would help guide other stakeholders" to support and supplement government effort at providing quality education which is all for all.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to only schools that practice inclusive education in Agona Swedru township. This was to enable the researcher have a comprehensive result of the study. Again, the study was restricted to teachers, parents and pupils. Though there are other pilot schools, the focus was on the three (3) schools in Agona Swedru township. These schools were selected because of their proximity to the researcher. The scope of this study was therefore limited to teachers collaboration with parents, skills and knowledge teachers needed, school support services and resources as well as the physical environment of the school.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The major limitation for this study were that the data was collected mainly from the teachers and parents who had children with special educational needs in the pilot inclusive schools. As a result their responses leading to the issues emerging from the practice of inclusive education in the pilot schools used at Swedru fell short of the rich insights that would have emerged from the special education coordinators and the circuit supervisors of the selected schools. Again, as a result of paucity of local literature on the phenomenon under investigation, majority of the literature review were from Asia and other developed countries.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are operationally defined as follows:

Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is the design of classrooms, programs and activities so that all students can learn and participate together.

Pilot inclusive schools

A school that practice inclusive education on experimental basis and based on outcome of its results, the practice of inclusion would be accepted and practiced nationwide.

Children with special needs

Children who require special attention other than what is required of every child. These include disabled and gifted children, street and working children from remote or nomadic populations.

1.10 Organization of the Study

The study is presented in five (5) chapters. Chapter one (1) presents introduction which consist of the background to the study, statement of the problem, aims and objectives of the study, the limitation of the study as well as operational definition of terms. Chapter two (2) entails the review of related literature. It makes use of secondary information such as newspapers, journals, books, and internet blogs related to the topic whiles the third chapter examines the method adopted in gathering the data. Chapter four examined the data collection, analysis of findings and discussion of results. The summary of the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study were contained in chapter five. References and appendixes followed at the end of chapter five

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature reviewed for the study. The review covered the following areas:

- Principles of inclusive education
- Teachers collaboration with parents and other professionals
- Expertise teachers need to handle children with special needs.
- Resources and other support service available for teaching and learning.
- Accessibility of classroom environment to children with special needs.
- Theoretical framework
- Summary of the literature review

2.2 Principles of Inclusive Education

Principles are fundamental norms, rules, or values that represent what is desirable and positive for a person, group, organization or community, and help it in determine the rightfulness or wrongfulness of its action. Principles are more basic than policy and, objectives and are meant to govern.

(<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/principle.html>.)

The fundamental principles of inclusive education is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have (UNESCO, 1994) It further states that inclusive schools must recognize and respond the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricular

organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnership with their communities. Contributing to the discourse Gyimah (2009) pointed out that the main principles of inclusive education are the realization that: every child is valued and respected for whatever difference he or she brings to the learning environment.

His assertion supports the viewpoints of (UNESCO, 1994). The researcher's opinion is that, for inclusive education to be effective, all children must be allowed to learn and socialize together in the same learning environment wherever possible irrespective of any challenges or differences that may exist among them. Gadagbui,

(2008) observed that the principles of inclusive education was adopted at the UNESCO 1994, Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs education that „schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other conditions“. These include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups.

It is apparent that, the essence of inclusive education is about creating an enabling environment to every child regardless of his or her condition to learn together in an inclusive classroom so that when they become adult, they can appreciate the differences of each other and live together in the larger community so that they can contribute to the national development.

2.3 Teacher Collaboration with Parents and other Professionals

There are many factors that contribute to the education of children. One of the most important factors include having a symbiotic relationship between the parent and the school as well as other professionals. In fact, research has shown that when parents and teachers have this type of relationship, the student succeeds both academically and socially (Dixon, 2009) Furthermore, Henderson and Berla (2007) conducted an analysis of eighty-five studies on the advantages of parental involvement in their children's education. They found out that, "the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status but the extent to which that student's family is able to create a home environment that encourages learning; express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; and, become involved in their children's education at school and in the community" (Henderson & Berla, 2007). Parents can be an invaluable partner in helping to define and meet educational, as well as social and emotional goals. However, unless these cooperative relationships become increasingly collaborative in nature, no changes will occur in the service delivery system (Melville & Blank, 2011). These partnerships involve sharing of the student's areas of strength and need. The school personnel get to know a student within the context of a family while parents can help facilitate goals and objectives with the student both inside and outside of the classroom. Many people are involved in creating the plan for a student. Once the plan is created, it is the teacher and parent who are the key players in the process and are closest to the action, it is the teacher and parent who will have the most influence on the student's ability to fail, meet, or exceed expectations

Shevin (2009) also offers possible positive effects of informed parental participation. First, informed participation allows the parent to be in a position to provide continuity

to the child's program. Secondly, it gives the parent access to information regarding resources and alternatives for their child. Next, informed participation serves to guarantee that the goals selected by the IEP team are realistic and feasible, in addition to being appropriate. Finally, this type of parental involvement works to ensure that there is one person on the IEP team that is working as the child's advocate. This is especially so because parents are free from any conflicting responsibilities that professionals might face. Turnbull and Turnbull (2011) state that collaboration between parents and professionals can benefit students with disabilities by providing multiple perspectives and resources to improve educational outcomes. Additionally, they argue that collaboration can benefit the collaborators themselves. This occurs when collaborators make resources, such as motivation and knowledge, available to one another. Thus, collaboration can increase their own resources as a result of the personal support and the sharing of resources that may occur in a collaborative enterprise. According to Milbury (2012), unless there is regular time set aside to collaborate, it is difficult to improve on collaborative practices, and teachers will not improve their collaborative skills. To create an atmosphere of collaboration, the administration must recognize that teachers need time to work together and collaborate. This time allotment needs to be built into the school schedule on a regular basis or collaboration will not occur. According to Lazar and Slostad (2009), when teachers began to try to connect with parents, schools generally did not reward the teachers for their efforts and "have traditionally distanced parents and teachers." A number of teachers believe they did not have the right to work with parents unless they were given permission by the administration or school board. In some school districts, schools further divided the relationship between the parents and teachers by excluding parents from some of the most important educational decisions, such as decisions about the curriculum and instruction, evaluation and other school controlled

decisions that are based on the majority culture. (Lazar & Slostad, 2009). In some cases parents and teachers do not know who should initiate and maintain the collaboration. Many parents, especially parents who have children with special needs, who become dissatisfied with the relationship they have, think that the teachers are unable to fulfill their responsibilities and do not want to have a collaborative relationship. Many times teachers are not taught how to interact and form relationships with parents. In one survey of six southern schools it was found that only 4% of the educators of future teachers taught the future teachers a complete course on parent involvement, and 15% of the future teacher educators taught a part of a course on the topic (Greenwood & Hickman, 2011).

According to Imel and Sandoval (2010), a number of factors contribute to collaborative linkages. School personnel/team members should facilitate regular contact through purposeful meetings in addition to frequent communication through telephone calls and e-mail. The focus should be solely on the student as opposed to organizational matters. An individual from the school personnel or team member such as the teacher should take a leadership role in helping to develop a shared vision for the child.

Literature suggests that there are potential barriers to the collaborative process. Some of these barriers may include: language barriers, cultural barriers, lack of economic resources (such as no phones, no computer, transportation issues, among others), lack of knowledge, feelings of incompetence, lack of time, lack of energy, or a long history of negative experiences with the school (Eccles & Harold, 2007). Additionally, time management for teachers and parents can be an issue since there are often conflicts with work schedules. Schools and teachers need to be aware that lack of parental participation may be the result of differences in the family structure, feelings of

inferiority, a negative attitude or lack of interest in education. For example, “single parents often do not have the time, money, or knowledge to help children with projects” (Wanat, 2012). Sometimes parents feel that they do not have anything valuable to contribute to the school. This is especially true when the parent may not have a great deal of education (Vandergrift & Greene, 2012). As a result, a parent may feel uncomfortable or self-conscious about communicating with the teacher or school personnel.

An essential role in promoting inclusive education is teamwork, exchange of experiences, partnership in schools and developing good relationships between all educational actors (Mărgărițoiu, 2010). Berlin (2010) explained that, in executing tasks, teams are regarded as being more focused than groups. This means that “all team members need to know

What should be achieved jointly, and be given clear information on what can be solved collectively. The task should be clear so that all team members understand their own initiative.” However, researchers have highlighted various obstacles – both structural and cultural in nature to collaboration between professionals from different sectors of society. In a review of the relevant literature, Widmark et al. (2011, p. 2) stressed that “the structural barriers include differences in the regulatory, financial, and administrative boundaries, and the cultural impediments consist of the various ways that the needs of individuals are considered, which are often a product of educational and organizational cultures.” Rose (2007) observed that, poor communication patterns, and a poor understanding of roles and responsibilities are obstacles to successful interprofessional collaboration, resulting in the duplication of roles and conflicts due to differences in approaches. On the other hand, there is evidence that also shows that diversity in teamwork brings about innovation, which

has many; positive effects on higher level of creativity in problem solving (Voutsas, 2011). Widmarket al. (2011) pointed out that collaboration should be seen as a tool for achieving users' objectives. This can only be possible if managers and personnel clearly understand factors that impede or promote collaboration and if the professionals involved lack motivation, mutual trust and common interests. Hegarty and Alur (2012) suggested that "collaborative problem solving to promote inclusive education is usually carried out between teachers and other support professionals who collaborate to solve specific problems, concerning a student or group of students, with a particular emphasis on classroom-based interventions to increase the students' chances for success. "Assistance might involve interactions between classroom teachers and speech and language specialists, school psychologists, specialists in visual and auditory impairment, special education specialists, or other professionals (Strogilos, & Tragoulia, (2013), found out that, there is a considerable amount of research evidence on the difficulties in implementing collaborative practices between special educators and their colleagues in inclusive schools The difficulties listed were the lack of specific policy and institutional schedule for conducting collaborative related activities, rigid school structures and practices, lack of administrative support, lack of time for common planning, inadequate consultation skills, increased workload for both general and special education teachers, different approaches and teaching methods which follow the general and special educators, different approaches to students with special educational needs, lack of information and awareness of general educators on issues related to special education and the processes of inclusion, as well as the entrenched perception that the education of special needs students is an exclusive responsibility for special educators.

(Strogilos, & Tragoulia,(2013) conducted a survey to assess teacher and service provider's (Speech Therapists, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Music Therapists, Art Therapists, Psychologist, and Social Worker) perceptions of the type of relationships that have been established between the school and families of the students they service as well as other professionals. The survey included general and special educators as well as service providers who work with students with and without disabilities in a suburban public school located in Westchester County, New York. Questions included how often communication occurs between the parents and the school, are the parents involved in decision-making regarding their children's educational plan, who is the primary person responsible for establishing a school home relationship, etc. The questionnaire did not provide the definitions for cooperative and collaborative communication. The results of the survey indicated that only 20% felt that there was a collaborative relationship between the school and the parents. The findings also indicated that 55% perceived their relationship as a cooperative relationship. Furthermore, 25% could not define their relationship as neither collaborative nor cooperative. While more extensive research in this area is needed, these results may implicate that schools need to be more proactive in establishing collaborative relationships with the parents of the students they service and other professionals

Beaton (2007) also conducted a study on teachers' collaboration with other professionals'. The main aim of the study was to analyze aspects of collaboration in inclusive educational practice in Croatian schools. The data obtained were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The results revealed that, at the present time, collaboration in Croatian schools was not well organized and defined. It also revealed that only a relatively small number of various professionals who could

support teachers and students in inclusive processes work in schools. Furthermore, it was established that schools did not compensate for this problem with stronger collaboration between schools and professionals in local communities. Teachers would also like to receive more specific advice, as well as more concrete assistance in the education of students with disabilities. The author concludes that a better conceptualization of collaboration between schools and local communities is needed (especially a higher level of team work). This would certainly contribute to improving the quality of inclusive education in schools.

The collaboration of special and general education teachers is one of the most important factors related to the effectiveness of the education of pupils with special educational needs, as indicated in relevant literature (for example, Beaton, 2007;

Bauwens, & Hourcade, 1996; Blanton, & Pugach, 2007; Sledge, & Pazey, 2013; Sokal, & Sharma, 2014; Tzivinikou, & Papoutsaki, 2014; Vlachou, Didaskalou & Mpeliou, 2004; Strogilos, et al., 2011). It has been documented that a strong school home relationship brings about overall success especially for students with disabilities (Kochhar-Bryant, 2008). “IDEA 2004 and No Child Left Behind 2001 require schools to transform the traditional notions of parent involvement from signing report cards, reading newsletters, and chaperoning holiday parties, to include activities such as participating in school decision-making processes, providing input to teachers about how to assist their child, and forming meaningful partnerships with the school community” (Kochhar-Bryant, 2008). Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to form a collaborative working relationship with parents. Communication is essential in any collaborative relationship. There must be a steady two-way stream of relevant

information flowing in order to make this collaborative relationship a meaningful one. Establishing and maintaining a collaborative relationship is an ongoing process.

It begins in the early stages of the development of the parent-school relationship and continues throughout the life of the relationship. Initially, parents and school personnel may not be ready for a collaborative relationship. Instead, they may work together cooperatively to help develop a shared vision without making any tangible changes in the way they communicate or in the quality of the communication. In the opinion of the researcher, there must be effective communication between teachers and the parents of special needs children as well as other professionals since communication is a powerful tool in ensuring effective collaboration among various actors more welcoming and inclusive of family Children with good school performance are those with strong families which are supportive and deeply involved in the child's education (Gadagbui, 2012). Gadagbui observed that, family support in educating a child with special need in broad context deals with all that goes into the rehabilitation or habilitation of the child with special needs. The support includes financial and emotional support, informal and formal transmission of knowledge and organized learning, values and systematic socialization of the young generation by the adults. Simply, family support means the roles parents, siblings, and extended family members, close friends of the family play towards the social life and the education of children with special needs.

Though the term used to describe parents efforts to support their children's development have varied over time and cross field of study (e.g. parent involvement, family involvement, family engagement, and parent engagement).

Parents are consistently considered pivotal to a child's overall wellbeing (Halgunseth, Peterson, Stark, & Moodie, 2009). In the view of the researcher, sometimes parents helping their special children with homework, having interest in their academics and encouraging their success can make a huge difference in the education of special needs children. Parents may not have a degree or in depth knowledge in training these children but the financial contribution put in will ensure that they best care and tools provided for learning. Parade et al., (2009) supported the view that even if they do not have a degree; African American parents tend to stand by their children, and try to give them all the tools needed to complete college.

Hayford (2008) opined that many lower attaining students reported that, they lack adult support to learn during their free time at home. Same author commented that some students who live with single parents or extended family members are usually overworked, they sleep late and wake up early every morning, they also generally not fed well and therefore come to school lethargic, frail and less prepared for academic work. Multiple meta-analyses and a synthesis of multiple meta-analysis have found that parental involvement is linked to children's educational success at all level of schooling (Hill & Tyson, 2009; Jeynes, 2005). Parents level of education has a multifaceted impact on children's ability to learn in school. Broad family contextual factors, such as parent education level and family income, are strongly related to positive child educational outcomes (Dalton, Glennie & Ingles, 2009). Parents' educational level affects their beliefs, perceptions and behaviors which in turn also influence children's academic outcomes. For example, parental education level is associated with parental expectations which then relate to parental behaviors such as reading with the child (Dalton et al., 2009; Davis – Kean, 2005). Parent, whose

education level was high when their child was eight significantly, predicted educational and occupational success for the child 40 years later (Dubow et al., 2009).

In another study, children's academic performance was found to improve when young mothers (women who were 20 old or younger when their children were born) with low level of education (a high school degree or less and low scores on academic aptitude test) completed additional years of schooling (Magnuson, 2007). Hayford (2013, p.64), in a Ghanaian context commented on a rather negative trend that some parents are semi illiterate and therefore unable to offer any useful assistance in terms of learning to their children. He further stated that parents with little formal education are less familiar with the language used at school, which limits their ability to support their children to learn as well as participation in school- related activities. As such they do not make any meaningful contributions when they attend school functions such as Open Days, Parent – Teacher Association meetings and Speech and Prize giving Days. Gadagbui (2012, p.71 citing Gadagbui (2003) proposed that the family which is the basic unit of the society endowed to procreate, train and care for children should be empowered and be self-evaluative of its roles that nature made it to play and what society expects it to play. This is because there can never be any good educational foundation laid except those began and are continuously supported by the „first family members“ of the society which constitute the basic family. Parents are the first teachers, then co teachers of the child and later their roles are complemented by the subsystems made up of the immediate community, the school, church and the larger society. Talay-Ongan (2005) advanced the argument that to open communication about child rearing and other values and to respect the expert knowledge families have of their children is important, but not stereotyping when considering the values of families in early childhood education and care.

In spite of critical roles parents have to play, it is bedeviled with many challenges including language barriers (Mendez, 2010; Smith, Stern & Shartrova, 2008), socioeconomic constraints, the cultural values and beliefs of the target population (s) (DeGaetano, 2007; LeFevre & Shaw, 2012), discrimination from school staff who may hold biased views or perceptions or who are unprepared to work with a given population (Chen et al., 2008). To reduce barriers for parental involvement (Mendez, 2010) noted the importance of flexible scheduling providing culturally inclusive programs in multiple languages, providing child care and providing a broad range of activities that meet the specific priorities of the community. Again teachers knowledge about different cultures (Lopez & Donovan, 2009); advocacy for staff training related to parents involvement, a better understanding of the different types of family involvement and increased culturally sensitive outreach by teachers (Chen, Kyle and McIntyre, 2008; Zarate, 2007); and pre-service teacher training and in-service professional development (Marschall, Shah & Donato 2012. McDonald et al., (2006) in another study investigated the effectiveness of families and schools together, (FAST) observed that two years after the program, teachers reported significantly higher social and academic skills and less aggression in students in the FAST group. Participants also shares their thoughts on how to make schools a more welcoming place for parents by ranking five topical areas regarding parental involvement. The following themes emerged: (a) increase family – school communication and interaction; (b) increase educational support in the home; (c) provide both parents and teachers with training to maximize family involvement; and (d) make the school environment involvement

2.4 Preparation and experiences teachers need

The practice of including people with special educational needs in mainstream schools and classes has been embraced by many nations including Ghana. Successful implementation of such a policy depends largely on teachers having the requisite knowledge, skills and experience. It is in view of this that much attention is being paid to the nature of teacher development (Whitworth, 2001). Whitworth (2001) postulates that, preparing teachers who can teach in inclusive schools and meet the needs of all students will require a different model of teacher preparation. Apart from a teacher gaining knowledge and competencies in handling and preparation, there is also an important factor in improving teacher attitudes towards the implementation of an inclusive policy. Without the requisite training in inclusive education program, it would be difficult for a teacher to accept and offer the necessary attention to a pupil with a disability in the class. It is through training and preparation process that teachers develop the capacity in handling pupil with special needs.(Whitworth, 2001).Segments of teachers in teacher training colleges (college of Education) as well as some tertiary institutions in Ghana lack the capacity to help pupil with special needs in class (Deku, 2008). It is obvious that inclusive education demands that all manner of pupils are educated under one roof hence the need for adequate preparation of teachers. Deku espoused that in Ghana, increasing demand to educate learners with disability in inclusive education setting has received little consideration. To Whitworth (2001), if education program is to prepare educators to be successful in the classroom of the future, they must conceptualize and designed their approach pre – service preparation of teachers. In the view of the researcher, with the shift towards inclusive education, the preparation of a professional teacher should not only focus on pre- service training but also on in- service training as well. In Ghana, educational institutions have a course in special needs education as part of the reform towards

inclusiveness. The course is taught in the training colleges in order to equip the trainees and also to prepare them for the task ahead. Previously, many of the teacher training colleges were meant for specialist and general or regular schools. For instance specialist training colleges for the Deaf was established to cater for teachers who will teach pupils with hearing problems. It was not mandatory for all teacher trainees to learn about special education needs at the initial teacher training colleges. There was an option for teachers to either be in a regular school or a school with individuals with disabilities. Currently, many of the educational institutions have now included special education needs in their curriculum.

In Whitworth's (2001), submission in conceptualizing and designing an approach to pre- service preparation of teachers, he propounded an inclusive teacher preparation model and this model consist of two major dimensions .One of the dimensions deals with the outcomes of the model and the other focuses on specific programme components. For a teacher to be effective in an inclusive environment, teacher preparation programs must instill in the teacher an understanding and appreciation of diversity. Preparing teachers to be flexible and creative is vital if teachers must be trained to meet situations and challenges that would demand their ability to deal with and adapt to change. To do this successfully, they must also have the ability to be flexible and creative in meeting these challenges and solving problems. These can be accomplished by providing experiences that requires prospective teachers to develop creative problem – solving skills and to view from different perspectives.

Hay (2003) noted that, educators' knowledge, skills and competencies have direct impact on their preparedness to implement inclusive education effectively. Obi and Mensah (2005) noted that, with the switch to inclusion a new kind of teacher is required. They note that the adoption of inclusive education means that the general

education teachers who are not specially and adequately prepared to teach children with disabilities would assume the overall responsibilities of the education of these children with special teachers taking auxiliary roles in regular schools.

Additionally, Nell (2006) states that the knowledge includes educators being adequately prepared to assess special needs children to adapt curriculum content to the needs of the learner in the classrooms to utilize instructional aids, accommodation, modifications as well as medical and Para medical assistive devices required by some of the special needs children. It also includes the use of appropriate teaching strategies based on learners' total level of functioning. Lewis and Doorlag (2009) maintained that limited knowledge and experience can lead to the development of prejudice and nonaccepting attitudes.

Hayford (1999) in a study conducted on student – Teacher perceptions on inclusive education in Ghana found out that students and teachers who have been exposed to special needs education tend to have positive attitudes towards children with special needs. He further contended that as teachers become more aware of the nature and needs of children with special needs they tend to look for better if not the best services for them.

Mastropieri (2006) indicates that regular education teachers do not consider themselves to be adequately prepared for teaching in inclusive classrooms. In addition, he indicated that adequate opportunities for professional development (in inclusion skills and competencies) have not been afforded to teachers. These teachers, therefore, have a number of concerns for the successful implementation of inclusive education programs.

The study conducted on pre service teacher preparation towards inclusive education in Ghana by Brew (2011) revealed that majority of tutors (51.2 %) reportedly felt the curriculum of colleges of education taught teachers how to do adaptations concerning teaching learning materials, learning environments and instructional strategies. Furthermore, majority of teachers (60.7%) also thought that pre service teacher were not adequately prepared to collaborate with parents and other professionals to educate pupils in inclusive classrooms. Nonetheless, 72.6% of teachers believed that, contents of courses in colleges of education did not teach pre service teachers the use of inclusive assessment. The results showed that 59.1% of the teachers in the study felt that the current curriculum did not prepare teachers towards the implementation of inclusive education. From the findings it was recommended that the curriculum for colleges of education should be reviewed to ensure that graduates have the requisite attributes, confidence and competence to design and deliver inclusive curricular for diverse range of learners to improve their participation in learning.

Again, Bhatnagar and Das (2013) conducted a survey of 470 regular school teachers in Delhi, India and reported that these teachers had a moderate level of concerns to implement inclusive education in their schools. While the teachers were not concerned about increased workload due to inclusion, an overwhelming majority of the respondents (95%) indicated that they had not received training in special education. Forlin and Chambers (2011) conducted a survey of 67 pre-service teachers at an Australian university to identify their concerns regarding the implementation of inclusive education. They reported that the respondents were concerned about their lack of knowledge and skill based difficulty with appropriate attention to all students in an inclusive classroom. Snyder (2009) conducted a qualitative study utilizing

interviews of regular and special education teachers in the USA and reported that the teachers were concerned about lack of skills in implementing inclusion.

In recent years, there has been a debate about whether there is a specific form of pedagogy that is most appropriate for students with special educational needs in inclusive settings (Kershner & Florian, 2009). Most of the researchers engaged in this debate suggested that, while there are certainly teaching approaches which have been developed by teachers of students with special educational needs, these are likely to benefit all learners and are not only of specific value to selected groups of students.

Many teachers who have considerable experience in working with students with complex needs, including those working in special schools, have devised approaches and adopted techniques to promote greater access to learning or have attempted to overcome specific barriers for some students. Example of this may include an augmentative system of communication, such as Makaton (a form of sign language) or a symbol system that will support students who have difficulties with language. (Davis & Florian 2005). However, in a view of teaching strategies and approaches for children with special educational needs, Davis and Florian concluded that whilst many strategies and approaches are being adopted for teaching students with special educational needs in inclusive schools, there has been insufficient investigation into their efficacy in order to reach conclusion about many of these. This conclusion suggests that teachers should give greater consideration to assessing the impact of strategies that they develop to address the needs of students who challenge their conventional methods.

Determine effective teaching in inclusive practice is a complex issue. Dawn (2009) observed that, while much has been writing with regard to what teachers should when

teaching inclusive classes, such recommendations are not usually based on classroom – based research. Barron and Darling-Hammond (2008) proposed that teachers should change their ways of grouping, such as arranging children with different needs or different ability to one group, to let them help and cooperate with one another. This can also allow children with special needs to improve with the help from their peers. To elaborate on this, it is important that creation of a harmonious environment can enable all children irrespective of their background to learn, respect and accept each other. In addition, teachers should pay attention to children's daily performance and growth and set up a portfolio for each child to record their development and learning progresses which can also serve as the purpose of assessment. Lack of training on adapting the curriculum for students with special educational needs is clearly an international problem (Dawn, 2009). Dawn (2009) found out that teachers in Africa felt under- skilled, under trained, and push for time when it came to educating students with disabilities. Many teachers do not modify the curriculum standards for the subjects they taught, largely because of their lack of training and expertise. Similar concern about lack of training were raised by teachers in the United States (Murry, 2000). in New Zealand (Piggot-Irvine, 2009), Ghana (Ocloo & Subbley, 2008), Botswana (Dart, 2007), and the United Arab Emirates (Arif & Gaad, 2008) cited in Kokkinos and Davazoglou (2009).the effect of co- teaching as a form of curriculum adaptation in inclusive settings were explored by Dymond, Renzaglia, Roseintein, Chun, Banks, Niswander and Gilson (2006). They evaluated the implementation of Universal approach to developing a high school science course in the United States of America. Development of this empowered the class teacher to deliver the instruction to students with special educational needs with co- teachers and other professionals. The main benefit for students was an improvement in social skills and increased

interaction with others. Because the UDL curriculum is designed to meet the needs of any learner the co- teachers role can be more of a general educator rather than an adapter of the curriculum. National Commission on Science Education report on inclusion concluded that, useful strategies for any successful inclusion education includes flexible timeframe for work completion, differentiation of task, flexibility for teachers, time for additional support, emphasis on vocational as well as academic goals and flexible teaching and learning methodologies , and the access to the curriculum involves how students with special educational needs interact with their peers or how the classroom is structured (Winter & O'Raw, 2010). Rose, McDanell and Ellis (2007) suggested that instructors should plan to introduce alternative forms of assessment gradually in conjunction with traditional forms of testing. Using a combination of alternative assessments and more traditional measures allow the instructor to compare results and obtained a more comprehensive picture of students' performance than traditional measures alone will provide. At first the instructor should use checklist and rubrics to evaluate students' performance but not ask students to do self and peer evaluation. When creating checklists and rubrics, instructors can ask students to provide input on the criteria that should be included in each. This approach gives the instructor time to become more comfortable with the use of alternative assessments while modeling their use for students. This process helps students to understand how they will benefit from alternative assessment and how they can use it effectively (Roach & Elliot, 2006). Persson (2008) proposed that because alternative assessment depends on direct observation, instructors can most easily begin to use it when evaluating the students with disabilities writing assignments and individual speaking task such as presentations. Once an instructor has reached a level of comfort with checklists and rubrics, they can also be used when observing students interacting in small groups. When doing this, however, the

instructor need to be aware that, group dynamics will have an effect on the performance of each individually, Tse and Lian (2009) also added that once students are familiar with the use of checklists and rubrics for evaluation, they can gradually begin to assess their own learning and provide feedback to their peers.

This aspect of alternative assessment can easily be included in the evaluation segment of a lesson. In classrooms where traditional forms of assessment are required, this gives the instructor multiple ways of measuring progress with increasing the time students spend taking traditional test. Ee and Soh (2005) contended that the concept of children with special educational needs extends beyond those who may be included in handicapped categories to cover those who are failing in school, for a wide variety of reasons that are known to be likely impediments to a child's optimal progress. Whether or not this more broadly defined group of children are in need of additional support depends on the extent to which schools need to adapt their curriculum, teaching, and or to provide additional human or material resources so as to stimulate efficient and effective learning for these students. Whitworth (2001) postulates that preparing teachers who can teach in settings that are inclusive and meet the needs of all students will require a different model of teacher preparation. Apart from the teacher gaining the requisite knowledge and competencies in handling and preparation, there is also an important factor in improving teacher attitudes towards the implementation of an inclusive policy. Without the requisite training in inclusive education philosophy, it will be difficult for a teacher to accept and offer the necessary attention to a pupil with disability in the class. It is through training and preparation process that teachers develop the capacity in handling pupils with special needs (Whitworth, 2001). This is true to the extent where segments of teachers training college (now Colleges of Education) as well as other tertiary institutions in

Ghana lack the capacity to help pupil with special needs in class (Deku, 2008) stenson (2006) reported on an action research that looked at the impact of curricular adaptation for special educational needs in an inclusive setting. In practice, head teachers and their staff had considerably more difficulty delivering an appropriate curriculum to students. Specific problems were caused by the nature of the subjects and activities, poor classroom organization, the responsibilities, attitudes and skills of educational staff and challenges around the social inclusion of students with special educational needs. According to stenson, problems in any of these areas could reduce to access to the curriculum through non-participation in lessons and activities, a lack of adequate provision and social isolation. Most students felt individual support they received in their specially adapted educational environment was a great help and made it easier to cope with the work challenges, but also felt they were missing out on other activities available for students without such needs.

The adaptation involved offering an individual programme where students worked in small groups at their own pace. Effective instruction for students with special needs requires assessment, evaluation and feedback than those without disabilities (Newman, 2006). Kontu and Pirtimaa (2008) contend that in the inclusion process, assessment is crucial to determine areas of particular difficulty and to evaluate progress. Standardized assessment is the form of national examinations and test at key educational stages are widely used internationally. But to be useful to students with special educational needs, these forms of certification should either have to encompass a very broad range of achievement or offer alternative tests for different ability levels. According to Dodge et al (2002). For instance, younger children with special needs require more time for meals and washing of hands, because their self-care abilities are not yet developed. Moreover, as children with disabilities

concentration span are short, the duration of activities that call for a high degree of concentration, such as listening to stories or music, should be given enough time and resources to take part in various group learning and free choice activities.

As a result, teachers may organize these children to play in large groups, small groups or on their own. Similarly, from the point of view of Smith and Thomas (2006), inclusive teachers may consider forming different groups by age consideration. Children can learn to communicate and cooperate with peers, or teachers can arrange for children of different ages to be in groups so that so that older children can and thus learn to take care of the younger ones, while the younger ones can learn from the older ones and widen their vision for learning. For a successful inclusion, teachers must assign a peer to provide help or assistance when needed. “To incorporate socialization goals, and also to help promote acceptance and learning about differences in the classroom, select different peers for different subjects or activities” (Smith & Thomas, 2006, p254). Though resources required to cater for disabilities can be expensive and scarce Gronlund, Lim and Larsson (2010) articulated that Inclusive Education requires support of both equipment and skills. They further acknowledge that these equipments are not used at all in mainstream schools because children with disabilities are contested and hence their effort is mainly identifying these children and making them go to special schools. In a study by Valeo (2008) found out that inclusive education programme could be successfully implemented if the level of the teaching competence was enhanced. To achieve this, the authorities must create opportunities for teachers to attend courses that are related to inclusive education programme to sharpen their skills.

Manisah, Mustapha and Zalizan (2006) observed that exposure to inclusive education is important in order for teachers to appreciate inclusive education practices and also

to understand their role in implementing inclusive education. Margaritoiu (2010) also argued that teachers of inclusive school reported that they were ill prepared when they entered the professional arena, although they had sufficient subject knowledge, it was evident that these category of teachers needed more generic teaching skills necessary for teaching diverse population of children with and without special educational needs. i.e., teaching strategies, differentiating curriculum, managing challenging behaviors. However, adjustments towards the pedagogical aspects can be trained internally by experienced teachers to the regular or new teachers through collaborative teaching between mainstream and special together indirectly. Therefore, reinforce a cooperative spirit in implementing inclusive education in mainstream primary schools (Tomlison, 2005). New Brunswick Association for Community living (2007)

Identified lack of knowledge and skill as a systematic barrier to the implementation of inclusive education. It is argued that lack of adequate pre service training for the teachers, is the reason for the barrier. Hence, the issue has been known for some time and therefore correcting it will require the effort of the department of education to overcome what would be considered the recalcitrance of some faculties of education.

Mainstream schools in Ghana must ensure that children with disabilities are accommodated by making their environment accessible to them. While considering the inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream education, teachers need to try and enhance the level of resources and differentiate between pupils who really need more resources and time to enable them perform well in class.

Obi and Mesah, (2005) disclosed that in advanced countries, prior to the introduction of inclusion policy, general education teachers were prepared for mainstreaming. These teachers were gradually brought to accept the inclusion policy. It is in line with

this arrangement that led to the introduction of special needs education into initial teacher training colleges in Ghana in the 1991/1992 academic year. Nevertheless Obi and Mnsah (2005) were quick to remark that although trainees in teacher training colleges and institutions in Ghana offer special education as part of their educational foundation courses the report by Caseley-Hayford, (2002) showed that the course content is not adequate to prepare teachers for inclusive education. The implication of this is that, teachers are not adequately prepared for the task of inclusive education in Ghana.

In showing the way Avoke and Hayford, (2000), reported that the Department of Special education of the University of Education, Winneba in collaboration with the School Attachment Programme (SAP) of the same university had initiated inclusive education in some Basic schools in the Winneba Circuit in the Awutu Efutu Senya(A.E.S) Education Districts of the Central Region of Ghana. This initiative led to the enrolment of some special needs students in some Basic schools in Winneba. Training was also given to regular teachers to be able to address the learning needs of these children with special educational needs. This led to the creation of an office at the District Education Directorate solely responsible for inclusion matters. Student teachers who have been exposed to the rudiments in special education were expected to attend to these children with special educational needs Obi & Mensah further stated that three districts were involved in piloting inclusive education programmes through the support of Sight Savers an International, Non-Governmental Organization, (NGO) concerned with education with visual impairment. Inclusive schools as being piloted now in Ghana involves itinerant teachers who visit children in the inclusive settings. Also peripatetic officers (now known as Special Education Officers) working in each

district visit these children on a regular basis. The programme is restricted to children with mild conditions.

Opong (2003) for example, identified four major new roles expected of modern teachers in addition to traditional roles. He listed them as follows:

- Planning and implementing individualized education program IEP
- Using specialized materials and equipment
- Working closely with specialized personnel and
- Working in collaboration with parents and families of children and youth with special needs.

This obviously means that the teacher will have to exhibit some amount of professionalism in his or her work. Professionalism is the skills or qualities required or expected of members of a profession. A profession is a paid occupation, especially one that requires advanced education training, (Hornby, 1995) cited in (Boison, 2006).

Literature clearly demonstrates that pre-service teacher preparation is gradually veering off from a wide world dimension of training towards general education classroom unto inclusive classroom instruction. A study conducted in Lithuania by Smith (2009) regarding teacher education towards inclusion concluded that teacher education should provide teachers with knowledge about intercultural issues in schools and society and engage teachers' commitment to working in a culturally diverse society. Several basic teaching skills were felt to be particularly important in this context. Smith (2009) added that no programme of study of initial teacher education can equip teachers with all the competences they will require during their careers and notes that the demands on the teaching profession are evolving rapidly, requiring teachers to reflect on their own learning requirements in the context of their

particular school environment and to take greater responsibility for their own lifelong learning. Additionally, Cooper, Kurtts, Baber & Vallecorsa, (2008) Examined teacher preparation curricular for inclusion, and drew the following conclusions to describe faculty members perceptions of their own knowledge and skills as related to preparing teacher candidates to work with students with special educational needs .Across the respondents from general education and special education faculty, over 38 % described themselves as either having a “fairly extensive or excellent” knowledge and skill base for preparing teacher candidates to work with students with special educational needs in general education settings, while 25.4% described themselves as „generally adequate“. Approximately 37% of the faculty surveyed described their knowledge and skills base for the preparing teacher candidates to work with students with disabilities in general education settings as “somewhat or extremely limited”. In response to item asking to what extent faculty knowledge and skill level reflected current best practice in teaching children with disabilities in general education classrooms, over 55% of respondents felt their knowledge and skills “fairly or extremely well” reflected best practices and 18% of faculty felt their knowledge and skills base “somewhat” reflected best practice. Approximately 26% of faculty reported that, their knowledge and skills level reflected current best practices for teaching students with special educational needs in general education classrooms either very little or not at all.

The most popular inclusion method seems to be a co-teaching model. “Co-teaching may be defined as the partnership of a general education teacher and a special education teacher or another specialist for the purpose of jointly delivering instruction to a diverse group of students, including those with disabilities or other special needs, in a general education setting, and in a way that flexibly and deliberately meets their

learning needs” (Friend, Cook, Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010). Inclusion of all children within the classroom has brought about a new challenge for teachers. A typical class may consist of gifted children, slow learners, English-language learners, mentally retarded children, hyperactive children, emotionally challenged children, and low socioeconomically status children. With such a diverse combination, classroom management, along with focusing on delivering a differentiated instruction that targets each student individually in the classroom has made a regular education teacher’s job beyond difficult. Because the state and federal education systems are calling for schools to improve special education, school systems are turning to inclusion of special education students in the mainstream setting. Education can be a powerful tool to unify the students with disabilities and those without them

Oliver and Reschly (2010) provided information on teacher organization and preparation in the classroom. They pointed out that, special education teachers as well as general education teachers are not adequately prepared to manage students with behavior disorders in the classroom. Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) or Severely Emotional Disorders (SED) have behaviors that inhibit them academically as well as socially. The EBD student oftentimes cannot or does not know how to control these “acting out” behaviors. Moreover, they are frequently too disruptive in the general education classroom and must be separated from their peers. Conversely, federal law states that students with disabilities must be educated in the same classrooms as their nondisabled peers.

The underlying key to teacher success is preparation. Learning in the classroom with the least disruptions possible is essential. Therefore, to impede negative behavior as much as possible, teachers must be prepared to manage these behaviors. Oliver and Reshly (2010) argued, “Because of the excesses exhibited by students with EBD,

teacher skills in classroom organization and behavior management are necessary to address these challenging behaviors, attenuate academic deficits, and support successful inclusion efforts”. Teachers must make sure that classrooms are structured and conducive to learning with minimal disruptions. Teachers must have concise rules for the classroom and ensure that students know and understand the rules that are set.

Final results of the research of Oliver and Reschly (2010) found that special education teachers “may not be adequately prepared to meet the behavioral needs of diverse learners” .Anderson, Klassen, and Georgiou (2007), detailed how the teachers in their study lacked the knowledge they need to be more effective at teaching and dealing with students with special needs. The teachers thought that school psychologist should play a huge part in educating them about students with special needs. They felt that with a better understanding of the types of students who they were working with, they could be more effective teachers to them. To understand how these children better work mentally, emotionally, and physically changes many aspects of the teaching-learning process for the better.

One would think more training and insight usually make teachers feel better about situations, however, that was not always the case Wilkins & Nietfeld (2012). There were teachers who were experts on inclusion in the classroom, and their attitudes toward inclusion were no different than those educators who had little training and insight on the program.

Akalin, Sazak-Pinar, & Sucuogluo (2010) give information on teachers and classroom management in inclusive classrooms. The inclusive classrooms in the study have at least one or more student diagnosed with a learning disability. The authors explain, “In Turkey the law mandating that children with disabilities should be placed

in general classroom was accepted in 1983 and mainstreaming has been expanding throughout Turkey since then” . However, teachers were not trained to provide accommodations or modifications to adhere to this mandate. Students were mainstreamed, even though few teachers were adequately trained in an academic setting to provide for the needs of students with disabilities. Moreover, Akalin et al. (2010), state, “The effectiveness of mainstreaming has been questioned in the light of the problems being encountered by the children, their parents and especially the teachers since 1990”.

Equally important was a study conducted by Fallon, Zhang, Kim (2011), which focused on training teachers to manage the behaviors of students with disabilities in the inclusive. Many general education teachers lack the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively manage these challenging behaviors. The study focused on novice teachers that are certified in the general curriculum who want additional certification in special education. Each participant in the study were volunteers in a graduate class in managing and assessing behaviors of students with disabilities using functional behavior assessments as well as behavior intervention plans. The need to train teachers to manage students with behavior disorders is imperative since these students are now educated in the same classrooms as their nondisabled peers. Educating, training, and cultural diversity should be considered when recruiting teachers to teach students with behavioral and emotional disorders.

It is essential that teachers are trained in the skills and strategies to support behavior management in the classroom as well as the ability to differentiate instruction for students with special needs. Frequent classroom distractions take away from the learning experience of all students. The teacher is the manager of the classroom and

he or she must have rules in place to impede negative behaviors as much as possible. Akalin, Sazak-Pinar, and Sucuoglu (2010), conclude, “The results of research focused on classroom management revealed that effective classroom management increased academic achievement and decreased problem behaviors of students” . It is the responsibility of the teacher to structure their classroom so that it has minimal distractions and create a learning environment for all students. Teachers should be dedicated to teach all students. Akalin, Sazak-Pinar, and Sucuoglu (2010) state the behavior of the student has a direct correlation to student achievement. Final results of the research found that “classroom management should be considered as a powerful cluster of techniques and strategies in terms of creating meaningful learning experiences for all students including students with disabilities.

Wagner, (2012) reported that general educators believe that they are not trained to effectively manage the challenging behaviors of EBD students, therefore making them apprehensive about having these students in their classes.

2.5 Resources and other Support Services Available

The Disability Act of Ghana , Act 715 of 2006 clause 17 stipulated that, the Ministry of Education shall by legislative instrument designate schools or institutions in each region which shall provide the necessary facilities and equipment that will enable persons with disabilities to fully benefit from the school or the institutions. Teaching and learning resources generally refer to as teaching kits include information technology (I.T) software, audio visual teaching materials and teaching materials produced by government of Ghana and some educational organizations which are available in bookstores (Ronald, 2013). Accessibility for Canadian with Disability Act (2005) contends that children including those with special needs learn through

observation as well as manipulation of objects found in their environment. In contribution to the observation made by (Ronald, 2013) noted that, teachers should make flexible use of resources depending on children's needs.

Resources are a source of aid or support that may be drawn upon when needed. Resources in education are those facilities and equipment that support effective teaching and learning. Amedahe (2006) stated that a teaching resource is what the teacher prepares or use to make learning easier than it would have been without it.

Ajayi and Faremi (2008) identified some of these resources as classroom, furniture and fittings. These writers stressed that shortage of resources in primary schools for example may contribute to poor learning outcome. Best and Khan (2007), pointed out that, the use of instructional materials contributes to students' academic performance. The importance of teaching and learning resources can therefore not be overemphasized. These resources together with support play a critical role in effective teaching and learning. When it comes to inclusion education, the need for these resources and support become more determinative. Teachers in inclusive setting need to augment their teaching with the use of such resources. It is only then that their teaching can be meaningful and beneficial to the children with special needs. Lack or inadequate provision of these resources will therefore spells disaster for children with disabilities and the practice of inclusion.

Shah (2007) conducted a large-scale survey of 560 regular primary school teachers in Ahmedabad, India and reported that the teachers were moderately concerned about implementing inclusion. She reported that the teachers were most concerned about lack of infrastructural resources and lack of social acceptance of students with disabilities in inclusive education classrooms. In an earlier study, Sharma (2009)

conducted a survey of 310 primary school principals and 484 teachers in Delhi, India and reported that both principals and teachers were concerned about „the lack of resources“ (such as special education teachers and Paraprofessional staff), and „the non-availability of instructional materials“ Gadagbui (2008) mentioned appropriate teaching aids and equipment such as hearing aids for the hard of hearing, argumentative communication books, stylus and frame, Braille machines, glasses, magnifying lenses and papers being the equipment and materials available in some of the pilot inclusive schools. Gadagbui further identified equipment such as Screening Audiometer, Diagnostic Audiometer for assessing hearing, tympanometer, Ear light, Otoscope for ear examination, battery charges, Auditory training unit, sound level meter and tuning fork as a necessities for inclusive schools.

An investigation conducted by Scholl (2006) on low vision devices for the visually impaired in mainstream schools revealed that there two main types of low vision devices equipment namely, optical and non-optical devices. Scholl study identified stand magnifiers, telescope, reading stand, felt- tipped pens, reading slit, binoculars, hand held magnifiers, lenses and close circuit television. Contributing to the discourse, Mercer and Mercer (2005) noted that instructional equipment can be used to meet the specific needs of special needs children. Mercer and Mercer also believed that audio visual equipment can be used to instruct students with specific modality preferences and manipulative devices often helps to hold the attention of distractible learners. They went further to say that, the use of tape recorders, over held projectors motivate special needs learners. The use of computers and computers software cannot be overemphasized in having debate of this nature since they bring learners closer to their natural environment. They further made mentioned of miniature chalkboard, flannel board, game material, library card holders, marking pens, typewriters,

stopwatches, magnetic board, tracing screen, door mounted mirror and teaching grooming and self-concept, adjustable stables, chairs and so on" (p.158). however in the Tree haven inclusive setting, the following facilities and equipment were stated to be available : Piano, Television, football field, and electronic darts. laundry and vending machines in adjoining rooms , native stone fireplace available for guest use, nature library, quiet lounge built- in seating has been expanded to accommodate outdoor classes, reception and exhibits room, computer lab with high speed internet access, Audio visual equipment, „borrow“ library with over 2000 volumes on topics ranging from ecology to natural history. They went on to say that classroom is made up of auditorium features elevated stage, projection facilities and equipment, sync-dissolve equipment for slide presentation, remote controlled lighting, sound system, lanterns, and listening aids for hearing impaired students or guest. They further stated that, meeting room to accommodate 15 to 125 people depending on room setup are in place. Carpeted rooms sleeping up to four with bunks, wardrobes, wireless internet and private bathrooms/shower with lines provided and total beds of 107 have been identified as facilities and equipment in the inclusive setting or Tree H School .Garuba (2003) alluded to the fact that lack of special educational facilities and equipment are hindering effective implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria. In his view, facilities such as Resource room, modern Assessment center for assessing vision, hearing, cognition and other health related conditions have not been made available in the inclusive settings.

A study by Kahn (2006) revealed that assistive technology devices are designed to compensate for or enhance the function of some physical, sensory or mental ability that is impaired. Children and adults who have a broad range of disabilities or limitations use assistive devices in the inclusive settings to aid their learning. Kahn

continues by saying that manual communication boards are inexpensive and practical mode by which argumentative communication device helps individuals communicate more easily and effectively. This equipment can range from with a board with pictures representing student's daily needs to electronic speech synthesizers. This technology can help a child with disabilities feel independent and take part in activities with other children in the inclusive schools.

The need for resources to facilitate effective teaching and learning may vary from school to school. However, it is generally believed that teachers definitely require support of a special educator to assist them in providing equal opportunities to students with special educational needs. For example teachers teaching in inclusive classrooms having children with hearing impairment were of the opinion that these children need to learn lip-reading or sign language to communicate (Carolan &

O'Leary, 2009). Nind (2004) contends that teachers must emphasized the content and instructional approaches in the context of individuals needs so that students can achieve the objective outlined in the curriculum.(Nind ,2004) reviewed inclusive education in both primary and post primary settings reported that the most common pedagogical or classroom technique was adaptation of instructions, such as teaching students to use specific memory techniques to help them remember the material learnt. Concerns about lack of resources for supporting students with special educational needs in inclusive schools were particularly common in resource poor countries such as Ghana (Ocloo & Subbley, 2008p.13). However, Dart's (2007) review of special educational needs provisions in Bostwana noted that lack of resources was usually attributed to confusion over who was responsible for what resources. Resources were sometimes under- utilized such as sophisticated equipment for students with visual impairments that had never been used. A lack of adapted

teaching and assessment materials such as brailled and talking books was also seen as a key barrier to accessing the curriculum for those with visual impairment. Bulgren, Lenze, McKnight, and Donald (2002) noticed that classroom support in place to assist special educational needs students to succeed in high school in United States was based on adapted curricular and school resources. Teachers indicate that they adapted their resources and curriculum to accommodate the learning styles of these students and that teaching techniques for independent learning often had equal importance to the teaching the general curriculum. Olsen and Slater (2008) reported on the study where a subset of the curriculum materials for a middle school astronomy package was modified to reflect best practices in working with students with special educational needs.

Modification made use of computer technology, including voice descriptions and visual cues to present information in a range of modalities, to simplify text but not content, to focus students attention onto the lesson's most important details, and to facilitate vocabulary – acquisition by all students. In the end, those with special needs who used the regular curriculum, had a post-test decrease of 7 percent in scores compared with a 7 percent gain in average post- test scores when they used the modified curriculum, with some students gaining up to 30 percent in post test scores .However, absolute numbers of students with educational needs were small, with only 21 matched pairs. Students with special educational needs seemed not to benefit additionally from the modified curriculum, with an 8 percent gain score post- test with the normal curriculum and a 9 percent gain using the modified curriculum. According to Humphery and Lewis (2008), employing teaching assistants to fill gaps in teacher resources to provide extra support for individuals or groups of students with special educational needs, can have positive outcomes but can also mask an overall lack of

teaching resources. Slife (2004) observed that, making support services available in the form of technology, teaching learning materials and specialists in the field of special education is worthwhile. National information Centre (2007) advocates for the education of children with disabilities in appropriate environment till they attain the age of 18. they describe educational placement of children with special needs as those with extra educational needs and stated that as far as possible, every child with special needs should be placed in regular schools, with the needed support services and facilities. For instance, a person with physical disability would acquire disability evaluation and assessment by a team of experts of consisting of Orthopedic surgeon, physiotherapist, Occupational therapist, social worker etc., working together.

According to Jarvis (2003) as with community and business relationships, schools reported varied experiences and levels of success with inter – agency and inter – department supports. A few schools reported that their students benefit from responsive services from such support services as speech – language pathologists occupational therapists and also indicated pleasure with the level and timeliness of services they received from social workers, health nurses and mobile mental health team. However, in a large number of schools, there is an extremely high need for increased support from such partner departments as social development and health. Johnson, Thurlow and Stout (2007) have it that special educational needs coordinator and other specialist teaching staff widely used to support general staff and coordinate the education of students with special needs. In related research, King and Youngs (2003) found special educational needs teachers were often used in the United States to help general education teachers deliver an adapted curriculum and assessment for students with special educational needs. This was possibly in answer to teacher

concerns about the extra time required for preparing lessons and their own lack of skills in accommodating these students.

The specialist teachers seemed to help foster inclusive environments, such as through modeling appropriate instructional techniques. Special educational needs officers are appointed by the National Council for special education and provide a direct service to the parents of children with special needs and special educational needs and to the schools within designated geographical areas. Special educational needs officers are mainly involved in resourcing schools to meet the needs of children with special needs and by ensuring that resources are used efficiently in schools (Blatchford, Bassett, Brown, Martín, Russell, and Rubie- Davies, 2009). To Blatchford et al. (2009) special educational needs officers have a role in supporting and advising parent of children with special educational needs. They identified possible placements for children with special educational needs, liaise with other services personnel, engage in discussion with schools, and assist in planning the transition of children between schools and onwards from schools to further or higher education and other services. Inclusive teachers typically value support from special educational needs Specialists (special Education Support Service, 2009 P.87). Evidence supports the views that specialist, and trained staff, working in schools alongside teachers, can be effective in both supporting class teachers and also helping students to access the curriculum. In a similar opinion, Nugent (2007) contends that special educational needs support has been shown to improve basic skills such as reading and writing; specific skills such as Braille and sign language as well as social skills. Blatchford et al.(2009) posit that evidence supports the view that specialist, trained staff working in schools alongside teachers such as special educational needs officers, can support class teachers and help students with special educational needs to access curriculum and there is some

evidence that such specialist support can improve basic skills such as reading and writing, specific skills such as knowledge of Braille and sign language as well as social skills. However, special educational needs officers resources are often limited and individual special educational needs officers carry a substantial burden. Dart (2007) also identified useful tools and strategies to increase curriculum access for students who are visually impaired in Botswana. The main barrier was the lack of adapted teaching and assessment materials (mainly Braille resources, but also talking books and the means to play them.) Margaritoiu (2010), argued that, the availability and utilization of resources in an inclusive school is the most important ingredients for the improvement of practical conditions for inclusion. The resources also increase the learning and teaching experienced by all children with and without educational needs irrespective of the situation in which they find themselves. Resources in this case include the school infrastructure, Assistive equipment, material, knowledge and skills teachers have acquired, through training and experience. All these resources can be drawn upon when dealing with differences in the school and classroom environment.

In order to provide a quality education for special needs students in the general education classroom, all of the necessary resources must be available for both the students and the teachers (Anderson, Klassen, & Georgiou, 2011). Resources are often extremely limited. There is a lack of teachers because there is a lack of funding, and these insufficient materials affect the success of the inclusion and those who are involved in the program. (Anderson) 2011, further opined that, despite the training received by regular classroom teachers, they usually express concerns about inclusive education saying the lack the specialized training required to teach academic, social or adaptive skills to students with disabilities. Adeosun, (2010), noted that the use of instructional materials contributes to students' academic performance. The importance

of teaching and learning resources can therefore not be overemphasized. These resources together with support play a critical role in effective teaching and learning. When it comes to inclusion, the need for these resources and support become more determinative. Teachers in inclusive settings need to augment their teaching with the use of such resources. It is only then that their teaching can be meaningful and beneficial to the children with special needs. Lack or inadequate provision of these resources will therefore spell disaster for children with special needs. Adeosun further pointed that, negative or positive attitudes towards inclusion may be contingent upon what teachers believe is lacking in the regular school system. This underscores the importance of teacher support, provision and availability of resources for inclusion to be successful.

Also, Villa and Thousand (2012) observed that emphasis is required of teachers to work together to support each other through professional collaboration, team teaching, teacher and students assistance teams and cooperative negotiations. This means that, support teachers in the inclusive schools additionally should provide direct help as team teachers by offering help to empower teachers to adapt and individualize instruction to meet the unique needs of all pupils. Writing on the topic, support services for persons with disabilities in an inclusive classrooms, Porter (2012) pointed out that, one of the most promising approaches of supporting classrooms teachers and children with special needs is to provide support from a collaborating teacher. In many cases, this teacher should be a former special educator who will be given a new mandate and role instead of providing the direct services to the students, emphasis is placed on providing professional assistance in planning and teaching strategies to the classroom teacher. Although Porter's comments is very relevant, this type of

collaboration is not effective in the pilot basic schools in Agona Swedru township where one or two special educators are attached to cluster of schools.

In Swedish early years education, children with special educational needs have a right to receive support provisions (Education Act, 2010), that is additional help and attention designed to enhance participation and facilitate learning in educational activities, routines and play. Some examples of support provisions are additional instructions, one-on-one aids and training with a special educator in reading and mathematics. Participation is about being present in an education setting as well as about interactions, joint activities and engagement. Such aspects, in particular that of engagement, are considered essential for a child's learning and development (Bronfenbrenner, 2009), and has been an interest of several Swedish special education researchers (Castro, Granlund, & Almqvist, 2015). Learning is about psychological that can be influenced by proximal activities, routines and play (group or solitary) at home, at school or during leisure time (Bronfenbrenner, 2009). These understandings of participation and learning are espoused in the research, and it is assumed that participation and learning makes possible the intellectual, social, emotional, moral and motor skill development of children. Participation, learning and development are therefore seen as linked. This means that support provisions can not only enhance participation and facilitate learning in educational activities, routines and play, but can in addition make possible children's development. Support service for children who struggle in education are crucial. A lack of support may risk creating circumstances where children cannot participate and learn, and thereby not benefit optimally from their education. The importance of support provisions in inclusive practices is also stressed in international conventions. For example, the UN CRPD (2006) states that persons with disabilities should "receive the support required, within the general

educational system, to facilitate their effective education". The provision of support is likewise considered crucial in non-inclusive educational arrangements (Education Act, 2010). In the year 2014, a revision of the Swedish Education Act concerning support provisions in schools was conducted (Education Act, 2010:800; Swedish National Agency for Education [SNAE], 2014a, 2014b). In short, the revision concluded that support provisions for pupils should be divided into extra adaptations. Extra adaptations refer to support provisions that are provided within the classroom. For example, a child can be supported via extra instructions and technical tools. Intense extra adaptations refer to deeper and more intensely embedded support provisions that are provided within the classroom. For example, a child can be supported via several extra instructions and a number of tools. If the child is not being sufficiently supported in order to reach the academic goals by means of additional adaptations and intense extra adaptations, or show other needs, the school head should be informed (Education Act, 2010:800). The school head should then ensure that the child's need of special support is considered, with support from the school Health Services. Special support refers to support provisions that may imply the involvement of other teachers and may take place outside of the regular classroom. One example of special support is training with a special teacher/educator in reading and mathematics. When special support is considered needed, an action plan [åtgärdsprogram, in Swedish] should be written with information concerning the support and the responsible persons. Special support can be provided in a smaller group of children [särskild undervisningsgrupp, in Swedish] and can also take the form of modified schooling [anpassad studiegång, in Swedish]. Before the July 1, 2014 the concept of special support was not grouped into extra adaptations, intense extra adaptations and special support, however (Education Act, 2010:800; SNAE, 2014a, 2014b), and instead the concept of special support was used for all types of support services. This

revision of the concept of support is related to supporting compulsory schools. In research, efforts have also been made to describe the support provided to children in need of support in Swedish preschools. The support provisions offered in Swedish preschools have been described as direct and indirect (Sandberg, Norling, & Lillvist, 2009). Examples of direct support are support for motor development, man-to-man marking and praise from a staff member given directly to a child, whereas examples of indirect support are support from peers and physical environments. Multi-tiered system of support and the Building Blocks framework the revision made of support provisions at a macro system level in the context of Sweden can be seen as following an approach that is internationally called multi-tiered system of support and Building Blocks. A multi-tiered system of support, and other similar notions such as a tiered approach, a tiered framework and Response To Intervention (Bender & Shores, 2007); RTI Action Network, 2015, "What is RTI," para. 1), may be illustrated with a pyramid graphic divided into three sections. Tier 1, that is to say the foundation of the pyramid, represents the high-quality instruction of all children in classrooms that is provided by qualified staff. Tier 1 comprises an ongoing screening of children to identify struggling learners and the provision of support to those children within their classrooms among peers. When the children do not show adequate progress in tier 1, tier 2 is introduced. Tier 2 consists of targeted supplementary instructions that some of the children may need (approximately 15%) in addition to the instructions offered in their classrooms (Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2010). Tier 2 instructions can be provided in small groups, and for a shorter or longer period of time, but this seldom exceeds a grading period. The children who do not show adequate progress in tier 1 and tier 2 are then provided tier 3. Tier 3 represents individualized and intensive instructions that approximately 5% of the children are estimated to need (Bender & Shores, 2007) These intensive instructions may be of longer duration than the

provisions of tier 2. In a multi-tiered system of support, the instructions and provisions can also be referred to as interventions. There is a didactical multi-tiered system of support for preschool that is called Building Blocks. It is explicitly focused on early years education and inclusive education. (Sandall, Schwartz, & Joseph 2011) have developed this didactic framework on preschool inclusion that is building on scientific evidence and educational practice. Building Blocks is “a set of educational practices designed to help teachers do a more effective job of including young children with disabilities and other special needs in preschool classrooms” (Sandall, Schwartz, & Joseph 2011).

2.6 Accessibility of School to Students with Special Needs

In spite of the efforts of the successive governments to create a conducive environment for participation of person with disability in all aspect of life, there are still challenges in terms of accessing the physical infrastructure as most public buildings are still not disability friendly. Some of the existing accessibility facilities are not designed according to the required standards and as a result, deliberately putting impediments to the disabled to exhibit their full potential to contribute to the development of Ghana and Africa (Addi, 2011).

Currently, it is estimated that a tenth of the world’s population constituted persons with all forms of disabilities of which 500 million are physically disabled (Ozcebe, 2008; Baser, 2008). This implies that, at least, two million out of the estimated population of 24 million Ghanaians are disabled in one form or the other. It is, therefore, important that public buildings are made accessible by appropriately designing, constructing and maintaining them to meet the needs of all users equally (Bariset al, 2009). Built environment, which is generally not disable- friendly, discriminates against PWDs, by excluding them from social life. (Otmani et al., 2009;

Imrie and Kumar, 1998). Wellington (1992) reports that it is not a common practice for disabled people to be active users of public buildings and spaces this is due to the fact that there is the perception that the disabled as persons has to depend on other people all the time for assistance. Checks by the researcher on the Draft Ghana Building Code (1988) and National Building Regulations (1996), which regulate the construction of buildings in Ghana, revealed that they have not been revised to incorporate barrier-free designs. This means, Ghana, as a nation, does not have a policy framework that regulates and obliges the stakeholders in the building industry to design and build structures that are disabled-friendly. Wijk (2001) observed that,

„Architectural disability“ by building designers to stubbornness and ignorance, and believes the ignorance and stubbornness can be dealt with by making good information and creative examples available and accessible to the designers. Salmen (2001), on the other hand, claims that architects, engineers and other construction professionals do not often appreciate the changing trends and lacks the ability to come out with suitable inclusive design solutions.

The attitude of these professional can change when they are given continuous professional education and training by their various professional bodies as well as calling for a change in the mode of training of these professionals (Vandebelt, 2001).

An important outcome for inclusive design should, therefore, be to both ease architectural disability and realize a greater measure of social equity and justice. However, critics of inclusive design argue that, in many cases, it is impossible to provide a „one size fits all „solution and that some people will always be excluded.

According to Vandebelt, (2001) accessibility includes ease of independent approach, entry, evacuation, and or use of a building and its services and facilities by all of the

building's potential users with an assurance of individual health, safety, and welfare during the course of those activities. The main public entrance or route to a building should be accessible to all persons, regardless of disability. Accessibility to buildings or parts of buildings means that people, regardless of disability, age or gender, are able to gain access to buildings or part of buildings, into them, within them and exit from them. An accessible barrier-free environment is the first step towards fulfilling the right of People with Disability (PWD) to participate in all areas of community life.

Article 9 of the UN convention on the rights of PWD on accessibility notes that, to enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, appropriate measures should be taken to ensure persons with disabilities have access, on an equal basis with others, the physical environment, transportation systems, and other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. In 2006, the government of Ghana signed the Persons with Disability Act, which guaranteed persons with disabilities access to public places, education, employment and transportation (p24 (7)). As cited in the

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), „the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities should be promoted and protected. The school environment encompasses the school building and all its contents including physical structures, infrastructure, furniture, and the use and presence of chemicals and biological agents, the site on which a school is located, and the surrounding environment including the air, water, and materials with which children may come into contact as well as nearby land uses, roadways and other hazards (Patrick, Ryan & Kalplan, 2007). Patrick, Ryan & Kalplan, (2007) further opine that the major importance of the schools physical environments is that, it can affect students comfort and to some extent, their ability to

learn. They argued that a good physical environment of a school goes a long way to promote physical activities among students which is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle. They further add that in combination with healthy eating, physical activities can help prevent a range of chronic diseases, including heart diseases, cancer and stroke which are considered the three leading causes of death. Patrick, et al. (2007) highlights some attributes of a good inclusive schools physical environment as lighting, acoustics, size, comfort, safety and access to technology. They contend that these attributes have a profound effect on the way in which the students are able to learn. From the point of view of Wyon contends that lighting, temperature, sound, and space designed are just a few of the important factors that impact learning. He further adds that, “common sense tells us that broken windows, leaking roofs, and neglected playgrounds are invitations for disaster” (p132). Additionally, Heath and Mendell (2002) contended that negative indoor environmental conditions such as pollutant exposure, thermal discomfort, and noise, light that result from building factors can impact student performance directly or indirectly through a decline of health and comfort and may lead to absenteeism. To prevent accidents, children’s safety should always be the top priority when designing the classroom layout and planning the activities. The advice that children including those with disabilities are active learners who are curious and interested in exploration, therefore given proper resources and adult assistance, they can construct knowledge on their own.

Patrick et al. (2007) opined that, level access routes accommodate the widest range of abilities and should be provided in all inclusive schools. Gradient of 1:5 or less steep is considered to be a normal level. Changes in levels are difficult for many people to negotiate (e.g., wheel chair users, people using walking aids pushing buggies, people with visual impairment, etc.) and should be avoided. When it is not possible to

provide a level access route, a gentle sloped access route should be provided. When the ramp rise greater than 300mm, a steeped access route should be provided in addition to the ramped access route (Patrick et al).another important facility that needs mentioning is sanitary facilities. According to Kenrick (2010), the number and the location of sanitary facilities required in a school building will be directed by the nature of the building, the size of the building, the number of students who will use the building, gender ratio, and pattern of use and the ease of access. Authorities must ensure that designers must have regard to the safety, health and welfare at the school. This provision must be adequate for many wheelchairs. According to Kenrick (2010), a wheel chair accessible unisex water closet must be designed to meet the needs of independent wheelchair users; it should be equipped to suit ambulant disabled people who may find themselves in the school setting. Kenrick (2010) added further that the travel distance to this water closet should be minimized where it is not located within the classroom. Urinals in inclusive schools must adhere to the following;

- Where one or more urinal are provided in a washroom, at least one urinal should be suitable for use by ambulant disabled people.
- Where six or more urinal are provided in a washroom at least one urinal and one low wash hand basin should be provided for where chair users
- Where accessible urinal are provided, a clear area of 900mm *1400mm in front of the wheelchair accessible urinal should be leveled (Kenrick, 2010)
- Where wash basins are provided, at least one wash basin with its rim set at between 720mm above the floor level should be provided.

The materials used for covering the classroom floor should be of a more durable in nature, easy to clean, able to absorb sound and suitable for sitting on. For example, rubber tiles, rubber mat etc. in addition mirrors should be installed in suitable places or on walls to offer children more opportunities to examine their own images (Kenrich, 2010). Kenrich (2010) pointed out that children are self-centered, active and curious but have short attention span. They need to learn about and experience the social life and the normal ways of dealing with people and handling problems. As a result, teachers may allocate time for group learning and play, prepare a relaxed learning environment, and provide children with opportunities to explore individually or play in groups. Children should be allowed to move freely and happily and exercise a degree of choice in choosing different activities. They may also be allowed to stay alone in one activity corner to read stories or play with toys, or they can chat with friends or participate in creative and play activities with other children. However, teachers must ensure students are not exposed to hazardous substances which may go a long way to harm the students (Fraser, 2002). According to Kenrich, (2010), strong physical fitness and good habits are the foundation of healthy growth, in that children grow healthy by participating in activities structured in line with their physical and mental developmental needs, and learn to maintain healthy practices throughout their lifetime. Again, physical activities enable children including those with disabilities to experience the capabilities of their bodies and develop a sense of space. As a result of the above, inclusive teachers must make it a routine to execute appropriate training to these children so as to help children develop gross and fine motor skills and effectively develop their concentration and observation abilities.

According to Harpur (2013) the universal designed UD can be applied to any product or environment. For example, a typical service counter in a school canteen may not be

accessible to everyone, including those of short stature, those who use wheelchairs and those who cannot stand for extended periods of time. She posits further that, applying universal design principles might result in the design of a counter that has multiple heights and that the standard height designed for individuals within the average range of height and who use the counter while standing and a shorter height for those who are shorter than the average, those who use a wheelchair for mobility, or prefer to interact with service staff from seated position. Making product or an environment accessible to people with disabilities often benefits others. For example automatic door openers, though benefit individuals using walkers and wheelchairs. It also benefits people carrying groceries and holding babies as well as elderly citizens. Sidewalk curb cuts designed to make sidewalk and street accessible to those using wheelchairs, are more often used by kids on skateboards, parents with baby strollers, and delivery staff with carts. When television displays in airports and restaurants are captioned, programming is accessible not only to people who are deaf but also to others who cannot hear the audio in noisy areas (Harpur, 2013). According to Ronald (2013), universal design UD was formulated by a group of architects, product designers, engineers and environmental design researchers with seven principles to provide guidance in the design of products and environments. Ronald (2013) listed the principles as:

- Equitable use (the design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities)
- Flexibility in use (the design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities)
- Simple and intuitive (use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge skills or current concentration level).

- Perceptible information (the design accommodates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities) and
- Tolerance for error (the design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions) (Ronald, 2013)

Ronald (2013) further has it that there must be low physical effort (e.g. the design can be used efficiently, comfortably and with a minimum fatigue). Doors that open automatically for people with a wide variety of physical characteristics demonstrates the application of this principle, as size and space and use (appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach manipulation and use regardless of the user's body size posture or mobility).

Similarly, Harpur (2013) contends that UD, as far as social inclusion is concerned, refers to broad – spectrum ideas meant to produce building products and environments that are inherently accessible to older people with and without disabilities.

Similar to universal design UD is the Design for All (DFA). DFA is about ensuring that environment, products, services and interfaces work for people of all ages and abilities in different situations and under various circumstances (Accessibility for

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005). Accessibility for Canadians with Disabilities Act continue to say that the ideology behind DFA is based on the premise of easy-to use affordable products and services improvement for improved quality of life of all citizens. Harpur (2013) contends that DFA permits access to the built environment, access to services and user-friendly products which are not just a quality factor but a necessity for many persons with disabilities. Within the DFA a three -way approach is proposed: goods which can be accessed by nearly all the potential users without

modification or failing that, products being easy to adapt according to different needs or using standardized interfaces that can be accessed simply by using assistive technology.

Building modification consists of adjusting buildings or facilities so that they can be used by people who are disabled or have physical impairments. According to Ronald (2013), in the case of new buildings, the idea of barrier free modification has largely been superseded by the concept of universal design, which seeks to design things from the outset to support easy access.

From the point of view of Ronald (2013). Freeing a building of barriers means, recognizing the features that could form to barriers for some people, thinking inclusively about the whole range of impairments, reviewing everything(from structure to smallest detail), and seeking feedback from users. It is important that children with special needs are given optimum learning opportunities and school must be developed in a manner that allows easy access to classroom resource rooms, playing fields as well as the toilets and the library. Epari (2005) observed that the biggest barrier that one could find in inclusive schools is one that does not accommodate children with disabilities but rather rejects them. However, it is important that inclusive settings in classroom organization, path access-ways and other school facilities become accessible to all children with disabilities to enhance learning. Rombo (2007) referred to school environment to what was going on in the schools/classroom contacts. This is explained in terms of school architecture and disability conditions that would show the way the school environment would be organized. These explained the way movement and mobility was made easy and flexible both inside and outside classrooms or entire school environment.

The space accommodates children with different physical impairment conditions, in particular, those with wheelchairs, crutches or canes. Rombo, therefore, argued that the issue of spacing is closely linked to children's safety especially for children with impairments such as learning, vision and those with physical disabilities. From her study, it was found that there were frustration stress and anxiety among many children with special educational needs. The findings of her study show that organization of the school environment is essential to the implementation of the inclusive practices (Mpya, 2010). Therefore accessibility of the school environment is a school resource that can enhance enrolment of the challenged learners. According to Rombo (2007), the school authorities should ensure that, provisions are made for children with disabilities to have free and easy access to facilities and premises. Children with disabilities must be given maximum learning opportunities and school must be developed in a way that foster easy access to classroom resource rooms, playing fields and more so the toilets and the library. Glasgow and Hicks (2005) argued that the biggest barrier that one could find in inclusive schools is one that does not accommodate children with disabilities but rather rejects them. The implication would be that inclusive settings in classroom organization, path access-ways and other school facilities must be accessible by children with disabilities to foster learning.

2.7 Theoretical Framework for the Study

The main theoretical framework that underpinned the study is the “inclusive teacher preparation model” this model provides element that teachers require to prepare adequately for inclusive education. According to Schumm and Vaughn (1999), the most effective teaching strategy use in preparing pre- service teachers towards

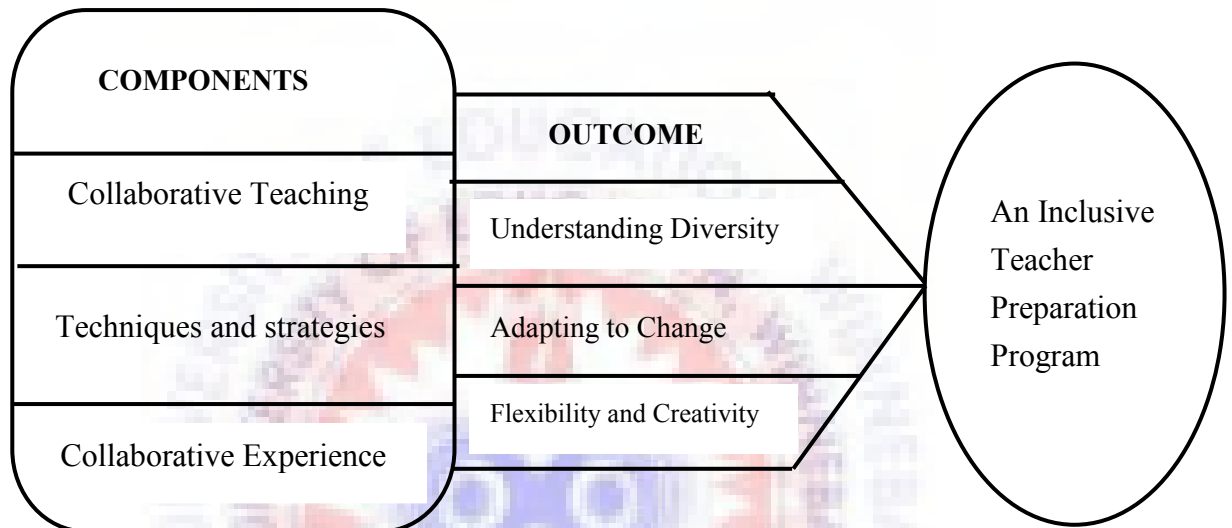


Figure 1: An Inclusive Teacher Preparation Model

Inclusive education is embedded in the inclusive teacher preparation model. The inclusive teacher preparation model (Schumm & Vaughn, 1995) has two major dimensions as demonstrated by figure 1 below: **(Schumm & Vaughn, 1995)**

The model provides a framework for developing and implementing a teacher education program that prepares pre- service teacher to teach in an inclusive educational setting. There are two major dimensions of the model. One deals with the outcomes of the model and the other focuses on specific program components (Schumm & Vaughn, 1995). To be effective an inclusive teacher preparation program must instill in the pre-service teacher an understanding and appreciation of diversity. In general, most educators, and that includes teacher educators, have not had a great

deal of experience in teaching students with diverse needs and abilities. That is because these students were segregated from the general education setting. Teacher trainers also need to mirror inclusive practices and accommodate for diversity in their classrooms. Most teachers have a narrow range of diversity with which they feel comfortable. Expanding that comfort level is essential if teachers are to be successful in teaching the wide range of diverse abilities present in today's classrooms. Since we do not know for certain the types of situations and challenges that will face teachers in the coming decades, we must prepare them to deal with and adapt to change. To do this successfully they must also have the ability to be flexible and creative in meeting these challenges and solving problems. This can be accomplished by providing experiences that require prospective teachers to develop creative problem solving skills and to view situations from different perspectives.

Components of an inclusive teacher preparation program

As illustrated in figure one, three major components constitute the supports for this model. The collaborative teaching, concerns the instructional approach used in the classroom. If colleges of education are to prepare pre- service teachers to teach collaboratively they must utilize this model in their pre- service classes.

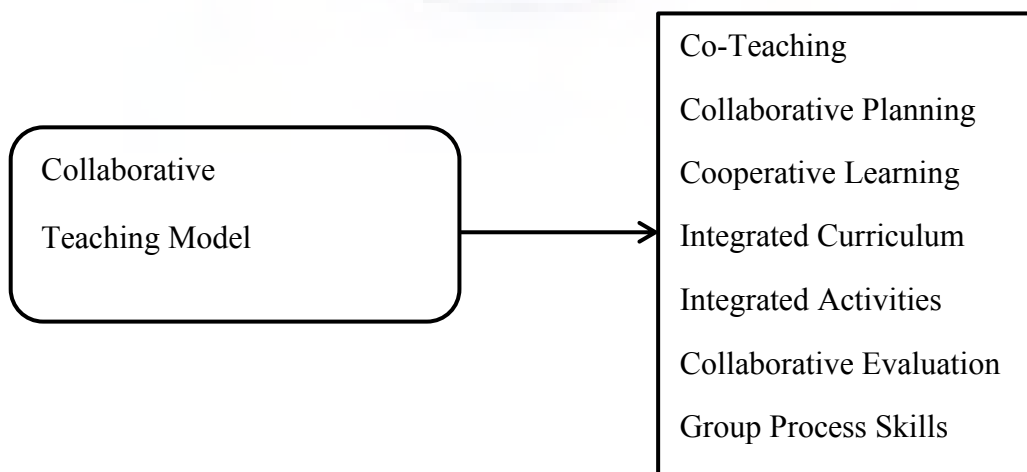


Figure 2: Collaborative Teaching Model

As shown in figure 2, there are a number of ways the collaborative teaching model can be accomplished (Schumm & Vaughn, 1995).

Teacher educators can co-teach classes. Modeling for their students collaborative teaching skills. This can be done with general and special education faculty, as well as with faculty from other disciplines outside of education. Collaborative planning for classes and collaborative evaluation of students can also be used as a means of demonstrating how such practices can be done effectively. Such approaches as collaborative learning arrangements and activities requiring students to develop and practice group process skills can also be utilized in the classrooms. Finally, colleges of education tutors should integrate curriculum objectives as well as instructional activities across classes and across disciplines.

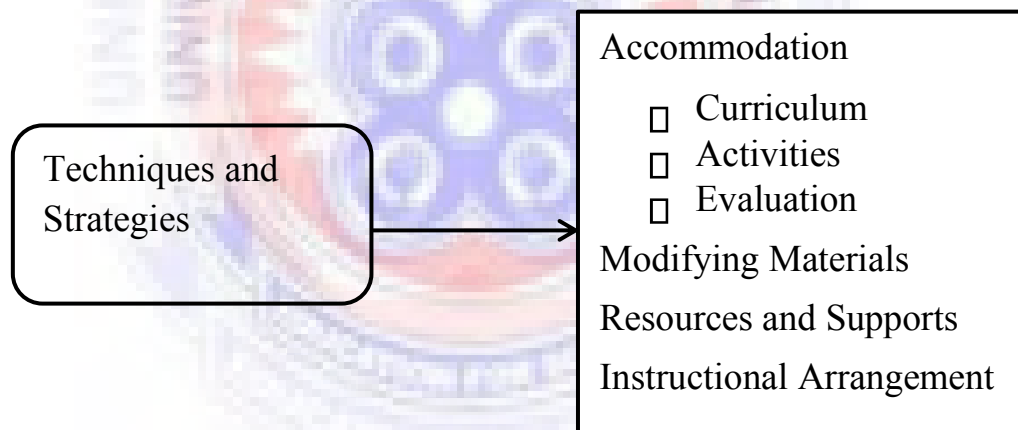


Figure 3: Techniques and Strategies for Inclusive Education

(Schumm & Vaughn, 1999)

As shown in figure 3, the second component involves techniques and strategies. Teachers are expected to teach in settings with children who have diverse learning needs must have the instructional tools to do so successfully.

Researchers (Schumm and Vaughn, 1995; Giangreco, Dennis, Cloninger, Edelman, and Schattman, 1993) have noted the lack of professional training in inclusive

techniques and practices for general and special education teachers. From experience, a tremendous amount of money is spent on in-service training to give teachers instructional skills to teach students with diverse needs. These resources could be directed elsewhere if teachers could merge from their pre-service training already possessing those skills.

Pre-service teacher preparation should address appropriate accommodations in the curriculum, instructional activities and evaluation procedures, in the modification of materials and the effective identification, development and utilization of resources. In addition, the pre-service program should prepare pre-service teachers to various types of instructional arrangements such as multi-level teaching, cooperative learning, and peer tutoring (Schumm & Vaughn, 1995).

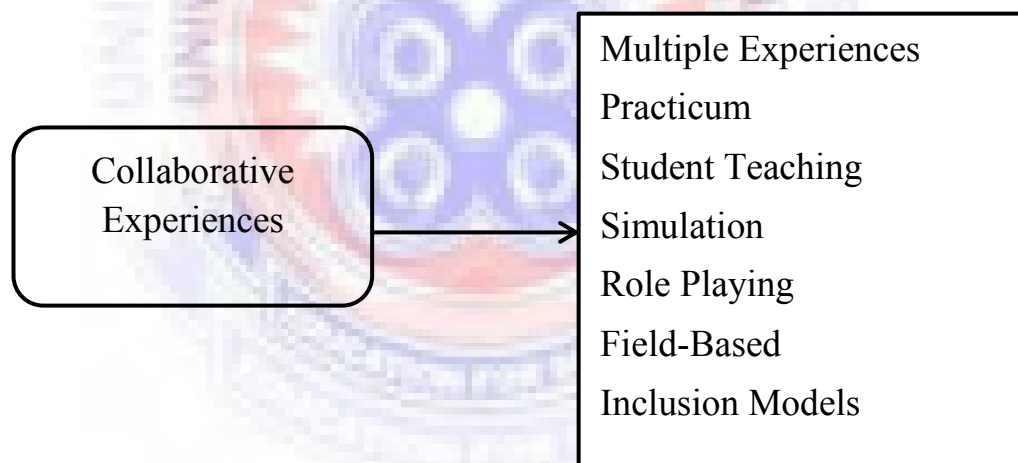


Figure 4: Providing Collaborative Experiences to Pre-service Teacher

(Schumm & Vaughn, 1995)

The third component of inclusive teacher model relates to collaborative Teacher Experiences. The previous two components apply primarily to the classroom. This component relates to field based experiences of the prospective teacher. Some prior preparation can be given in the classroom through simulation, role playing. But, beyond that, the pre-serve teacher should be given the opportunity to observe and

work with collaborative inclusive situations. This requires that, the pre- service teacher preparation include multiple opportunities for the pre- service teacher to observe and work in actual classrooms where inclusive practices are implemented. Furthermore pre services teachers should also in other activities in the school that promote inclusive practices. This includes collaborative planning and problem solving activities as well as curriculum adaptations and modifications. The use of this model makes the classroom environment equally accessible to all learners. This is therefore supported by the social model of disability which views disability as a consequence of environmental, social and attitudinal barriers that prevents people with impairments from participating fully in society. This is in line with the definition of disability by the Disabled Peoples' International (1991) that the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others, due to physical or social barriers. Under the social model, disability is caused by the society in which we live and is not the fault of individual disabled persons, or an inevitable consequence of their limitations. Disability is the product of the physical, organizational and attitudinal barriers present within the society, which lead to discrimination. Removal of discrimination requires a change of approach and thinking in the way in which society is organized.

The social model takes the accounts of individuals with disabilities as participating with our economic, environmental and cultural society. The barriers that prevent any individual playing a part in society are the problem and not the individual. Barriers still exist in education, information and communication systems, working environments, health and social support services, public buildings and amenities. The devaluing of individuals with disability through negative images in the media, films, television among others also acts as a barrier. The social model has been developed

with the aim of removing barriers so that individuals with disabilities have the same opportunity as everyone else to determine their own lifestyle (WHO, 1980). This therefore calls on Ghana education services and other key stakeholders in education to prepare teachers to acquire the necessary skills competence and knowledge needed to remove these barriers to create opportunity and participation for all children in an inclusive classroom.

This study used the inclusive teacher preparation model and the social model of disabilities as the framework to attempt to develop an insight regarding issues emerging from inclusive practices in the three pilot inclusive schools in Agona Swedru Township in the central Region of Ghana.

2.8 Summary of Literature Review

Major issues emerged from the theoretical and empirical review of literature on issues the implementation of inclusive education. The chapter outlined the concern regarding the teacher collaboration with parents and other professional, requisite skills and special training for teachers" resources and support services as well as accessibility of school environment to children with special needs. With respect to teacher collaboration with parents and other professionals, literature review has indicated that teachers" collaboration between parents and other professionals cannot be relegated to the background if inclusive education is to succeed in Ghana. With regards to the requisite skills and training that teachers must possess, several authors were of the view that, since teachers are the pivot around which the concept of inclusive education revolve, steps must be taken to ensure that, teachers are given adequate training and skills to enable them handle children with special needs.

Resources for inclusive schools have been discussed extensively in the literature. Most authors suggest that teachers should make flexible use of resources depending on children's learning needs and not rely too much on the available stock of materials in the school alone, but try to create their own materials and also use some natural resources such as fallen leaves rainfall among many others. Support services as a component of a purposeful inclusive practice was not left out. Throughout the literature, teachers are advised to consult with special service providers who are associated with their students' special needs, such as special education teachers, occupational therapist, community nurse, psychologists among others who may be involved in working with students with special needs in the inclusive classroom. Another important component of inclusive education discussed in the review was the accessibility of the school environment for children with special needs. Numerous researchers argued that the relationship between academic achievement and characteristics of the school environments can result from direct environmental influences of the school, or from placement of children into particular school environments based on prior ability. As a result of this a lot of attention must be given to the environment.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology for the study. Research methodology in simple terms is a set of systematic procedures (plan) for conducting study so as to get the most valid findings and this involves research method, research design, population of the study, sample size, sampling techniques and instrumentation, procedure for collection and data analysis. (Bouma ,1994). He added that, research methodology is a process through which a researcher attempts to achieve systematically and with support of data to answer research questions, the resolution of a problem or a greater understanding of a phenomenon. The presentation was done under the following subheadings;

- Research design
- Population
- Sample size
- Sampling technique

3.2 Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was adopted to enable the collection of snapshot information on issues emerging from the implementation of inclusive education in pilot inclusive schools in Agona Swedru. Shields and Rangarjan, (2013). contended that a descriptive design is a design which involves describing and observing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way. It is used when the researcher wants to describe specific occurrences in the environment Avoke (2005) adds that

descriptive surveys are designed to portray accurately the characteristics a particular individuals, situations, or groups. He notes that, survey research in education involves the collection information from members of a group of students, teacher or other groups of persons associated with educational issues. Patton (2008) pointed out that descriptive research can either be qualitative or quantitative methodologies. It can also involve collection of quantitative information that can be tabulated along a continuum in numerical form. Patton continues to stipulate that descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts and describe the data collected. The researcher adopted the descriptive survey design because surveys are useful in describing the characteristics of a large population and consequently making the results statistically significant even when analyzing multiple variables. In addition, the descriptive design was considered by the researcher as the most appropriate because it gives the opportunity to observe subjects in a natural environment.

3.3 Population

The target population for the study involved all the teachers in the thee (3) pilot basic inclusive schools as well as the parents of children with special needs in Agona Swedru Township. The schools were Salvation Army A and B Basic School, Methodist A and B Basic School and Presbyterian A and B Basic School. This comprised of forty-two (42) teachers and eighteen (18) parents who had children with special needs. The total population for the study was therefore sixty (60). Table 1 shows the distribution of the population.

Table 1: Distribution of population among the three pilot basic schools under study

Schools	Teachers	Parents
Salvation Army A and B Primary	14	6
Methodist A and B Primary	15	6
Presbyterian A and B Primary	13	6
Total	42	18

3.4 Sample Size

The sample size for the study was forty two (42) comprising thirty (30) teachers, ten (10) each from the three schools. Twelve (12) parents four (4) from each of the three schools. Creswell (2005) stated that, sample refers to a sub-group of target population that the researcher plans to study for the purpose of making generalization about the target population. Table 2 shows the distribution of the sample size.

Table 2: Distribution of sample size for the study among the three pilot basic schools

Schools Sampled	Teachers Sampled	Parents
Salvation Army A& B Primary	10	4
Methodist A & B Primary	10	4
Presbyterian A &B Primary	10	4
Total	30	12

3.5 Sampling Technique

A Combination of methods were employed in sampling the sample size. These include simple random sampling and purposive sampling technique. In selecting the teachers, a simple random sampling technique was used. This method according to Alhassan (2006) gave every member of the population equal opportunity of being selected to form the sample size. The method afforded the researcher the opportunity of securing a true representative sample of the population. During the process, the researcher wrote numbers 1-42 on pieces of papers which were put in a bowl and teachers were asked to pick one of the pieces from the bowl. It was explained to the teachers that those to pick 1-30 will be involved in the study before the balloting was carried out. This was to avoid bias on the part of the researcher in selecting teachers who will take part in the study.

In selecting the parents of children with special educational needs for the interview on the other hand, purposive sampling was used in the selection of participants. Since teachers knew most of these parents and where they live, the teachers were contacted to assist in selecting 4 parents in each of the schools for a face – to – face interview. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique that allows a researcher to use respondents that have the required information with respect to the objectives of the study (Cohen et al, 2004). In view of this, the researcher selected the sample that satisfied the specific needs of the research since the parents selected represented those children with special educational needs in the three pilot basic schools.

3.6 Research Instrument

The study used questionnaires, interview and tape recorder as the principal instruments. The use of questionnaires was suitable for this study because it allowed

the respondents to answer the questionnaires and return them at their own convenient time. The use of interview for parents who had children with special needs was to give opportunity to probe further if the respondents answer or response were not clear and also to enable the researcher have one on one interaction with the respondents.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

A 30 item questionnaire was constructed and administered by the researcher to the teachers to elicit information on the knowledge of inclusive education practices such as teacher collaboration with parents and other professionals in decision making, teachers' requisite knowledge and experience, availability of resources and support services as well as accessibility of the school compound. Alhassan (2006) maintained that structured questionnaire are those in which some control or guidance is given for the answer. It may be multiple choice option from which the respondent selects the answer very close to their own opinion. The entire questionnaires were divided into three (3) sections. In the first section, the questionnaire sought demographic data of respondents and this includes gender, number of years of teaching, educational qualification and grade level taught. In section two (2), the item sought to elicit from respondents their views on special needs children in three (3) inclusive pilot basic schools in Agona Swedru township. The items in section one and two were in a form of checklist. In section three the questionnaires elicited information on inclusive education practices in the pilot inclusive schools of Agona Swedru township. Respondents had to respond to 30 statements, rating their responses on likert type scale classification with 1 indicating Disagree (D) 2, Strongly disagree (SD) 3, Neutral (N) 4, Agree (A) 5, Strongly agree (SA). This structured and close ended nature of questionnaires made them easy to complete and the result easy to compile.

Gay (1987) said that structured items normally facilitate data analysis and makes scoring very objective and efficient.

3.6.2 Interview

Parents of Children with special needs were interviewed using a semi structured interview guide that was based on teacher collaboration with parents and other professionals in decision making, teachers' requisite knowledge, availability of resources and accessibility of the school environment. This provided for qualitative and in-depth explanation of the results of the questionnaires. The interview was conducted face-to-face. The interview was semi structured that allowed the respondents to give their responses. Marlow (2001) is of the view that, in semi structured interview, the interviewer has more freedom to pursue hunches and improvise where necessary with the questions. The author continues that semi-structured interviews often use interview schedules consisting of the general type of questions. The researcher took down responses in a note book verbatim and was able to use prompts and probes during the interview.

3.7 Pre- testing of the Research Instrument

The pre- testing of the instrument was carried out in one other pilot basic school in the Agona Swedru Township and the school was chosen because it was not one of the schools used in the study. Again, it was chosen because it possessed the same characteristics as the schools used in the study. The purpose of pre testing of the instrument was to establish the validity and reliability of the research instruments and also to identify potential challenges so that if need be, the instruments can be modified or even overhauled. The researcher visited the school to conduct the pre- test of instruments after taking a written permission from the Assistant Director in charge of

Supervision at Agona Swedru District Education Office .the school for the pre testing of the instruments was purposively selected. A set of questionnaire was given to ten (10) teachers out of the twelve in the school who were selected by simple random sampling method. This was done to ensure that each teacher on the staff had an equal chance of being selected. Regarding the interview, one- on –one for each parent was adopted. During the trial testing of the instruments the researcher realized that, there were some ambiguity and incoherence in some interview questions as well as the questionnaires .The researcher therefore effected the necessary corrections after the trial testing.

3.8 Validity

Validity is one of the basic principles of research and it is the ability to produce findings that are in agreement with the theoretical or conceptual values in order to produce accurate results and to measure what is supposed to measure (Sarantakos, 1998). In order to ensure the validity of the questionnaires, the items were carefully constructed. As Best and Khan (1995), point out, ensuring validity of questionnaire was asking the questions framed in the least ambiguous way. Then the entire questionnaire was subjected to peer review. They were scrutinized by colleagues postgraduate students. The items were also vetted by the researcher's supervisor and the questionnaires were further given to seasoned educationist for comments and suggestions. Secondly, the instruments were pre tested by the researcher to strengthen its usefulness. Both the questionnaires and the interview items that sounded ambiguous and unclear were deleted before they were used for the final data collection exercise.

3.9 Reliability

Reliability in the opinion of Osuala (1993) refers to consistency of measurement. Before coming out with the final items, cognizance was taken of the comments, suggestions and inputs of all the stakeholders involved to ensure reliability. Osuala (1993) further stated that reliability is the degree to which assessment results are the same when: (1) the same tasks are completed on two different occasions, (2) different and equivalent task are completed on the same or different occasions. To ensure this, the researcher carried out testing of the instruments. Thus the questionnaires and the interview guide that will be used for the actual study were subjected to pre-testing in some three schools that will not take part in the actual study. The reliability coefficient of the instruments used was 0.94 Cronbach's Alpha

3.10 Procedure for data collection

According to Creswell (2005), respecting the site where the research takes place and gaining permission before entering a site is very paramount in research. Before the commencement of data collection, Permission was sought from the headmasters/ headmistresses of the various schools that participated in the study. Questionnaires were administered and the respondents were allowed to return them through the head teachers of the inclusive schools within two weeks and this was adhered to with 100% return rate. Gay (1987) suggested that it is more productive to send questionnaires to a person of authority rather than to the person with the derived information. In his view, if a person's boss passes a questionnaire and asks a person to complete it and return it, that person is likely to do so than if you ask him or her. Interviews were also conducted for the parents of children with special needs in a form of semi structured interview which was recorded and later transcript. Before the interview, arrangement

was made for them to be assembled at a location close to Salvation Primary schools and items explained to them before the actual interview was conducted. Also, structured questionnaire was administered to the teachers to elicit information on the knowledge of inclusive education practices such as teacher collaboration with parents and other professionals in decision making, teachers' requisite knowledge, availability of resources and accessibility of the school environment formed part of the questionnaire

3.11 Data Analysis

Data analysis was done both quantitatively and qualitatively. Kanne (2004) defined data analysis as the process of bringing order to the data by organizing into categories, patterns and trends through the use of statistical methods. Data from the questionnaires were categorized in relation to the research questions they were supposed to answer. Tables were also used with statistical analysis to draw analytical conclusions. In analyzing the data the five likert type scaled subgroup of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, undecided and Strongly Disagree were collapsed into a three type scale responses subgroup of 1 . Agree, 2 Undecided, 3 Disagree. This was done to further simplify the data for easy analysis.

For qualitative data, the text obtained through the interview was analyzed thematically. The responses were grouped under the following themes:

- Teacher collaboration with parents of children with special educational needs in the three pilot inclusive schools in Agona Swedru township
- Knowledge and skills teachers have in teaching children with special educational needs in the three inclusive pilot schools in Agona Swedru township

- Effective use of teaching/learning resources for special needs learners in an inclusive schools Agona Swedru township .
- How the school set up has been designed to accommodate special needs learners especially those with physical impairments in the three inclusive pilot schools in Agona Swedru township

In each table, the percentages were computed and then used in detail analysis in chapter four alongside the description of the interviewees' responses.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents results and discussions of findings from the study. The findings are presented according to the four research questions posed that guided the study. The study sought to find out issues emerging from inclusive practices in three pilot inclusive schools in Agona Swedru township in the Central Region of Ghana. Specific information as provided by the teachers and parents of children with special educational needs was analyzed and presented as follows.

4.2 Research question 1

To what extent do teachers in inclusive schools collaborate with parents and other professionals in decision making?

To answer this question, seven items were used to address question one. Table 3 shows teachers responses to the items.

Table 3: Teacher parent and other professionals' collaboration in making decision about the education of their special needs children

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Strongly Agree	Agree	Total
	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)
1. Parents are involved in decision making	6 (6.7%)	19(63%)	6(20%)	0(0%)	3(10%)	30(100%)
2. Parents interest in the assessment	5(17%)	13(43%)	4(13%)	5(17%)	3(10%)	30(100%)
3. Parents attend meetings with teachers	8 (27%)	7(23%)	10(33%)	3(10%)	2(7%)	30(100%)
4. Parents show interest in their child's work	8 (27%)	8(27%)	11(37%)	1(3%)	2 (7%)	30(100%)
5. Teacher invites nurse for health check	1 (3%)	9(30%)	8(27%)	6(20%)	6(20%)	30(100%)
6. Teacher invites SPE resource teacher to assist	4 (13%)	13(43%)	6(20%)	2(7%)	5(17%)	30(100%)
7. Tr. arranges with support Persons to assist	3(10%)	10(33%)	9(30%)	5(17%)	3(10%)	30(100%)

Key

F- Frequency

% - Percentage

For the purposes of discussions, Strongly Disagree and Disagree, is merged as Disagree. And, Strongly Agree and Agree as Agree.

The statement in table 3, elicited from respondents their views concerning parental involvement in decision making about the education of their children with special needs in the three pilot inclusive schools in Agona Swedru township. The respondents reacted to the statement bringing out their views as to whether parents attend meetings

with teachers and other professionals to discuss and take decisions regarding the progress of their children with special educational needs. Regarding questionnaire item number 1 in table 3 that focused on finding out whether parents were involved in decision making concerning their children, analysis of the responses from the respondents revealed that 8 (27%) of the teacher respondents disagreed, 0 (0%) were undecided and 22 (73%) indicated that parents attend meetings with teachers and other professionals to discuss and take decisions concerning the progress of their children with special educational needs. For item two (2), teacher respondents responded to statement expressing their views on whether parents take their children with special needs to the assessment Centre after they have been referred by a resource teacher. Analysis shows that, 9(30%) disagreed, 5(17%) were undecided and 16(53%) agreed to the statement. Likewise 18(60%) disagreed, 3 (10%) were undecided and 9 (30%) agreed to the statement. This were the responses provided for the third item which sought to find out whether parents show greater interest in the education of their children with special needs by buying the necessary learning materials for them.

These opinions of respondents is in line with a study carried out by Barnsley (2005) on parental involvement in inclusive education. Barnsley identified six types of parental involvement in inclusive schools: Assisting parents in child- rearing skills, school parent communication, involving parents in school volunteer opportunities, involving parents in home-based learning, involving parents in school decision making and involving parents in school- community collaborations. This also emphasized on the point expressed by Okyere and Adams (2003) on Botswana's model where they alluded to the fact that, opportunities exist for active participation of parents in decision making as well as involved in assessment to what is best for

their children with disabilities. it was realized that the majority of the respondents 22 (73%) agreed that parents are involved in the decision making on the education of their children with special educational needs by attending meetings with teachers and other specialists to discuss and take the decisions on output and progress of their children with special needs. it was also noted that the significant number of the respondents 16 (53%) agreed that parents take their children with special needs to resource centre after they have been referred by special education teachers. Further interpretation of the analysis indicate that 19 (63%) of respondent who are the majority disagreed that parents show greater interest in the academic work of their special needs children by buying the necessary learning materials for them.

The researcher was also interested in finding out whether teachers in inclusive schools work closely with community health nurses to ensure that the children get access to healthcare even as they are in school. The results indicated that 9 (30%) of the respondent disagreed that they did interact and work with community health nurses. 6 (20%) said they were undecided while 15 (50%) of the respondents agreed that they work and interact with community health nurses. This confirms the view point of Emma and Farrell (2009) having it that support of resource teachers community health workers, social workers, caregivers, parents and volunteers may be sought for in identifying and understanding learning needs, communication needs, use of assistive devices and therapeutic management.

Teacher collaboration with special education resource teacher to access and understand the needs of children with special educational needs was another area that received some attention from the researcher. In an effort to find out the level of teacher collaboration with special education resource teacher in the assessment processes, 10 (33%) of the respondents disagreed that there is collaboration between

teachers and special education resource teachers in assessing children with special needs 2 (7%) of the respondent were undecided on the issue while 18 (60%) of the respondents agreed that there is collaboration between them and special education teachers in assessing children with special needs in their school. This development is in line with the findings of Kings and Youngs (2003) indicating that special educational needs teachers were often used in the United States to help general education teachers to deliver an adapted curriculum and conduct assessment for students with special educational needs. The research sort to find out whether teachers arrange with support service personnel to assess plan and facilitate appropriate learning experiences for all students. In the process, 12 (40%) of the respondents disagreed that there is such arrangement between teachers and the support service personnel. 5 (17%) of respondent were undecided and 13 (43%) of the respondent agreed that they arrange with support service personnel to assess plan and facilitate appropriate learning for children with special educational needs. This trend is in conformity with the research findings reported by Johnson, Thurlow and Stout (2007) that stake holders indicated that collaboration relating to special education plan development is a critical element that is often missing. Many of the professionals and support service providers involved in the consultation process indicated that they had expressed a desire to collaborate with the school team in the development of special education plan goals and outcomes for students with whom they worked, but that they were not invited to do so.

Interview data Analysis

The researcher also conducted interview in order to triangulate the views of respondents and these has been discussed quite extensively based on emerging themes.

4.2.1 Individualized Educational Plan Meeting

From the analysis of the interview results, it was obvious that, some parents do attend individualized educational plan meeting with the teachers and other specialist for the child's needs and interest.

During the interview section one parent remarked:

"I normally attend IEP meetings with teachers and other Officers, but my contributions during the meeting were minimal because am an illiterate and I don't know much about the problems of my child" (Translated comment, Parent A)

Another parent who had different view on the issue also commented that:

"One day, I was invited to meet the class teacher and special education resource teacher to discuss my child's learning difficulties. They suggested that, I buy hearing aid for my child who finds it difficult to hear well and I have started making preparation towards it" (Verbatim expression, Parent A)

The view expressed by parent A is in line with social model of disability. Social model holds the view that society is the obstacle for persons with disability and that if organizes and put the necessary structures in place for persons with disability, they can fit into it and live an independent life in the society (Oiver, 1990). Relating this to the child who needs to be bought a hearing aid to enable him to hear well, if the mother is able to buy a hearing aid for the child, then the child can hear well in classroom and learn effectively and will no longer depend on his peers.

Individualized Education Plan is inclusive setting is a tool used to address the unique needs of children with special educational needs. Parents are essential stakeholders in planning individualized educational plan because they have valuable information they can offer about their child which will facilitate the drawing of IEP. The involvement of parents in meetings and drawing of individualized educational plan are evident in

what Okyere and Adams (2003) have documented on Lesotho that as much possible parents are encouraged to get involved especially when important decisions made regarding their pupils with special needs in inclusive schools.

4.2.2 Parents involvement in assessment process

It was realized during the interview that, some parents are involved in the assessment of their special needs children. Most of the parents interviewed revealed this will buttress the views of teachers in the questionnaire data. A parent remark on taking his child to assessment center:

“I was informed by the class teacher and the special education resource teacher to send my child to assessment centre after screening him and I was told at the assessment centre that, my child has a refractive error and after the officials asked me a lot of question about the conditions of my child, they gave him some medicine” (Comment, Parent C)

During the interview section, another parent commented that:

“Occasionally class teachers and special education resource teacher check the eyes and the ears of the children and during this exercise, they do invite parents and I recalled I was ones given given a referral letter to send my child to hospital for further and detailed examination” (verbatim expression from parent D)

Parental involvement in the assessment of their children with special needs can not be glossed over. (Broadfoot, 1989). In his view parents wants assessment results to go in a certain way or direction and therefore needed to be involved so as to get their cooperation. In a study conducted by Hornby (2000) on facilitating parental involvement in assessment of their children with special needs, the findings revealed that most parents are involved when it comes to assessing their children with special educational needs at all level of education. In his view parents give information from birth of their child onwards, family history, social environment in which the family

lives, and child's behavior in the home setting which may be different from that of the school.

4.2.3 Provision of learning materials

The results of the interview revealed that most parents provide or buy learning materials for their children with special needs. This assertion of the parents was supported by the views expressed by a comment made by a parent that:

“I bought the necessary learning materials for my child. For example, books, reading glass, bag, pens, and pencil.....” verbatim expression by a parent

Another parent also remarked that:

“At the beginning of every academic term, all children are given a list of books and other learning materials that they will need in the next class and I make sure that I buy all the books and the necessary learning materials for my child” (Comment by a parent)

This views expressed by parents are consistent with what Farrant (1998) said about teaching and learning materials, when he alluded to the fact that the provision of learning materials to children by parents is very key to their academic performance. In his view, teaching and learning materials promote effective and efficient learning of pupils and enhance understanding and retention of whatever concept the child is being introduced to. A study carried out by Maquire, Brunner, Stalker and Mitchell (2009) showed that children do better at school when their parents are involved in their education and that parents know their children better than anyone else and have vital information about their children with special needs. They further stated that parental involvement in the decision and taking interest in the child's education motivate children to learn better. This agrees with the social model of disability which recognizes the fact that it is the society that put hindrance on the way of persons with

disability. Hence if parents are involved to help remove of these obstacles of special needs children and put the right structures in place by providing them with the needed learning materials and necessary assistive devices, then children with special needs can fit into inclusive school and participate fully all school activities.

4.2.4 Collaboration between class teachers and other specialist

Responses from most parents interviewed indicated that they have been saying regular class teachers working hand in hand with specialist such as nurses, special educators and doctors to deliver educational and health related services to children including children with special educational needs in the pilot basic schools. However, few respondents who also said they cannot tell whether the teachers collaborate with other specialists because they have never seen them with other specialists, this is borne out of the fact that some parents said they do not visit the schools. Identification of children with special needs through organized screening and monitoring of progress of children with sensory impairments within the inclusive schools is very key to the success of the inclusive programme.(UNESCO, 1994).

Remarking on the issue a parent said:

“... I was at the school when I saw a special needs teacher and class teacher with a nurse screening the eyes and ears of the school children together. I don't know whether that is what you are asking me” (Expression by parent A)

Commenting on the subject another parent was of the view that:

“... The class teacher, special education teacher and nurses from hospital work together to see to the screening, treatment and other learning needs of my child with eye problems. So I know they work together” (Parent B).

The views of the parents agreed with Abosi (2000) when he contends that collaboration in inclusive education was based on the fact that two heads or efforts of teachers are better than one to meet the educational needs of children with special needs in the inclusive classroom.

4.3 Research question 2

What requisite experience and special training do teachers in Basic schools have to teach in the inclusive classrooms?

To answer this research question, teachers questionnaire items number 8- 17 were used. Table 4 shows teachers responses to the items

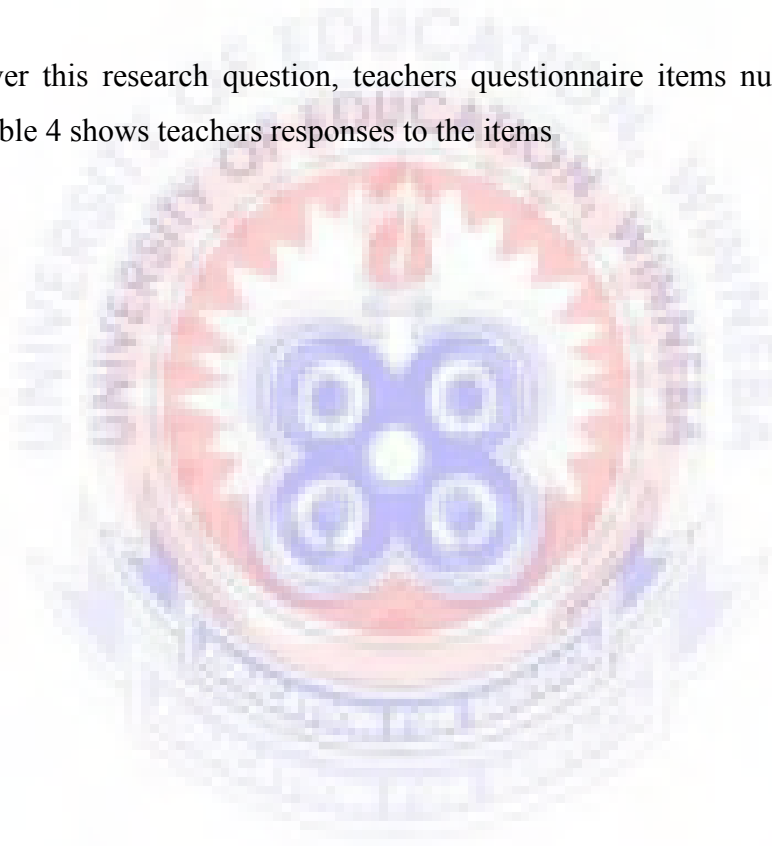


Table 4: Responses of the selected teachers about the knowledge and experience they have to teach children with special educational needs

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Strongly Agree	Agree	Total
Statement	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)
8. Teacher provides appropriate seating arrangements.	3(10%)	3(10%)	2(7%)	14(47%)	8(27%)	30(100%)
9. Teacher receive in-service training	4(13%)	6(20%)	4(13%)	12(40%)	4(13%)	30(100%)
10. Teacher reframes assessment questions	3(10%)	7(23%)	4(13%)	11(33%)	5(17%)	30(100%)
11. Teacher uses oral assessment	3(10%)	10(33%)	4(13%)	10(33 %)	3(10%)	30(100%)
12. Teacher uses assorted Questions	6(20%)	6(20%)	0(0%)	13(43%)	5(17%)	30(100%)
13. Teacher gives flexible time	3(10%)	2(7%)	1(3%)	16(53%)	8(27%)	30(100%)
14. Teacher makes changes to curriculum.	4(13%)	8(27%)	1(3%)	16(53%)	1(3%)	30(100%)
15. Teacher presents lessons step by step	4(13%)	4(13%)	0(0%)	14(47%)	8(27%)	30(100%)
16. Tr. encourages formation of small groups	5(17%)	4(13%)	3(10%)	15(50%)	3(10%)	30(100%)
17. Teacher considers the individuals capabilities	2(7%)	2(7%)	3(10%)	16(53%)	7(23%)	30(100%)

Table 2 represents the level of preparation, experience and skills teachers have in adapting instructions and the curriculum to enable them teach children with special educational needs in inclusive setting.

Provision of appropriate seating arrangement for children with special needs in inclusive classrooms that supports their learning is essential for the success of inclusive education. From the table, 6 (20%) of the respondents disagreed that they provide appropriate arrangement for children with special needs 2 (7%) were undecided while 22(73%) agreed to the statement. This is consistent with the assertion of Wortham (2000) that access to the curriculum is so more than simply including a students with special needs in a mainstream classroom, but involves subtler issues such as how students with special needs interact with their peers, how they strategically placed or better still, how the classroom is structured for effective teaching and learning.

The researcher sought to find out whether classroom teachers receive any in- service training from special educators or other professionals in the management of children with special needs saw 10 (33%) disagreeing on the statement and 4 (13%) undecided while 16(53%) agreed on the statement. The views of the majority of the teachers is related to the findings of Hwang and Evans (2011) when they opined that a major factor in the success of inclusive education is the degree of pre- service training and in-service training as well as collaboration among general educators, special education teachers, related service providers parents and their perceptions of their respective roles. In finding out whether teachers reframe their assessment questions to make it clearer to slow learners, 10(33%) disagreed to the statement while 4 (13%) were undecided and 16(53%) agreed that they do vary their questions. This indicates that most of the teachers do make some form of adjustment to the questions they asked in order to motivate slow learners to answer the questions. This behavior corresponds with the findings of Brackenreed (2004) that modifications to mainstream curriculum in the United States for example, were most likely to take the form of additional time

to complete test or assignments for high to moderate functioning students, with low – functioning students likely to alternative assessment. The data collected revealed that the situation in inclusive schools in Agona Swedru township is quite different from that of US as reported by Brackenreed.

When teachers were asked whether they use oral assessment to assess students with special needs especially those with fine motor deficits, 13 (43%) of respondents disagreed that they use oral assessment to assess students with fine motor deficits. 4 (13%) of the respondents were undecided while 13 (43%) of the respondents agreed that they use assessment to assess individual with fine motor deficits. The lower percentage of teachers who use oral assessment as a means of assessing individuals with special educational needs makes the practice in Agona Swedru quite opposite to what is generally practiced as reported by Applebee (1998) that for assessment task, the teacher should plan for experiencing learning difficulties including those with fine motor skills deficits to access and become familiar with the appropriate support that will allow them to complete assessment task this may include provision of a scribe and a reader, additional time, rest breaks, additional assessment opportunities, for example performing a written task orally among others.

In finding out whether teachers use assorted questions in their assessment, example filling in, true or false to encourage slow learners to participate in the assessment, 12 (40%) of the respondents disagreed to the statement while 0 (0%) were undecided and 18 (60%) of the respondents agreed that they use assorted assessment questions in assessing persons with special needs. This practice where the majority of teachers vary their questions is in line with the study of Kostelinik, Soderman and Whiren (2004) who pointed out that most teachers perceived the alternative test formats such as reducing the number questions items on a test page, wording questions, teaching

test-taking skills, using assorted questions or making accommodation such as extending time limits or reducing a test aloud etc. In an attempt to find out whether teachers give flexible time for completion of class work, 5 (17%) of respondents disagreed that they give flexible time and 1(3%) of respondents were undecided while 24 (80%) agreed to the statement, This development is in conformity with UNESCO (2005), which states that inclusive curriculum must take into account the different abilities and needs of all students. It must also be capable of being adapted to meet diverse needs by employing strategies such as the use of flexible time for work completion, differentiation of task, time for additional support and emphasis on vocational as well as academic goals. When a researcher asked whether teachers increase the print to aid children with low vision, 12 (40%) disagreed that the increase print to aid children with low vision. 1 (3%) of the respondents were undecided while 17 (57%) of respondents agreed that the they increase the print to aid children with low vision in their class. This is in line with the views of Barron and Darling-Hammond (2008) who maintained that if one gesture represents “open your book”, always use that same gesture, provide concrete learning aids which facilitate learning by using a hand on approach, remove unnecessary detail from textbooks or worksheets, highlight critical features that are most important for students to learn, enable students to access alternate formats such as large print, computers, and simplified texts.

In a quest by researcher to find out whether teachers observed good practice of encouraging peering tutoring or allowing children to learn in smaller groups to ensure that no child is left behind 9 (30%) of respondents disagreed that they encourage peer teaching in their class and 3(10%) were undecided and 18 (60%) agreed that they encourage peer teaching and the formation of small groups to ensure that the slow

learners are not left behind. This revelation corresponds with the observation made by Smith and Thomas (2006) that for successful inclusion, teachers must assign a peer to provide help or assistance when needed. They further stated that, to incorporate socialization goals, and also to help promote acceptance and learning about differences in the classroom, teachers must select different peers for different subjects or activities. The research sought to find out whether teachers consider individual capabilities in the delivery of lessons in order to ensure all students achieve their learning goals. In the end, 4 (13%) of the respondents disagreed that teachers considers individual capabilities and 3 (10%) were undecided while 23(77%) agreed to the statement that teachers emphasis on tailoring the content and instructional approach in the context of individual needs so the students can achieve their objectives outlined in the curriculum. This conduct is against Nind's (2004) advice that teachers must emphasis on tailoring the content and instructional approaches in the context of individual needs so that the can students achieve the objectives outlined in the approved curriculum.

Interview

4.3.1 Remedial clinical teaching

Some special needs students have peculiar difficulties in learning as a results of their as result of short attention span and poor memory and in view of this, there is the need to reinforce and repeat lessons for them severally through collaborative effort of general educators and special educators (Snell, 1998) it is evident in the views expressed by parents that both regular classroom teachers and special educators do give assistance to children with special needs in the area of remedial clinical teaching.

In fact one parent stated that:

“I was at the school to find out how my ward is doing at the school. I saw the Class teacher teaching and the special education teacher at the back of the classroom assisting the special need child. So I went back and came during break time. Still I saw his teacher and the special needs teacher teaching him and two other children in their resource room. I don’t know whether that is what they have been doing every day”. (Parent A)

Another parent also had this to say:

“ I don’t always visit my child’s school but I tried to find out what happen in school and I remember my child once told me that a white lady voice trainer came to their school to work with their teacher in teaching English language lessons” (verbatim expression, Parent B)

From the responses given by the parents, it can be deduced that, there is collaboration between classroom teachers and special education resource teachers to give assistance to children with special needs in the pilot basic inclusive schools. This comes to buttress the findings of Peterson (2005) on the study he conducted for which the findings indicated that special education teachers and classroom teachers as emerging out of the research related to in- class special education support to teachers and aides.

Also, it affirms Taylor’s (2004) view that the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments cannot be met in a single environment, or expertise with unlimited funding. Tayalor recommended that a team approach should be used in identifying and meeting these needs and that the team should include staff who have specific expertise in educating students with special needs. the views expressed by parents can be backed by Oliver’s (1990) social model theory which clearly states that individual limitations of whatever kind is not the cause of the problem, but the society’s failure to provide appropriate services and adequately ensure that the needs of disabled people are adequately taken into account in its social organization.

4.3.2 Provision of appropriate seating arrangement

Placement of students with special needs at places in the inclusive classroom that support their learning is essential for the success of inclusive education

Commenting on the issues of appropriate seating arrangement, a parent said:

“As for me, my child cannot see well and because of that her class teacher has asked her to always seat in front of the class so that he can see well and read from the blackboard” (Expression by parent A)

Another parent also commented on the issue and indicated that:

“My child complained to me that she cannot see the writing on the blackboard Well and so I talked to his class teacher and the class teacher now allows her to sit close to the blackboard so that he can see well” (Comment from Parent B)

The views expressed by the parent of children with special needs about the teachers practice of appropriate strategic placement of students with special needs in the classroom is consistent with the assertion of Wortham (2002) that access to curriculum is so much more than simply including a students with special educational needs in a mainstream classroom, but involves subtler issues such as how students with special needs interact with their peers, how they are strategically placed or better still how the classroom is structured for effective curriculum adaptation.

4.4 Research question 3

What resources and equipment are available for teaching children with special educational needs?

To answer this research question, items number 18-23 were used with the aim of finding out what resources and equipment are available for teachers to teach in an inclusive setting. Table 5 shows teachers responses to the items

Table 5: Resources and equipment available for teaching children with special needs

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Strongly Agree	Agree	Total
	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)
18. Special needs are given assistive devices	9(30%)	13(43%)	3(10%)	4(13%)	1(3%)	30(100%)
19. Adequate assist devices for children with Special needs.	6(20%)	17(57%)	5(17%)	2(7%)	0(0%)	30(100%)
20. Tr. has enough materials	13(43%)	11(37%)	3(10%)	3(10%)	0(0%)	30(100%)
21. Tr. uses variety of real Materials	6(20%)	8(27%)	2(7%)	12(40%)	2(7%)	30(100%)
22. Tr. uses simple artificial concrete materials.	8(27%)	5(17%)	1(3%)	15(50%)	1(3%)	30(100%)
23. There are special educators to assist special needs children.	7(23%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	14 (47%)	7 (23%)	30(100%)

Table three gives an overview of resources and equipment that are available for supporting students with special educational needs to participate in learning in the inclusive schools in the Agona Swedru township. The responses on the item special needs children are given assistive devices such as reading glass and hearing aids to help them see and hear well revealed that 22 (73%) of the respondents disagreed 3(10%) were undecided on the issue, while 5 (17%) agreed that children are given assistive device .This means that special needs children in the three inclusive pilot schools are not provided with assistive devices to aid low vision pupils see clearly and also to hear their teachers loud and clear .In the quest to find out whether the inclusive

schools have adequate assistive devices per the number of students with special educational needs, it was found out that, 23 (77%) of the respondents disagreed 5 (17%) were undecided while 2(17%) agreed. This statement did not agree with Skrebneva (2010) when she pointed out that, deaf learners in inclusive schools of South Africa are supported by experts in sign language interpreters, note takers, the use of hearing aids, argumentative communication boards to be able to follow and participate in language lessons in the inclusive classrooms. In an attempt to find out whether apart from the availability of assistive devices, teachers have a good stock of learning materials for students with special educational needs, the result indicated that 24 (80%) of respondents disagreed 3 (10%) were undecided while 3(10%) of the respondents agreed. This development is at variance with the views expressed by Ministry of Human Resources Development (2000) that broken articles should be repaired or discarded. First aid kits should be easily accessible and teaching and learning materials must be well stocked to make them readily accessible .It is important that teachers maintain a good stock of resources at their disposal in order to ensure that these resources are readily available for use. In finding out the extent to which teachers use assorted real material to ensure that their lessons are well understood by all students including those with disabilities, it was found that 14 (47%) of the respondents disagreed that they use assorted and real materials in teaching, 2(7%) were undecided while 14 (47%) disagreed that they practice the use of assorted real materials. The high numbers of teachers using assorted real materials to enhance lesson delivery makes the advice of Accessibility for Canadians with disabilities Act (2005) credible. They contend that teachers should make flexible use of resources depending on children's learning needs and they should not rely too much on available teaching kits. Teacher must make use of assorted real materials since they

depict the natural and true picture of concepts being handled. It was revealed that 13 (43%) of the respondents disagreed that they use artificial but true – to- type materials in their lesson delivery 1(3%) were undecided and 16 (53%) agreed that teachers use simple but concrete materials to ensure that the students understand the lesson well. This is in conformity with the view of Accessibility for Canadians with disability act (2005) which states that teachers should avoid using too complicated teaching materials, which they students may not understand. Otherwise learning effectiveness will be hampered. If possible, teachers may try to design and develop true- to- type learning materials by themselves. In trying to ascertain whether teachers in inclusive schools in the Agona Swedru township do invite special education resource teachers to help address the educational needs of students with special needs, 8 (27%) of the respondents disagreed 1 (3%) were undecided on the issue while 21(70%) agreed that there are special educators to assist students with special educational needs in their school. The teachers views affirms what Farrell(2001) said that one of the most promising approaches to supporting classroom teachers and children with special educational needs is to provide support from a collaborating teacher.

Interview

In addition to the questionnaire items, interviews were conducted to triangulate the views of some of the respondents and these were analyzed below based on the emerging sub- themes such as availability assistive devices to support special educational needs students, resource room and class support services.

4.4.1 Devices to support special needs children

An assistive device to support children with special educational needs was evident in the interview with parents. It emerged that special needs students were supported with resources such as reading stand, magnifying glass, hearing aids, wheel chairs and calipers.

During the interview a parent remarked that:

“At a meeting special education teacher showed me some devices that they use in teaching the special needs children and that aside, I quite remember the doctor sold reading glass to me for my child to use...” (Parent A)

Additionally, one other parent also commented that

“At the assessment center, the doctor asked me to buy lens for my ward to aid her in seeing and I have to look for money and buy one for to use and before then the teacher has some magnifying lens that she uses to assist her for reading” (Remark by Parent B)

These opinions of parents relate to Mercer and Mercer (2005) when they believed that instructional equipment or devices can be used to meet the specific needs of special educational needs students. Mercer and Mercer further indicated that audio visual equipment can be used to instruct students with specific modality preferences and manipulative devices often help to hold the attention of disabled learner. They went on to say that the use of tape recorders, overhead projectors motivate special needs learners. However, Khan (2006) reveals that assistive technology devices are designed to compensate for, or enhance the function of some physical, sensory or mental ability that is impaired. Children and adult who have a broad range of disabilities use assistive technology devices in the inclusive setting to aid their learning. Khan further indicated that manual communication boards are an inexpensive and practical mode by which an augmentative communication devices help individuals more easily and effectively. This equipment can range from a board with pictures representing a

students' daily needs to electronic speech synthesizers. This technology can help a child with disabilities feel more independent and take part in activities with other children in the inclusive setting.

4.4.2 Resource room and in class support services

Inclusive education not about integrating persons with special educational needs into the mainstream and leaving them without any form of support. The success of inclusive education depends to a large extent on the availability of quality support services offered in the mainstream programme (Farrel, 2000). This means that qualified personnel should be available to support classroom teachers. Parents interviewed did indicate that special educational needs children are pulled off to office of resource teachers for clinical teaching, counseling, screening, as well as occasionally in class support such as remedial teaching, checking their gadgets, exercise books and other learning materials.

One parent remarked that:

“I remember sometimes ago, my child told me that the special teacher has come to pull him to the resource room for some lessons (Verbatim expression by parent A)

“...I have not seen any teaching assistant helping the special needs children in the school. But it will be good if such people are there to provide the needed support services to the children and teachers, just like the way the nurse have been coming to check on them” (Parent B, Comment)

Remarkingly, a parent C had this to say:

“I remember the headmaster at PTA meeting introduced two young ladies to us that they were posted by Agona Swedru Municipal Office to the School to assist the teachers in teaching pupils....they will be assisting the class teachers where they special needs children especially the lower Primary pupils..”

However, there was one respondent, a parent whose view contracted the earlier one in her opinion the pupils were left on their own. She remarked:

Responses from parents interviewed revealed that children with special needs receive some support services from specialist such as special educator nurses and doctor though not enough. This view is consistent with recommendation of UNESCO (2005) that suggest that inclusive teachers must consult with special services associated with their student's special needs for example special education teachers, physical, occupational or movement- orientation therapist and physiologists, who may be involved in working with students with special needs in an inclusive classroom. The responses also showed that, the services were carried out in the classroom and resource room and it was also revealed that though the schools have some assistive devices and learning materials, it was not adequate for the special needs students.

These views is at variance with Lowenfied (1994) cited in Champan (1978), that freedom of exploration and interaction with instructional materials and assistive devices are therefore critical in the learning process of human beings, because they help learners to see hear and handle whatever they learn. It is therefore important that within every inclusive classroom, teaching and learning materials should be adequate so that effective support services in teaching and learning can take place. Lowenfield (1994) further argued that in regular classroom with special needs children, individual schools will have to continue to make the best internal provisions they deem suitable but will turn to others when they require guidance, information or support services from special resource persons. The views of the respondents can be buttressed by social model theory which propounds that it is the society that has to put the necessary structures in place so that persons with disabilities can become capable of playing their role independently. The theory recognizes the fact that the society is the main standing block for persons with disabilities such that it is society that marginalizes labels and discriminates against persons with disabilities.

In summary, it was found out that some form of support services were provided to special needs children in class and resource room remedial teaching as well as referral of children to other specialist and teaching assistant support.

4.5 Research question 4

To what extent is the school environment accessible to children with special needs in the three pilot inclusive schools in Agona Swedru township?

To answer this question, questionnaire item 24 -30 were used. Table 6 shows teachers responses to the items



Table 6: The responses of teachers on how accessible the school environment is for children with special needs

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Strongly Agree	Agree	Total
	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)
24. The school has ramp to facilitate easy movement	10(33%)	7(23%)	5 (17%)	3(10%)	5(17%)	30(100%)
25. The sch. toilet & urinals are suitable for all persons.	15(50%)	8(27%)	1(3%)	5(17%)	1(3%)	30(100%)
26. Washing basin & other hygiene facilitates are all accessible	13(43%)	9(30%)	2(7%)	6(20%)	0(0%)	30(100%)
27. The school and classrooms are accessible to all	9(30%)	9(30%)	2(7%)	9(30%)	1(3%)	30(100%)
28. The floor is well designed to make it Slip- free.	10(33%)	6(20%)	2(7%)	11(37%)	1(3%)	30(100%)
29. Sch. furniture are of good height.	5(17%)	9(30%)	2(7%)	9(30%)	5(17%)	30(100%)
30. The school has playgrounds that are accessible	10(33%)	7(23%)	3(10%)	9(30%)	1(3%)	30(100%)

In ascertaining the extent to which schools make their environments friendly for easy access to persons with special needs, the researcher sought to find out whether the schools have ramps on the compound that facilitate the movement of students who use

wheelchairs. 17 (57%) of the respondents disagreed that their schools have ramps that makes persons with disability to move easily and 5(17%) were undecided on the issue whilst 8 (27%) of the respondents agreed on the issue. Most of these schools have very high stair case that makes it difficult for persons with disability to move freely. This trend of presence of ramps in some schools and absence in other schools is similar to the report of a research conducted by Kenrick. According to the research conducted by Kenrick (2010), issues of equity observed in schools and also discussed by school staff and students tend to resolve around two main areas. First was the issue of accessibility of the school buildings.

According to the report, in some of the schools visited, it was evident that comprehensive effort had been undertaken to make them accessible to all students, regardless of needs, as there were elevators, ramps accessible equipment on the playgrounds and so on. However, in other schools, he noted narrow hallways and secluded classrooms, and that access to gyms, playgrounds facilities, or other areas of the physical plant were not accessible to student with mobility issues.

The researcher also sought to find out whether the schools had toilets and urinals that are adapted to make them accessible to students with disabilities and the results pointed out that 23(77%) of the respondents disagreed that urinals and toilets are accessible to persons with disabilities 1 (3%) were undecided while 6 (20%) agreed that their school's urinal and toilet facilities have been adapted to make them friendly to persons with disabilities. This state of affairs in most of the schools does not conform to the standards of Kenrick (2010). Kenrick contends that a wheelchair accessible unisex water closet must be designed to meet the needs of independent wheelchair users, but it is also equipped to suit ambulant disabled people who may find themselves in the school setting. "The travel distance to this water closet should

be minimized where it is not located within the classroom” (Kenrick, 2010). He goes on to say to add that urinals in inclusive schools must adhere to the following; where one or more urinals are provided in a washroom, at least one urinal should be suitable for use by ambulant disabled people. Where six or more urinals are provided in a washroom, at least one accessible urinal and one low wash hand basin should be provided for wheelchair users. Where accessible urinals are provided, a clear area of 900mm* 1400mm in front of the wheelchair accessible urinal should be leveled (Kenrick, 2010). The issue whether the schools in Agona Swedru township have wash basin or other hand hygiene facilities that are readily within the reach of all persons with disabilities, 22 (73%) of the respondents disagreed that their schools have hygiene facilities that is within the reach of persons with disabilities 2 (7%) were undecided whilst 6 (20. %) of the respondents agreed to the statement. This development is contrary to the standard of Wyon (2001) that where wash basins are provided, at least one wash basin with its set at between 720mm and 740mm above the floor level be provided.

In the quest to find out whether schools have classrooms that are accessible to the persons with physical impairment 18(60%) of the respondents disagreed on the issues and 2 (7%) were undecided whilst 10 (33%) agreed that their schools are accessible to persons with disabilities. This development is in opposition to the advice of Kenrick (2010) that classrooms should be spacious, accessible and have adequate lighting, good ventilation, enough space for activities and appropriate facilities. In an attempt to find out whether the classroom floor surfaces are well designed to make it slip – free, 16 (53%) of the respondents disagreed on the issue 2 (7%) were undecided on the issue whilst 12 (40%) agreed that the classroom floor surfaces are well designed to make it slip- free. This situation contradicts the standards of Kenrick (2010) that the

floor surface of the classroom must be kept clean and dry at all times. The materials used for covering the floor should be of more durable nature, easy to clean, able to absorb sound and suitable for sitting on, for example, rubber tiles, rubber mats among others. The research sought to find out whether the school has chairs and tables that are of good height and strengths to all students and it was found out that, 14 (47%) of respondents disagreed that the school have tables and chair that are of good height 2 (7%) were undecided whilst 14 (47%) agreed that the school has tables and chairs that are of good height. This situation contradict the opinion of Fraser (2002) that the height of a classroom furniture or partitioning boards should be adjusted to children's height. Fraser continue to add that the furniture should not be centralized in one specific spot but be appropriately placed.

Another subject of importance to the researcher was to find out whether the schools have playgrounds that are accessible to students with disabilities. It was revealed that 17 (57%) of respondents disagreed to the statement 3(10%) were undecided whilst 10 (33%) agreed that the schools have playgrounds that are accessible to persons with disabilities. This occurrence is in line with the quote of Wyon (2001) that "common sense tells us that broken windows, leaking roofs, and neglected playgrounds are invitation for disaster".

Interview

4. 5.1 Accessibility of the school environment

Interview was also conducted for the parents of children with special educational needs to ascertain the extent at which the school physical environment are friendly to their children. From the interview, it is evident that, the school facilities and the

school environment are not easily accessible to persons with special needs especially persons with disabilities.

Indeed a parent had this to say:

“Hmmm this is very frustration occasionally I send my child who use a wheel Chair to school and it has not always been easy at all moving into the classroom I complained several times to the headmaster but nothing has been done about it” (Verbatim expression by Parent A)

Another parent also remarked:

“I don’t understand why the contractor who builds this school did not design surface of the floor to make it slip-free. On two occasions, my child fell and when I complained to his class teacher, they don’t do anything about it (Comment, Parent B)

“My child has always been comfortable and happy and he has never complained about the accessibility of the school environment and I want to believe that all is well” (Comment by Parent C)

There was another parent whose view was quite different from the earlier ones. In his opinion, there was nothing wrong with the school physical environment: he remarked:

The comments by the parents about how unfriendly the school environment is to their children is similar to the report of a research conducted by Kenrick. According to the research conducted by Kenrick (2010), issues of equity observed in schools and also discussed by school staff and students tend to resolve around two main areas. First was the issue of accessibility of the school buildings. According to the report, in some of the schools visited, it was evident that comprehensive effort had been undertaken to make them accessible to all students, regardless of needs, as there were elevators, ramps accessible equipment on the playgrounds and so on. However, in other schools, he noted narrow hallways and secluded classrooms, and that access to gyms, playgrounds facilities, or other areas of the physical plant were not accessible to student with mobility issues.

4.5.2 Accessibility to the school facilities

Responses from the parent clearly indicated that accessibility to the school facilities such as urinals, toilet, the school playing grounds and a washing basin and other hygiene facilities is a major problem and a matter of grave concern to the parent since it was found out that the school environment is not easily accessible to children with disabilities.

Indeed one parent commented that:

“As for me my child’s condition is such that he is not able to use the toilet and the urinal that has been provided by the school for all children” (Comment by Parent A)

Remarking on the issue, another parent commented that

“Whenever it is time for the children to go out and play, my child does not go out to play with his friends because the school playground is not safe for my child” (Verbatim expression by Parent

B)

The feeling expressed by parents about inaccessibility of the school playgrounds and other facilities by their children is in line with the quote of Wyon (2001) which state that “common sense tells us that broken windows, leaking roofs, and neglected playgrounds are invitation for disaster”

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations for the study.

5.2 Summary

The purpose of the study was to ascertain issues emerging from inclusive education practices in pilot basic schools in Agona Swedru township. The study was guided by four main research questions that were raised. In all thirty (30) teachers and twelve (12) parents who had children with special needs were involved in the study.

Two sets of instruments were used for data collection which included questionnaire for teachers and semi- structured interview guide for parents. A simple random sampling was used to select teachers whilst purposive sampling was used in selecting parents for the interview.

5.3 Main Findings

1. For research question 1, the study revealed that most parents were involved in some aspects of decision making for their children with special needs education especially in the area of provision of basic needs, learning materials, drawing of Individualized educational plan, Parent Teacher Association meetings and referral to assessment centers for detailed diagnosis and prognosis. The study further revealed that, there was a collaboration between regular classroom teachers and other specialists in the three pilot inclusive schools in Agona Swedru township. The collaboration was in the area of assessment of sensory impairments of children clinical teaching, resource

room support services and development of individualized educational plans for students with special needs.

2. For research question 2, the findings from the study revealed that teachers adequately adapted the curriculum and used teaching methods that helped students with special needs with learning difficulties to achieve their learning goals.
3. For research question 3, the study indicated that in class support services as well as resource room support were provided to children with special needs within the pilot basic inclusive schools by resource teachers. Respondents were of the view that reading glass, hearing aids, reading stand, large print and magnifying lens were some of the devices given to support students with special needs for participation and efficient learning. It was also revealed that, though the schools have some assistive devices, they were woefully inadequate taking into consideration the number of children who needed them.
4. For research question 4 it came to light that the physical environment is not suitable for students especially those with disabilities in the inclusive schools in Agona Swedru township.

Majority of the respondents did indicate that, physical environment do affect movement of students with disabilities especially those with physical disabilities .Additionally, the school facilities such as the urinal toilets among others well also not easily accessible to students with disabilities in these schools

5.4 Conclusions

The study concluded that most parents were involved in the decision making for their children with special educational needs in the pilot inclusive schools under study. Additionally, there was collaboration between regular classroom teachers and other specialists in the three basic inclusive schools under study.

Furthermore, teachers in the pilot inclusive schools in Agona Swedru township adequately adapted the curriculum and their teaching pedagogies. This helped the children with special educational needs to achieve their learning goals.

Again, it was evident that support services were provided to students with special needs to participate fully and to enhance teaching and learning in inclusive classroom.

It was also established that the physical environment that existed in inclusive schools in the Agona Swedru township was not suitable and affected the mobility of students with disabilities especially those with neuromotor problems.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on findings from the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Though parents are involved in the decision making for their children with special educational needs, they should show greater interest. Additionally, there should be effective collaboration between regular teachers and other specialist to meet the needs of students with special educational needs in inclusive schools.
- There should be more aggressive capacity building workshops and in-service training to all teachers in the pilot basic inclusive schools to equip teachers

with the needed knowledge, skills and positive attitudes that will make them teach to the differential needs of all children.

- Stakeholders should provide support services as well as more resources such as assistive devices and teaching and learning materials for all pilot basic inclusive schools for effective inclusion to take place.
- The physical environment or school compound of inclusive schools must be safe and comfortable for both teachers and students regarding accessibility to the school buildings and easy movement in and around the schools.
- Agencies such as Ghana Education service, Ghana Health service, Agona West Municipal Assembly, Social Welfare Department Non- Governmental organizations as well as other stakeholders should team up to implement the above recommendations for effective inclusion to take place.

5.6 Areas for Further Research

Further studies could be conducted to investigate strategies to adopt to ensure effective support services for pupils with special educational needs in the pilot basic schools in Agona Swedru township. In addition, studies must be conducted on barriers to inclusive education programme.

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APPENDIX A

Department of Special Education

University of Education Winneba

12th December, 2016.

Head of Department

Department of Special Education

University of Education, Winneba

Dear Sir,

APPLICATION FOR AN INTRODUCTORY LETTER

I wish to apply for a letter of introduction to enable me get access to schools in Agona Swedru township. I am a second year M.Phil. student currently working on my dissertation on the topic: "Issues Emerging from inclusive Education practices in

Three Pilot Basic schools in Agona Swedru township". A letter of introduction will enable me get the necessary assistance from the school Authorities

The names of the schools are: Salvation Army A&B Basic school, Methodist A&B Basic School and Presbyterian A&B Basic School.

Thank you in advance.

Yours truly,

.....

Divine B. Defor

APPENDIX B



DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
(UEW)
OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

December 15, 2016

.....
.....
.....
.....
Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I write to introduce to you, Divine B. Defor an M.Phil student of Department of Special Education of the University of Education, Winneba.

He is currently working on his thesis on the topic: *"Issues Emerging from inclusive Education practices in Three Pilot Basic schools in Agona Swedru Township"*.

I should be grateful if you could give him the needed assistance to enable him to collect data from your school. This forms part of the requirements to complete his programme.

Counting on your cooperation.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yaw Nyadu Offei'.

YAW NYADU OFFEI (PHD)
AG. HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX C

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE

*In case of reply,
the number and date of this
letter should be quoted*



Municipal Education Office
Post Office Box 240
Agona Swedru
agowesteduc@yahoo.com

My ref. GES/CR/SWD.260/21
Your ref.

Republic of Ghana

17th March, 2017

INTRODUCTORY LETTER
DIVINE B. DEFOR

The Municipal Directorate of Education, Agona West, writes to introduce to you Mr. Divine B. Defor who wishes to collect data from your school.

We therefore recommend him to you for any assistance he requires.

We count on your usual cooperation.

ELIZABETH HELEN ESSEL
MUNICIPAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
AGONA WEST

**ALL HEADS OF PUBLIC/PRIVATE
SCHOOLS - AGONA WEST ✓**

copy: Mr. Divine B. Defor

*/*vg*/*

2017
10/03/17

APPENDIX D

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

**ISSUES EMERGING FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE
EDUCATION IN SELECTED PILOT INCLUSIVE BASIC SCHOOLS IN
SWEDRU TOWNSHIP**

**QUESTIONNAIRES FOR TEACHERS IN THE PILOT INCLUSIVE BASIC
SCHOOLS**

This questionnaire is to solicit your views about the inclusive education practices in the pilot basic schools in Agona Swedru Township. Could you kindly answer the questions as sincerely as possible? All the information will be treated with confidentiality. Your sincere response will go a long way to find solutions to some of the challenges affecting inclusive education in Agona Swedru Township.

Thank you in advance.

SECTION ONE

Background Information / Demographics

Please tick / fill in your responses in the spaces provided:

Gender _____ Male _____ Female _____

Number of years of teaching: 0-5 [] 6-10 [] 11-15 [] 16-20+ []

Educational level:

- I. Teacher Certificate „A“
- II. Diploma
- III. B.Ed.
- IV. M.A / M.Ed. / M.Phil.
- V. Any other, please state _____

SECTION TWO

1. Do you have children with special needs in your class Yes
.....No

2. If yes, what type of special needs children are they?

i. Learning disabilities ii.

..... Behavior disorders iii.

..... Physical disabilities iv.

..... Intellectually Handicapped

v.Hearing impaired

- vi. Visually impaired
- vii.Communication disorders / speech disorders viii.
..... Multiple disabilities
- ix.Orphan
- x. Street children xi.
.....Autistic child xii.
- Any other? Please state

SECTION THREE

In this section, you are please required to tick or circle the appropriate numbers to respond with how much you agree or disagree with statements in the box using

- 1) Disagree (D)
- 2) Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 3) Neutral / Neither Agree or Disagree /Uncertain / Undecided (N)
- 4) Agree (A)
- 5) Strongly Agree (SA)

Teacher collaboration with parents and other professionals

statement	D	SD	N	A	SA
1. Parents are involved in decision making on the education of children with special needs.					
2. Parents take their special needs children to assessment center for assessment.					
3. parents attend meetings with teachers to discuss and take decisions on output and progress of their special needs children					
4. Parents show greater interest in the academic work of their special needs children.					
5. teacher occasionally invites community health nurse to check on student's health					
6. teacher invites special education resource teacher to assist students with special needs					
7. Teacher arranges with support personnel to assess and plan appropriate learning experience for all students with special needs.					
Teacher preparation and experience					
statements					
8. teacher provides appropriate seating arrangement for students with special needs					
9. Teachers receive in- service training from special educators and other professionals on management of special needs children in the pilot inclusive schools					

10. teacher reframes assessment questions to suit children with special educational needs					
11. Teacher uses oral assessment to assess students with special educational needs.					
12. Teacher uses assorted question types in assessment. E.g. filling in, true or false, etc. to encourage all learners to participate in the assessment.					
13. teacher give flexible time frame for completion of work					
14. Teacher makes changes to curriculum and use of resources. eg. The increase of print to aid those with low vision.					
15. Teacher presents lessons step by step in a systematic way to enable all learners to participate.					
16. Teacher encourages formation of small groups for students to study together.					
17. Teacher considers individual students capabilities in the delivery of lessons in order to ensure all students achieve their learning goals.					
Availability of Resources and Equipment					
statements					
18. Special needs children are given assistive devices such as glass and hearing aid to help them see and hear well					
19. there are adequate assistive devices for children with special needs in the inclusive schools					
20..teacher has a good stock of materials at his or her disposal to ensure that, teaching and learning materials are ready for use.					

21. teacher uses a variety of real materials to ensure that the students understand the lessons well					
22. teacher uses simple artificial but a concrete materials in lesson delivery					
23 There are special educators to assist children with special needs in the inclusive setting.					
Accessibility of school environment					
statements					
24. The school has ramps on the compound that facilitate easy movement of students using wheel chairs					
25. The school toilet and urinals are suitable and accessible to all categories of students.					
26. The school has a washing basin and other hygiene facilities which are within the reach of all persons with disabilities.					
27. The school and classrooms are accessible to all categories of persons with disabilities.					
28. The classroom floor surfaces are well designed to make it slip-free					
29. The school has chairs and tables that are of good height and strengths to all students					
30. The school has playgrounds that are accessible to all students					

APPENDIX E

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

SEMI – STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS IN

SELECTED PILO BASIC INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS IN AGONA SWEDRU

TOWNSHIP

NAME.....

REGION.....

SCHOOL.....

DATE.....

DURATION

Kindly respond to the following questions to the best of your knowledge on the inclusive education practices in the selected pilot basic schools in Agona Swedru Township. You are assured of utmost confidentiality and your responses will be used for academic purposes only.

Parental involvement in decision making

1. How often do you attend meetings with teachers to discuss and take decisions about your child's needs and interest?

Prompt: How often are you involved in the assessment processes and other activities involving your child with special needs?

2. How satisfied are you with your level of involvement in your child's education in the school?

3. What specific support services are provided to your child in the inclusive school?

Prompt: What professionals do you see teachers working hand in hand with to deliver quality educational services to children with special needs?

Teacher preparation and experience

1. To what extent do teachers assist children with special needs in an inclusive classroom?

2. What kind of assistance do teachers in inclusive school give to children with special needs to enable them cope with classwork?

Availability of resources and equipment

1. In your opinion how appropriate or suitable is the materials teachers use in teaching children with special needs?

2. In your own view, do the teachers have enough resources that can enable them teach children with special needs more effectively?

3. What facilities and equipment are available to support your child with special needs?

4. What assistive devices are provided for children with special needs to enhance their learning?

Accessibility of school environment

1. To what extent is the school environment accessible to your child?
2. What do you have to say about the tables and chairs in the classroom of children with disabilities?

Prompt: How do you find the type of tables and chairs that are provided for your child to learn in an inclusive classroom?

