

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**THE ROLE OF RESOURCE TEACHERS TOWARDS SUCCESSFUL
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN GHANA**



YALLEY SARAH

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

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The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central sunburst design with a face, surrounded by a blue and red border. The text "UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA" is written around the perimeter of the emblem.

YALLEY SARAH

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EDUCATIONAL STUDIES submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,
University of Education, Winneba, in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the MASTER OF EDUCATION (Special Education) degree**

DECEMBER, 2014

DECLARATION

Student Declaration

I, **Yalley Sarah**, hereby declare that except for the reference made to other people's work which have been duly cited, this research study is the result of my own work and it has neither in whole nor in part been presented elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:

Supervisors Declaration

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

Supervisor's Name: Prof. Mawutor Avoke

Signature

Date:

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband Mr. Ato Kwamena Abakah for his immeasurable support. To my children, for their spiritual, and physical co-operation. It is also dedicated to all my friends and family members.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank the almighty God who strengthens me daily and gives me the courage and capability to endure the long hours of writing and re-writing. To my supervisor, Prof. Mawutor Avoke for his selflessness and diligence shown towards me, I say God richly bless him. But for the support from my friend, Bright Brew, this work would not have been completed on time. To them I say bravo!

Finally, all those who contributed to the success of this work, I say God bless you.

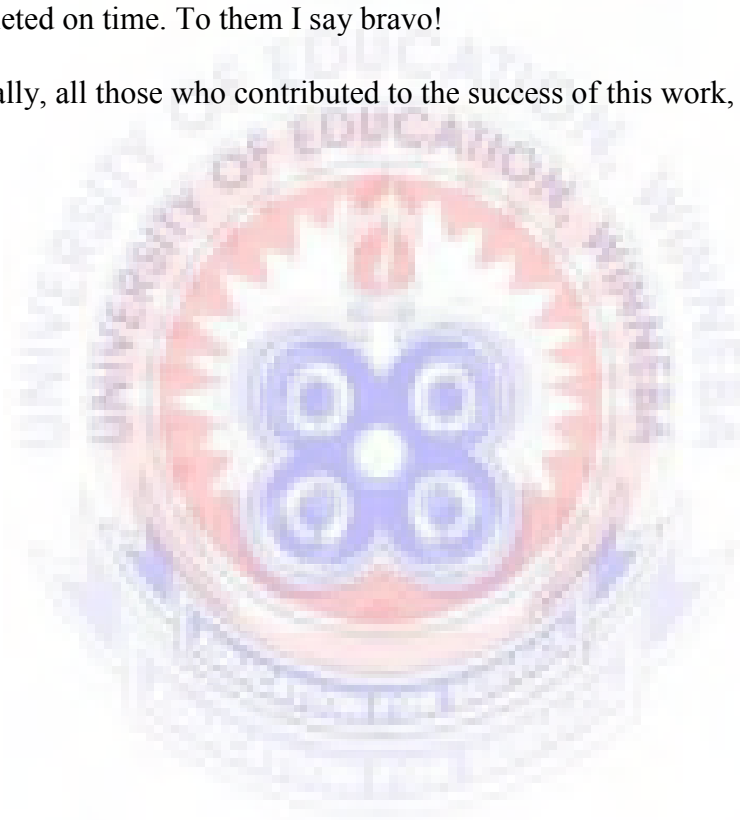


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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to explore the views of resource teachers on the role they play in the implementation of inclusive education in Ghana. The study adopted the survey design and used teacher-made questionnaire for the collection of data. Through the purposive sampling technique, the researcher involved 105 resource teachers in the study. Through the descriptive analysis, the data collected were analysed to reflect the research questions. The findings were: A total (68.2%) of the resource teachers were of the view that resource teachers have the skills, knowledge and competencies needed in inclusive setting. Again (55.8%) of the resource teachers agreed that resource teachers play active role in assessment in the inclusive setting. Finally (60.5%) of the resource teachers were of the view that they do not collaborate with parents and other professionals in the inclusive setting. Based on these findings the researcher recommended special training on the use of technology and assistive devices to enhance their role in technological areas. Again, there should be in-service training and orientation on how to collaborate with professionals and parents. The implication for further research was also suggested.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Today, more and more schools are embracing inclusive beliefs and values and putting into practice structures that will permit each student to learn in an environment that welcomes diversity. If schools are to succeed at including students who present challenging behaviours or diverse learning abilities, regular classroom teachers and students need to be supported by a team of professionals. These Educational Support Teams should include the resource teacher, the guidance teacher, school intervention/behaviour mentors and others, such as literacy and numeracy teachers. The primary roles of the Educational Support Team members should be to support the classroom teacher through coaching, co-teaching, co-planning and consultation. Individual team members may have specific assignments for their work, but they should function as a team with a shared vision, a focus on collaboration, peer support, joint problem-solving and strategies/practices that result in teacher and student success.

The resource teacher is an important member of the Educational Support Team and must lead the team towards effective overall management of inclusive initiatives. Unlike the regular teachers and the resource teacher in the outmoded “integrated model”, who in most instances primarily worked directly with students, the role of the resource teacher in an inclusive school must be focused on supporting and working directly with classroom teachers. The resource teacher must be an experienced and knowledgeable teacher who can provide leadership to help build teacher capacity for utilizing differentiated pedagogical strategies in the classroom.

The resource teachers have a wide variety of experiences and qualifications, including special education qualifications, understanding of adolescent development, a general understanding of school curriculum assessment and teaching strategies that accommodate various learning style.

Generally, the teacher's task where learners with special educational needs are concerned has changed dramatically over the past few years. Whereas formerly teachers were only expected to identify exceptional learners as soon as possible with a view to rating them on a scale for special education, they now have to accommodate the special needs children in ordinary classes, in conformity with the principles of normalization, mainstreaming and inclusion (Lefrancois, 1997). In the United State of America (U. S. A.), the 2004 amendments to The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) continue to challenge teachers in the methods by which they handle individuals with disabilities (Council for Exceptional Children, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2005). The amendments emphasize that children with disabilities must meet the same content standards as other students do, and special education teachers must know how to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment in ways similar to general education teachers. Similarly, general education teachers must become more conversant of the special education curriculum and ways to implement it.

This change in policy has major implications for collaboration between regular teachers and resource teachers for inclusion to strive. Whereas teachers were prepared to adhere to a standard curriculum, teach learners in a class as a whole, and place a high premium on the orderly progress of classroom routine, they are now expected to make provision for conspicuous individual differences, for example, in learning styles or

achievements (Downing, 2002). It is in line of this that resource teachers have to be drawn into to assist the regular classroom teacher to handle any special case in the regular classroom to include all children.

In Ghana, pragmatic efforts are far advanced in implementing inclusive education. According to the Ministry of Education (2003), the Education Strategic Plan (2003-2015) document mandates that special education should include more in-depth knowledge of Special Needs Children, particularly in the light of policy on inclusive education, and that all teachers in the country should be trained in the UNESCO Special Education Training Packs (1993) which provide basic approaches to helping children with special needs. Currently, 379 pilot inclusive schools have been established in 70 districts within seven (7) regions in Ghana (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

Although teachers in general education classrooms have relatively positive attitudes towards including students with disabilities in regular school classrooms, they have limited knowledge of inclusive practices (Shade & Steward, 2001). Most teachers do not provide the individual support to students with disabilities to offer any assistance to enable them to overcome their problems and participate in learning successfully. Most general education classroom teachers in Ghana have limited knowledge in identifying special need children. Regular classroom teachers usually express concerns about inclusive education. Information gathered from resource teachers revealed that teachers in the general classroom have difficulties in adapting the general curriculum to suit the learning needs of special needs children (field data, 2013). Regular class teachers tend to use assessment practices that alienate special needs children. As a result of these practices

in general education, some of the special needs children feel uncomfortable and thus, finally, drop out of school.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore the role resource teachers play towards the development of inclusive education in Ghana.

Research Questions

To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher raised three research questions to guide the study.

1. What knowledge, skills and competencies do resource teachers require to enable them function in an inclusive setting?
2. What role do resource teachers play in the assessment of pupils in inclusive classrooms?
3. How do resource teachers collaborate with other professionals and parents to enhance the inclusion of pupils with special needs in inclusive settings?

Significance of the Study

It was anticipated that the findings from the study would expose resource teachers' views about the role they play towards inclusive education. This would enable in-service teachers to know the exact services to derive from the resource teacher to function effectively for the promotion of inclusive education in the country.

Results from the study will inform the Government of Ghana what has to be done to equip resource teachers in Ghana to successfully collaborate with in-service teachers

towards inclusive education. Moreover, the results of the study would add valuable information to the body of literature available in Ghana concerning resource teachers' role towards inclusive education. The result would reveal to resource teachers some of the role expected of them during inclusive assessment.

Delimitation

Even though there are many resource teachers playing key role towards inclusive Education in Ghana, the study focused on one hundred and five (105) of the resource teachers attached to some basic schools in the Greater Accra Region. By the nature of survey and considering the time frame for the study, it was not possible to explore the views of all resource teachers in Ghana. The researcher explored the views of one hundred and five (105) resource teachers on the role they play towards inclusive education in Ghana.

Operational Definition of Terms

Inclusive education: Is explained as taking a full and active part in school-life, be a valued member of a school community and be seen as an integral member irrespective of one's ability or disability (Farrell, 2000). This implies educating pupils with disabilities with their non-disabled peers in general education class or setting as a way of increasing their access to, and participation in, all natural settings.

Inclusive classrooms: Classrooms that welcome and accept both regular and special needs children.

Resource teachers: Teachers who have received special training in Special needs education to provide related and resource services to individuals with special needs.

Structure of the Study

The report of the research is in six chapters. Chapter one includes background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, hypotheses, significance of the study, delimitation, definition of terms and structure of the study.

Chapter two describes literature review which used the theoretical and conceptual framework as well as empirical studies. The conceptual framework covered the areas such as concept of inclusive education, expertise teachers need to handle inclusive classrooms, adaptations in inclusive classrooms, collaboration with professionals and parents and alternative assessment. The empirical studies summarized the findings of other studies on the role of resource teachers towards inclusion from other countries.

The third chapter describes the methodology that was employed to collect data for the study. The methodology include research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, instrumentation, reliability and validity of instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis.

Chapter four presents the results and discussion of findings, while chapter five provides the discussion of the result.

Chapter six draws on the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter provides the review of related literature on the role of resource teachers towards successful inclusive education from different countries. The literature had been reviewed under conceptual and empirical studies, based on the following sub-themes.

- The concept of inclusive education
- The knowledge resource teachers require in an inclusive context.
- Competencies resource teachers require to enable them function in an inclusive setting.
- The resource teacher's role in the use of assessment in inclusive classrooms.
- Resource teacher's collaboration with professionals and parents.
- Empirical studies on resource teachers' work towards inclusion.
- Summary

The Concept of Inclusive Education

As far back as 1924, the League of Nations adopted the Declaration on Human Rights and the Rights of the Child (Urika, 1996), cited in Avoke (2005) yet in spite of that, discrimination and acts of aggression are still perpetuated against some children all over the world. The current body, the United Nations, formulated new and more elaborate conventions on human rights in 1959. These declarations directed member states to protect the right of citizens, particularly vulnerable groups such as women, children and

those with disabilities, as well as the disadvantaged. Yet in spite of these conventions, people with disabilities are still being subjected to inhuman treatment, and denied access to relevant services in many parts of the world including Ghana (Avoke, et al. 1998). The United Nations Charter on Human Rights, (1948), the Salamanca Statement (1994), and the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993) are compelling Regular Schools and Institutions to open their doors for students having special needs to be educated together in the same class, institute and environment with their regular counterparts, a system known as mainstreaming or integration.

Delegates at the World Conference on Special Needs Education held in Salamanca, Spain in 1994, recognized the urgency and the importance of providing education for individuals with special needs within the regular education system and made the following proclamation among others:

...those with special needs education must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs...regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system...(UNESCO, 1994, p. 9).

The UNESCO (2008) accord states that inclusive education is: „an ongoing process aimed at offering quality education for all while respecting diversity and the different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of the students and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination“ (p. 3). The current thinking has moved beyond the narrow idea of inclusion as a means of understanding and overcoming

a deficit, inclusion is now widely accepted as concerning issues of gender, ethnicity, class, social conditions, health and human rights encompassing universal involvement, access, participation and achievement (Ouane, 2008). Inclusive education describes the process by which a school attempts to respond to all learners as individuals, by reconsidering and restructuring its curricular organization and by providing and allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity (Hyam, 2004).

Inclusive education is, however, more than just a placement. Specific principles underlying this approach are usually built into a bill of rights and governmental policies (Department of National Education - DNE, 2002) which perceive education as a basic human right. The principle implies that all learners have the right to equal access to the widest possible educational opportunities. The state has an obligation to protect and advance these rights so that all citizens, irrespective of race, class, gender, creed, or age have the opportunity to develop their capacities and potential and make their full contribution to society. The principle of quality education for all learners suggests that schools have to meet the diverse needs of all learners (Barton, 1993).

According to Giangreco (1993) inclusive education has five components and all of these should occur on an ongoing basis. They contend that inclusive education is in place only when all the five features occur regularly. The five features are;

- **Heterogeneous grouping.** All students including those with special needs are educated together in groups and the number of students with and without disabilities approximates natural or normal proportions.

- **A sense of belonging to a group.** All students including those with disabilities are considered active members of the class. Students who have disabilities feel welcomed as those without disabilities.
- **Shared activities with individualized outcomes.** Students share educational experiences, for example, lesson, laboratories, field work, and group learning at the same time. The learning objectives for the students are individualized to meet each student's learning needs.
- **Use of environments frequented by individuals without disabilities.** The learning experiences take place in general education classrooms and community work sites.
- **A balanced educational experience.** Inclusive education seeks an individualized balance between the academic/functional and social /personal aspects of schooling (p.51).

Arnesen (2009) , notes that „inclusion may be understood not just as adding on to existing structures, but as a process of transforming societies, communities and institutions such as schools to become diversity-sensitive“ (p. 46). The authors make these points that the international commitment to human rights has led to a changing view and a reduced emphasis on an individual's „disability“ which has, in turn, led to its classifications „socio-cultural“. This view is consistent with the disability studies perspective which recognizes disability as „*another interesting way to be alive*“ (Smith et al., 2009) and sees individual support as the norm for all learners.

More specifically regarding teacher education, Ballard (2003) says that inclusive education is concerned with issues of social justice, which means that graduates entering the teaching profession should:

Understand how they might create classrooms and schools that address issues of respect, fairness and equity. As part of this endeavour, they will need to understand the historical, socio-cultural and ideological contexts that create discriminatory and oppressive practices in education. The isolation and rejection of disabled students is but one area of injustice. Others include gender discrimination, poverty and racism (p. 59).

This implies that there are many teachers in the classroom who are indirectly excluding certain individuals because of their little or no knowledge about the children's background. Others, because of their cultural differences, they express negative attitude toward children with disabilities. In Ghana more pragmatic efforts are far advanced in implementing inclusive education. According to the Ministry of Education (2003), the Education Strategic plan 2003-2015 document mandates that special education should include more in-depth knowledge of special needs children particularly in the light of policy on inclusive education, and that all teachers in the country should be trained in the UNESCO special education training packs (1993) which provides basic approaches to helping Children with Special Needs. It also suggested that a more comprehensive special needs education module should be developed for Colleges of Education in Ghana Ministry of Education (2003), cited in Avoke (2005). Currently, 379 pilot inclusive schools have been established in 70 districts within 7 regions in Ghana (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Knowledge Resource Teachers Require To Function in an Inclusive Setting

According to Hay (2003) educators' knowledge, skills and competencies have direct impact on their preparedness to implement inclusive education effectively. Education White Paper 6 of the Republic of South Africa (DNE, 2001) maintains that educators are the primary resource for achieving the goal of an inclusive education and training system. Also, Hall and Engelbrecht (1999) identify need for knowledge, skills and competencies are vital for successful inclusive education.

Knowledge dispels misconceptions and clarifies misunderstandings; prejudice and fear then decrease (Goddard, 1995). Educators and regular class peers become more accepting as they learn more about the abilities and problems of "special learners" (Lewis & Doorlag, 1991). Knowledge that a learner has a disability raises the anxiety level of educators, for example, knowledge that a learner is visually impaired causes tension and anxiety in the educator (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997). In fact, what is pertinent is that, although the learner reads Braille material, he is able to participate in class discussions, benefits from instructions, and interacts with classmates. Learners with "special needs" should be included in as many activities as feasible and treated like any other learner, that is, as an individual. Special learners are children with identified needs; despite these needs, they remain individuals (Downing, 2002). Elliot (1996) points out that mainstream classroom educators must be prepared to buy into the philosophy that if material is presented appropriately, all learners can learn; it may have to be at their own rate, but they still can learn. Educators must also be risk takers. They must be willing to risk the way they have always done things. They must be willing to look at the same situation in a

different way and even risk failure in order to grow, and to look at obstacles as opportunities (Nell, 1996).

According to Kapp (1994) the resource teachers should be aware of:

- The importance of early identification of and aid to learners with problems and the educator's task in this regard.
- The most important causes and manifestations of learning and behaviour problems in learners.
- The identification procedures that may be employed, such as screening and criterion-referenced tests.
- Informal methods of gathering information.
- The basic principles and possible forms of assistance (p.76).

Additionally, Nell (1996) states that knowledge includes educators being adequately prepared to assess special need child, to adapt curriculum content to the needs of the learners in the classrooms, to utilize special orthodidactic devices and instructional aids as well as medical and Para-medical assistive devices required by some of the special need child. It also includes the use of appropriate teaching strategies based on the learners' total level of functioning. Lewis and Doorlag (1991) maintain that limited knowledge and experience can lead to the development of prejudice and non-accepting attitudes and to a natural discrimination against learners who are different.

Competencies Resource Teachers Need

In addition to knowledge, resource teachers need to possess certain skills and competencies to enhance inclusion. According to Van Schalkwyk (1994) skills and competencies refer to the abilities, knowledge, expertise or techniques a person has.

Resource teachers need to be trained to acquire necessary skills in order to implement inclusive education successfully. Downing (2002) suggests that the skills required for inclusive education are different. They involve being able to identify and assess special need children, being able to adapt curricular content, teaching methods and assessment methods to assist special need children and working in collaboration with colleagues, parents and the broader community.

Also, Goddard (1995) state that the resource teachers should be able to identify and assess the learner with learning and behavioral problems in his class by using informal diagnostic procedures and implement screening tests such as reading and mathematical tests himself or in cooperation with the remedial educator or school psychologist. Furthermore, the educator should be able to adapt curricular content and teaching methods to assess special need children and collect relevant information in connection with the learner's problems by means of informal media such as observation, home visiting, etc. The information collected concerning the learner should be recorded and then discussed objectively and scientifically with others (school principal, remedial educator, didactic assistance team or parents).

Finally, the resource teachers should be able to formulate the objectives of the aid, based on the findings, either on his own or in co-operation with others, apply basic aid techniques on his own and evaluate the progress thereof. Work in collaboration with colleagues, parents and the broader community.

The Government of the Republic of South Africa Gazette outlines the following roles and competencies of the educator to ensure effective implementation for inclusive education:

Learning mediator: The educator will mediate learning that is sensitive to the diverse interests of all learners, including those with barriers to learning. This implies the planning of learning activities that are: relevant and meaningful to the learners, appropriate to their development levels and contexts, and based on sound knowledge of subject content.

Interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials: The educator will understand and interpret learning programmes; design original learning programmes; identify and select relevant and meaningful resource material; adapt material to the needs of the learners; value the many skills the learners bring to the classroom.

Leader, administrator and manager: The educator will manage learning and make decisions and expectations according to the level of learners; carry out classroom administration efficiently; participate in decision making; support learners and colleagues and respond to changing circumstances and needs; be responsible for teaching every learner in the class; see every learner as providing an opportunity to become a better educator.

Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner: The educator will keep informed of changes in the educational and other relevant fields through reflective study and research; has the ability to problem solved.

Community, citizenship and pastoral role: The educator will develop a sense of responsibility towards others; uphold the constitution and promote the values and practice of democracy; empower learners through providing a supportive environment; respond to the educational needs of the learners; respond to the other needs of the learners and colleagues.

Assessor: The educator will understand that assessment is integral to the teaching and learning process; understand the purposes, methods and effects of assessments and give meaningful feedback to learners; be able to formally assess the skills a learner needs; develop alternate assessments when necessary.

Learning area /subject /discipline /phase specialists: The educator will have a working knowledge of the skills, values, principles, methods, and procedures of area/subject/phase of expertise; know about different teaching methods and use them according to the needs of the learners in the class, have an understanding and knowledge of his/her area of expertise (Hyam, 2004).

It can be seen that the role of the resource teacher in an inclusive classroom is multi-dimensional. It is challenging and complex because it encompasses all aspects of teaching and learning. The resource teacher is the social and emotional Centre of the classroom.

Resource Teacher's Collaboration with Professionals and Parents

Inclusive education is based on the premise that no one teacher can possess all the expertise needed to meet the educational needs of all the students in the classroom. Instead, teachers should have support system through collaboration with trained experts and peer assistance.

According to White Paper 6 of The Republic of South Africa (DNE, 2001), inclusion is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. Educators need support to be prepared to cope with the challenges associated with inclusive education. Resistance to including special needs children may emanate from a fear of not being adequately prepared to teach special

needs children (Goddard, 1995). The degree of support the educator receives is the most powerful predictor of positive attitudes towards inclusive education. Sharing information and working as a collaborative team can serve to alleviate concerns and resistance (Downing, 2002:189).

Educators must be prepared to work as a team and support each other. The educator should not be expected to integrate a learner with a disability into the mainstream classroom on his own (DNE, 2002). Without adequate support educators feel unsure and demotivated, and may become negative and pessimistic. Instead of viewing the situation from the perspective of 'my learner' and 'your learner,' all educators must be prepared to share the responsibility for the learning of all learners (Corbett, 2001).

Working as a team is a key to success. For some educators, especially those who feel that they lack the necessary training to teach learners with disabilities or who may be experiencing integration for the first time, the concept is frightening and intimidating (Flavell, 2001). Resource teachers should be prepared to discuss the problems they may experience with special needs children with other teachers and colleagues particularly the experience ones. They should be prepared to accept different suggestions and to admit that they do not have all the answers. Resource teachers must be prepared to learn from each other (Hyam, 2004).

According to Fullan (1993) resource teachers can be effectively prepared for inclusive education if they are prepared to be committed to the inclusion process. Hay (2003) points out that it seems obvious that inclusive education will function at its best if all parties from the mainstream and special schools (for example: principals governing bodies, etc.) are strongly involved in the process. A willingness to work together is a vital

prerequisite. Intensive participation of educators, principals and school boards from mainstream and special schools heightens the expertise and leads to mutual adaptations of goals at different levels. Educators who work together will have more opportunities to investigate and explore their beliefs and attitudes and instructional alternatives (Pugach & Johnston, 1995). Resource teachers could then be encouraged to develop a shared commitment and vision for future development towards inclusive education and will be more committed to achieving that goal (Downing, 2002).

School-Based Support Team

A school-based support team is an 'internal' support team, which is co-ordinated by a member of staff, preferably someone who has received training in either life skills education, counseling or learning support (remedial) (Eaton, 1996). According to White Paper 6 of The Republic of South Africa (DNE, 2001), the primary function of the school-based support team would be to support the learning and teaching process by identifying and addressing learner, educator and institutional needs. The team is made up of learners, their parents, educators and representatives from the community, organizations, NGO, neighboring schools, education institutions, and other indigenous support systems (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker, & Engelbrecht, 1999).

According to Foreman (1996), it is imperative that school-based support teams become an integral part of the education system. The teams focus should be prevention, rehabilitation, social integration and equalization of opportunities. The school-based support team is not there to remove the 'problem' learner from the classroom, but acts as a support system to empower and prepare the educator to succeed within the bounds of the classroom. The purpose of this team is to support educators who are experiencing

problems and are not adequately prepared to cope with special need children in the inclusive classrooms.

Key functions that relate to this includes (DNE, 2002, p.117.) various forms of classroom-based support, such as:

- Identifying special needs children and coordinating the curriculum.
- Collectively identifying educators' needs and in particular, barriers to learning at learner, educator, curriculum and institutional-levels.
- Collectively developing strategies to address these needs and barriers to learning. This should include a major focus on educator development and preparedness to deal with special needs children.
- Drawing in resources needed from within and outside the school to address these challenges.
- Direct learning support to special needs children; Keep confidential notes about cases to enable follow-up work to be carried out in an efficient way.
- Training and ongoing support to educators to respond to special needs children.

Once the team is established the members themselves need ongoing support and professional development to enable them to support the educators in their schools. Educators involved in meetings need to have “free” time and release from other responsibilities. The principles and practical aspects of the school-based support team need the full support of the staff and principal (Campher, 2003).

Support from District Level

Support from the district level can enhance resource teachers' preparedness for inclusive education. District support teams will provide the full range of education support services, such as professional development in curriculum and assessment to school-based support teams. When there is a need for more specialist advice and intervention, the district support team (support professionals), which consist of a core of education support personnel, will be capable of offering support and advice (Engelbrecht & Green, 2001). These teams can consist of school psychologists, special educators, guidance, counselors, speech and language specialists, occupational therapists and even doctors and nurses (Waiter-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin, & Williams, 2000).

In the past, the role of the district support teams/support professionals was curative, fragmented and problem orientated (Campher 2003). It has changed to being preventative, health promotive and developmental. There are several consultation approaches. Waiter-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, (2000) stated that teachers have to do behavioral consultation as an efficient means of implementing behavioural intervention and clinical consultation for identifying and assessing learner problems and describing specific strategies for resolution. Furthermore, mental health approach, which ensures the development of 'health promoting schools' should be accessed by the teacher. It includes accountability, legal and ethical practices and collaborative and consultative skills.

The main focus of the district-support team would be to ensure preparedness of educators, with a particular focus on curriculum and institutional development, and to

ensure that the teaching and learning framework and environment is responsive to the full range of learning needs (DNE, 2001).

Support of Special School Educators

According to White Paper 6 of The Republic of South Africa (DNE, 2001) special schools and settings will be converted to resource centres and integrated into district support teams so that they can provide specialised professional support in curriculum, assessment and instruction to neighbouring schools.

According to Bothma, Gravett and Swart (2000) services of existing structures through collaboration and teamwork must be addressed. Support and collaboration between ordinary school and special school educators can play a significant role in providing quality inclusive education in Ghana. Special school educators are encouraged to share knowledge with ordinary school educators who may otherwise not have access to this knowledge at the university. Despite existing individual skills and knowledge of both ordinary and special educators and personnel, they do not have the necessary collaborative skill to share their expertise effectively. The historic divisions between ordinary and special schools continue to hamper effective collaboration.

Consultation and collaboration functions fall into the domain of communication and collaboration planning and include exchanging learners' progress information, sharing diagnostic information and sharing responsibility for grading, participating in collaborative long and short-term educational planning and meeting with parent (Dettmer, Thurston, & Dyck, 1993). A common base of learner-related information for educators, who are jointly responsible for learners experiencing barriers to learning, provides a

platform for other collaboration roles, such as problem-solving (Pugach & Johnston, 1995).

Through the process of problem-solving, ordinary and special school educators use their collective expertise in an equal status relationship (Idol & West, 1987). This partnership allows for the proposal of alternative teaching strategies or supplementary instructional material by special educators in consultation with the general educator. Collaborative problem-solving may also entail the periodic observation of learners who are experiencing barriers to learning in ordinary classes, in order to identify areas of difficulty or monitor the success of intervention strategies (Bradley, King-Sears & Tessier-Switlick, 1997). The collaborative teamwork approach will also include aspects of training and support in consultation with various role-players (Idol, 1997). Special schools should be available for training and support of educators, psychologists and other support personnel. Training should include visits to special schools, a rotation of personnel or an exchange scheme, possible internship and practical experiences, lectures, notes and information, participation in multi-disciplinary teams and research opportunities. Information could be made available on the internet or by having a telephone "helpline" available for questions (Friend & Cook, 1996).

The collaborative roles of special and ordinary school educators include actively planning for skills transfer across settings, team teaching, directing small group instruction in ordinary schools, special education settings and training peer tutors (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997; Phillips & McCullough, 1990). A network between schools could assist in accumulating valuable knowledge and expertise as well as providing support.

As more learners who are experiencing barriers to learning are accommodated in inclusive classrooms, pre-service teachers ought to be equipped to collaborate with other professionals“ by providing a continuum of services. Hall, Campher, Smit, Oswald, and Engelbrecht, (1999) stated that services like early identification of barriers to learning and development as well as learning support programmes, study methods, life-skills, social skills and behaviour modification programmes are other valuable skills and strategies that need to be shared to improve learners' self-esteem. Parents and care-givers should be given Guidance and Counseling services on assessment of academic progress of both learners at risk and general school learners.

The Resource Teacher’s Role in the use of Assessment in Inclusive Classrooms

The move towards inclusive education requires novelty in assessment practices to foster participation of all learners. Traditionally, assessment was used to determine eligibility for special education services. Thus, emphasis was usually on formal type of assessment with the use of standardized tests. As a result, emphases have now shifted to the use of alternative assessments such as authentic assessment, performance-based assessment and portfolio assessment (Darling – Hammond, 1995).

Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessments are designed to provide students with a genuine rather than contrived learning experience. Students are encouraged to complete or demonstrate the desired behaviour in a real – life context. Thus, they demonstrate the behaviours in the same way as workers would do in out – of – school setting. Student are expected to plan, construct, and deliver an original response and to provide explanations and justifications

for the work done. Authentic assessments have four common characteristics. First, they are designed to be truly representative of performance in the field. For example students actually conduct science experiments rather than memorize disconnected facts about science. Second the criterion used in the assessment seeks to evaluate the essentials of performance against well-articulated standards. Additionally, students are encouraged to evaluate their own work against public standard that is taking the initiative to assess their own progress. Finally, students are expected to present their work publicly and orally (Darling – Hammond, 1995).

Performance – Based Assessment

Performance assessments are assessments which permit pupils to show what they can do in a real situation. Performance assessments gather evidence by observing and rating their performance or product. They are appropriate for all grade levels and across subject areas. Performance assessments are especially useful in subjects such as art, music and foreign language learning. This form of assessment is frequently used in early childhood and special education. This is because preschoolers and kindergarten and primary school pupils are limited in their communication skills. Therefore much assessment information is obtained by observing their performances and products. Performance assessment:

- Have a clear purpose which identifies the decision to be made from the performance assessment.
- Identify observable aspect of the pupil's performance or product that can be judged
- Provide an appropriate setting for eliciting and judging the performance or product.

- Provide a judgment product.
- Provide a judgment or score to describe performance.

Portfolio Assessment

A portfolio is a systematic collection of work demonstrating what the student has done over a period of time. It can contain examples of assessment, tests, essays, poem, and art work. A portfolio must be upgraded as the pupils' achievements and skills grow.

There are numerous types of portfolios which can be used to assess a student's progress based on a varied collection of the student's work (UNESCO, 2004). The items in a portfolio can include work samples, homework assignments, final products and classroom test results. Others are various works in progress, samples of tests completed, self-evaluation of the progress of learning and teachers' observation (Vaidya, 1997; UNESCO). These works can be collected in a carton box, folder, drawer, cabinets, bags or other suitable container (Pleiss et al., 2003; UNESCO, 2004). When a student completes an assessment activity or task, it is placed in the portfolio and these pieces of work in the portfolio contribute to an overall evaluation of student work. Portfolios therefore show a variety of assessment tasks the student has learned and the student progress over time (Pleiss, 2003). These authors further emphasize that in some instances, portfolios of students works can take the place of examinations or tests.

Portfolios have a number of benefits for both the teachers and learners. Among the benefits is that:

- Students become more engaged in knowing about their own progress since they are able to participate in the on-going assessment process.

- Portfolio shows a wide range of student's abilities over time unlike testing which shows only a narrow range of ability at a given point in time.
- Portfolio requires students routinely identify the strength and weakness of their work.
- Portfolio gives more reliable and dynamic data about students for teachers, parents and the student himself. Portfolios can thus be used to exhibit student work to their peers, parents and others.
- In addition, portfolio places emphasis on student improvement and achievement.
- Finally, it makes it possible to capture the learning process over time as well as the non-traditional strengths and talents which have not been well understood or valued by schools (Birgin & Baki, 2007; UNESCO, 2004; Pleiss et al., 2003; Vaidya, 1997).

Related Empirical Studies on Resource Teachers' Work towards Inclusion

Related studies from other parts of the world were used to support the current study. Literature clearly demonstrates the role of resource teachers 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 resource teachers' work towards inclusion concluded that resource teachers should provide teachers with knowledge about intercultural issues in school and society and engage teachers' commitment to working in a culturally diverse society. In this context, several basic teaching skills were felt to be particularly important in this context. These were;

- Classroom research skills and the ability to engage with academic research;

- Monitoring the effectiveness of their classroom interventions;
- Reflecting critically on their own practice;
- Working collaboratively (p. 112).

It was a descriptive survey which used questionnaire to collect data from 120 resource teachers who were randomly selected for the study.

Smith (2009) adds that no programme of study of initial teacher education can equip resource 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.

However, in another study, Molina (2006) found that theoretical classes and reading are not sufficient to modify negative attitudes teachers and students towards pupils with special educational needs. This is in agreement with many other researchers (Campbell, 2003; Forlin, 2001; Tait & Purdie, 2000). Loreman, (2007b) conclude that if resource teachers are going to develop positive attitudes towards inclusive education, they need opportunities for direct interaction with people with disabilities, instruction on policy and legislation relating to inclusive education, and opportunities to gain confidence in practical teaching situations with students with disabilities. Additionally, Bolling (2007) suggests that teacher educators should use case methodology to encourage individuals to reflect upon and possibly change their prior assumptions and beliefs.

Role of Resource Teachers in Inclusive Assessment

Also a study conducted by Twendle and Malki, (1999) on roles of resource teachers in inclusive assessment, revealed that training received by pre-service teachers at training have encouraged assessment practices that alienate children with disabilities to struggle to meet the learning and achievement targets of the general curriculum. Consequently, resource teachers do not teach towards differential learning outcomes since the approaches adopted by many teachers tend to favour the regular children. Inclusive curriculum should be about departing from the traditional approach that seeks to measure quality in terms of narrowly focused examination and test result. The study was qualitative in nature which used interviews as instrument in collecting data. It was a case study which involved six (6) resource teachers.

A Model for Examining Teacher Preparation Curricula for Inclusion

Cooper, Kurtts, Baber and Vallecorsa, (2008) researched on “A model for examining teacher preparation curricula for inclusion”, and drew the following conclusions to describe faculty members’ perceptions of their own knowledge and skill level as related to preparing teacher candidates to work with students with disabilities. 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 disabilities in general education settings, while 25.4% described themselves as “generally adequate.” Approximately 37% of the faculty surveyed described their knowledge and skill base for preparing teacher candidates to work with students with disabilities in general education settings as “somewhat or extremely limited”. In response to the item asking to what

extent faculty knowledge base and skill level reflected current best practice in teaching students 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 skill base “somewhat” reflected best practice. Approximately 26% of faculty reported that their knowledge base and skill level reflected current best practices for teaching students with disabilities in general education classrooms either very little or not at all (Cooper, Kurtts, Baber, & Vallecorsa, 2008).

Summary

There are few empirical studies available on role of resource teachers towards inclusive education in Ghana. The literature was reviewed under three (3) strands derived from the research questions. The thematic review approach was adopted to review the literature. Literature related to the sub-themes derived were reviewed to support the study. However, greater amount of the literature reviewed are not local. This therefore has created content gap in terms of literature on resource teachers’ role in inclusion in Ghana.

Previous research has not adequately explored issues concerning role of resource teacher towards inclusive education in Ghana. Several sections of the literature reviewed in this study are foreign and focused on evaluation and analysis of the role of resource teachers for inclusion. The current study tended to replicate the information from the literature to assess the situation in Ghana on the role of resource teachers toward inclusive education.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter focuses on research methodology. It describes the design, population, sample, sampling technique, instrumentation, validity of instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis.

Research Design

The researcher adopted the descriptive survey design for the study. The purpose of the research was to explore, describe and analyze the situation as it naturally occurs. The study sought to explore the role of resource teachers towards successful inclusive education in Ghana. Descriptive survey, according to Best (1970), is concerned with: conditions or relationships that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs, points of views, or attitude that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are being felt, or trends that are developed. The descriptive survey is concerned with how, what is or what exists is related to some preceding event that has influenced or affected a present condition or event. The design looks at individuals, group, institutions, methods and materials in order to describe, compare, contrast, classify and interpret the entities and the events that constitute the study. Qualitative techniques are most often used to collect, analyze and summarize the data.

The setting of the study was selected District in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The researcher selected this setting because she lives and understands the lives of the inhabitants, and the dynamics of such setting.

Population

The population for the study comprised all resource teachers in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The population was made up of about one hundred and fifty (150) resource teachers in the region.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. In all, 105 resource teachers were selected. The researcher selected the 105 resource teachers who are attached to some basic schools in the Greater Accra Region.

According to Creswell (2008), in purposive sampling, researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon. The standard used in choosing participants and sites is whether they are „information rich“ (p.125). Furthermore, Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2003) posited that in purposeful sampling the researcher handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgments of typicality. These authors state that the sample is chosen for a specific purpose.

Instrumentation

In this research the researcher employed a structured questionnaire to gather data. Creswell (2005) opined that every research aims to extend the boundaries of knowledge. This could be achieved by ensuring that methods used are in conformity with a theoretical framework and philosophical argument. The basis of the design of the instrument was the issue in the literature reviewed in chapter two of this particular study. This tool was considered because it is appropriate for survey designs, which offer a

researcher the opportunity to gather pertinent data about the cases involved in the study (Hancock, 2002).

Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988) define the questionnaire as "a prepared question form submitted to certain persons (respondents) with a view to obtaining information. Churchill and Peter (Schnetler, 1993) have shown that the questionnaire, as a measuring instrument, has the greatest influence on the reliability of research data. The characteristics of measurement are best controlled by the careful construction of the instrument. The questionnaire was sectionalized into five sections. Some descriptive statistics applications were used to analyze the data collected in the study. The descriptive statistical tools that the researcher used included tables, figures and percentages for graphical representation.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

According to De Vos (2001) validity refers broadly to the degree to which an instrument is doing what it is intended to do. Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument succeeds in measuring what it has set out to measure.

The validity of the questionnaire as a research instrument reflects the sureness with which conclusions can be drawn. It refers to the extent to which interpretations of the instrument's results, other than the ones the researcher wishes to make, can be ruled out. Establishing validity requires that the researcher anticipates the potential arguments that skeptics might use to dismiss the research results (Cooper, 1989; Dane, 1990).

To establish content validity, the researcher discussed with her supervisor thoroughly the items in the questionnaire if they have what it takes to measure what they

are intended to measure. Colleagues also read through the questionnaire to find tune some of the items.

The researcher employed the questionnaire as a method to find out the role of resource teacher. Due to the complexity of the respondents' varying contexts and conditions, one is never sure that the questionnaire devised will actually measure what it purports to measure. Items in the questionnaire cannot be measured like height, mass, length or size. From the interpretation of the results obtained and the sureness with which conclusions can be drawn, the researcher is, however, convinced that the questionnaire to a great extent did measure that which it was designed for.

Reliability

After series of discussions with my colleagues and other lecturers, a draft of the questionnaire was pilot tested. The purpose of the piloting, according to Oppenheim, (1992), Morrison (1993), Wilson and McLean (1994) cited by Cohen et al (2003) was to increase the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Furthermore, as Cohen et al (2003) suggest, piloting involves checking for clarity of items, instructions and layout as well as to gain feedback on the questionnaire. Additionally, piloting fosters the elimination of ambiguities or difficulties in wording. The pilot study was conducted to determine whether questionnaires would be understood by the sample to be studied. A cover letter explaining the purpose of the study, soliciting co-operation of respondents and assuring them of confidentiality of information was attached to each of the questionnaire.

Results from the pilot study informed the researcher on whether the participants understood the questions they were being asked. This offered the researcher an idea of improving or modifying the instruments. Changes were made on some items that respondents had indicated they needed further clarification on.

Data Analysis

This study used descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) to analyse the data collected. The agreed and the strongly agreed were collapsed to form “Agree” while the disagree and strongly disagree responses were merged to form “disagree” response. The total responses were converted into percentages for simple analysis. Simple frequency table was used to present the data. The researcher used simple statistics which involved the use of; frequency table, percentages and figures in analyzing the data.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the data generated from the survey. The data were analysed to reflect the research question: what are the roles of resource teachers towards successful inclusive education in Ghana? In an attempt to answer the main research question, other minor questions were formulated to generate responses. The responses to each specific question were ranked only on the “agree” and “disagree”. The ranked items were presented and commented on.

Knowledge, Skills and Competencies Resource Teachers Require to Function in Inclusive Setting

The table 4.1 below shows the views of resource teachers on knowledge, skills and competencies resource teachers need to function in inclusive classroom.

Table 4.1: Resource Teachers view on Knowledge Skills and Competencies needed to Functioning Inclusive Setting

Table 4.1 below represents the responses of resource teachers concerning their view on knowledge, skills and competencies needed to function in inclusive setting.

S/N	Items	Responses		
		Agree %	Disagree %	Total
1	Resource teachers know how to successfully do screening and identification	80 (76.2)	25(23.8)	105
2	Resource teachers know the importance of early identification.	100 (95.2)	5 (4.8)	105
3	Resource teachers are aware of the causes and manifestations of learning and behavior problems.	95 (90.5)	15 (9.5)	105
4	Resource teachers are knowledgeable in instructional strategies for children with disabilities in inclusive classroom.	50 (47.6)	55 (52.4)	105
5	Resource teachers can use informal methods of gathering information.	63 (60)	42 (40)	105
6	Resource teachers are skillful in recording and discussing information concerning special needs children.	78 (74.3)	27 (25.7)	105
7	Resource teachers know the importance of valuing diversity among pupils in classroom.	95 (90.1)	10 (9.9)	105
8	Resource teachers are competent in teaching children with disabilities in classroom.	50 (47.6)	55 (52.4)	105
9	Resource teachers are knowledgeable on the appropriate instructional classroom management skills.	65 (61.9)	40 (38.1)	105
10	Resource teachers are knowledgeable, skillful and competent in instructional resources and assistive technology for children with special needs.	40 (38.1)	65 (61.9)	105
Total		715 (68.2)	335 (31.8)	105

Source: Field data (2014)

From table 4.1, the findings showed that 80 (76.2%) of the resource teachers in the study agreed that, resource teachers know how to successfully do screening and identification. However, the minority 25 (23.8%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement. Furthermore, 100 (95.2%) of the respondents posited that resource teachers know the importance of early identification while 5 (4.8%) opposed the statement.

Additionally, Table 4.1 revealed that the majority 95 (90.1%) of the resource teacher are aware of the causes and manifestations of learning and behavior problems. However, the minor 15 (9.5%) of the resource teachers are of deferring view. Moreover, the minority 50 (47.6%) of the resource teachers agreed to the statement that resource teachers are knowledgeable in instructional strategies for children with disabilities in inclusive classroom. Meanwhile, the majority 55 (52.4%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement.

Furthermore, the majority, 63 (60%) of the resource teacher believe that they can use informal methods of gathering information to collect data on special needs individuals. While the minority 42(40%) disagreed with the statement. Again, the majority 78 (74.3%) agreed that resource teachers were skillful in recording and discussing information concerning special needs children while the minority 27 (25.7%) disagreed with the statement.

Moreover, the greater number 75 (90.1%) of the resource teacher agreed with the statement that resource teachers know the importance of valuing diversity among pupils in the classroom whereas the minority 10 (9.9%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. In addition, the majority 55 (52.4%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement that resource teachers are competent in teaching children with disabilities in the

classroom while the minority 50 (47.6%) of the resource teacher disagreed with the statement.

Table 4.1 again reveal that the majority 105 (61.9%) of the resource teachers are knowledgeable on appropriate instructional classroom management skills whereas the minority 40 (38.1%) disagreed with the statement. Furthermore, 65 (61.9%) of the resource teacher disagreed with the statement that resource teacher are skillful, knowledgeable and competent in instructional resources and assistive technology for children with special educational needs whereas the minority 40 (38.1%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement.

In summary, Table 4.1 reveals that the majority (68.2%) of the resource teachers agreed that resource teachers have the skills, knowledge and competencies needed to function in an inclusive classroom.

Roles of Resource Teachers in the use of Assessment in Inclusive Classroom

Table 4.2 below shows the views of resource teacher on their role in assessing children in their inclusive classroom.

Table 4.2: Roles of resource Teachers in the use of Assessment in Inclusive Classroom

Table 4.2 shows the responses of the resource teachers' role they play in the use of assessment in inclusive classroom.

S/N	Items	Responses		
		Agree %	Disagree %	Total
1	Resources teachers are knowledgeable on how to select criteria for evaluation of work sample.	40 (38.1)	65(61.9)	105
2	Resource teachers involve parents in the portfolio assessment process to underscore the importance to the pupils.	30 (28.6)	75 (71.4)	105
3	Resource teachers are aware of how to schedule and conduct portfolio conference with pupils.	50 (47.6)	55 (52.4)	105
4	Resource teachers know how to encourage pupils to do self-evaluation.	80 (76.2)	25 (23.8)	105
5	Resource teachers are competent in identifying observable aspect of the pupils' performance.	90 (85.7)	15 (14.3)	105
6	Resource teachers are skillful in providing an appropriate setting for eliciting and judging pupils' performance.	60 (57.1)	45 (42.9)	105
7	Resource teachers knowledgeable and skillful in designing assessment task which is truly representative of performance in the field of study.	60 (57.1)	45 (42.9)	105
Total		410 (55.8)	325 (44.2)	735(100)

Source: Field Survey (2014)

From Table 4.2, the findings reveal that the majority 65 of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers are knowledgeable on how to select criteria for evaluation of work sample while 40(38.1%) of the respondents agreed with the statement. Again, 75(71.4%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers involve parents in the portfolio assessment process to underscore the importance to the pupils. Meanwhile, the minority 30(28.6%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement.

Furthermore, 55(52.4%) of the resources teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers are aware of how to schedule and conduct portfolio conference with pupils while 50(47.6%) of the respondents agreed with statement. Moreover, 80(76.2%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that resource teachers know how to encourage pupils to do self evaluation.

Additionally, the majority 90(85.7) of the resource teachers are competent in identifying observable aspect of the pupil's performance whereas the minority 15(14.3%) disagreed with the statement. Again, 60(57.1%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement that resource teachers are skillful in providing an appropriated setting for eliciting and judging pupil's performance. However, the minority 45(42.9%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

Moreover, the majority 60(57.1%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement that resource teachers were knowledgeable and skillful in designing assessment task which was truly representative of performance in the field of study. However, 45 of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

In summary, (55.8%) of the respondents agreed that resource teachers take active part in assessing individuals with special needs in inclusive settings.

4.4: Role of resource teachers for collaboration in inclusive setting.

Table 4.3 below shows the views of resource teachers on their role in collaboration with parents and other professionals in inclusive assessment.

Table 4.3: Role of resource Teachers for Collaboration in Inclusive Setting

Table 4.3 shows the responses of resource teachers on the role they play in collaborating with parents and other professional in the inclusion setting.

S/N	Items	Responses		
		Agree %	Disagree %	Total
1	Resources teachers are competent in the formation of school-based support team.	35 (33.3)	70 (66.7)	105
2	Resource teachers are skillful in doing clinical consultation for identifying and assessing learning problems and describing interventions.	47 (44.8)	58 (55.2)	105
3	Resource teachers know how to partner with parent in educating special needs children.	60 (57.1)	45 (42.9)	105
4	Resource teachers know that parents are to be offered opportunity to be part of the decision making process in school	80 (76.2)	25 (23.8)	105
5	Resource teachers are competent and skillful in collaborative teaching skills.	24 (22.9)	81 (77.1)	105
6	Resource teachers are skillful in collaborative evaluation.	24 (22.9)	87 (77.1)	105
7	Resource teachers are skillful in collaborative lesson planning.	20 (19)	85 (81)	105
Total		290(39.5)	445 (60.5)	735(105)

Source: Field Survey (2014)

Findings from Table 4.3 reveal that 70(66.7%) of the resource teachers disagreed with statement that resource teachers are competent in the formation of school based support team while 35(33.3%) of the respondent agreed with the statement. Again, the majority 58(55.2%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers are skillful in doing clinical consultation for identifying and assessing learning problems and describing interventions.

Additionally, the majority 60(57.1%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement that resource teachers know how to partner with parents in educating special needs children whereas 80(76.2%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement that resource teachers know that parents are to be offered opportunity to be part of the decision making process in school.

Further the majority 81(77.1%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers are competent and skillful in collaborative teaching skills while 24(22.9%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement.

Moreover, 81(77.1%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers are skillful in collaborative evaluations whereas 24(22.9%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement. Again, the majority 85(81%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers are skillful in collaborative lesson planning. Meanwhile, the minority 20(19%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement.

In conclusion, Table 4.3 reveals that the majority (60.5%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers collaborate with parent and other professionals in the promotion of inclusive education

Table 4.4: Summary of the Views of the Resource Teachers in the Survey

Table 4.4 shows the summary of the responses of the resource teachers on the three thematic areas used to collect the data.

S/N	Items	Responses		
		Agree %	Disagree %	Total
1	Resources teachers have the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to function in an inclusive setting.	715 (68.2)	335(31.8)	100
2	Resource teachers play active role in assessing individuals with special needs in inclusive setting.	410 (55.8)	325 (44.2)	100
3	Resource teachers collaborate with parents and other professionals in an inclusive setting.	290 (39.5)	445 (60.5)	100

Source: Summary of tables 4.1, 2&3)

Findings from Table 4.4 shows that the majority (68.2%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement that resource teachers have the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to function in an inclusive setting.

Furthermore, the majority (55.8%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement that resource teachers play active role in assessing individuals with special needs in an inclusive setting. However, the minority (44.2%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement.

Moreover, the majority (60.5%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers collaborate with parents and other professionals in an inclusive setting whereas the minority (39.5%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This study aimed at finding answers to questions with respect to resource teacher's role in inclusive education. Though the study went through some challenges, it provided enough information which will serve as bench mark for resource teachers' role towards successful inclusive education.

Discussion

This section set out to discuss the findings of the study. The discussion has been done under the main research question: What are the main roles of resource teacher in inclusive education in Ghana? Out of the main research question, other three (3) research questions were raised to guide the study. Thus the findings had been discussed under these research questions one after the other.

Research Question 1: What knowledge, skills and competencies do resource teachers need to successfully function in inclusive setting?

The resource from the analysis in table 4.1 indicated that the majority 80 (76.2%) of the resource teachers in the study agreed that, resource teachers know how to successfully do screening and identification. This means that majority of the resource teachers in the study here been screening or separating individuals with disabilities from those without disabilities. This therefore gives the platform to the resource teachers to identify those suspected to be having special needs. This revelation is in line with Hall

and Engelbrecht (1999) who posited that knowledge, skills and competencies are vital for successful inclusive education. Again, Kapp (1994) reiterated that resource teachers should be aware of the identification procedures that may be employed, such as screening, and criteria referenced tests. As a result, if these resource teachers are not able to screen and identifying individuals with special needs, these individuals will not be captured to receive the necessary assistance to fit into the inclusive system.

Furthermore, majority 95 (90.5%) of the resource teachers are aware of the causes and manifestations of learning and behaviour problems. This implies that resource teachers have what it takes to educate parents and other stakeholders in education about the causes of disabilities among children. Again, the manifestations and the warning signs of learning and behavior problems are also known to the resource teachers. This, resource teachers are able to help regular classroom teachers to identify learning and behavior problems among pupils in the classroom. The acquisition of knowledge by resource teachers about “causes and manifestations of learning and behavior problems” will put them in a better position to become more accepting as they learn more about the abilities and problems of “special learners” (Levis & Doorlag, 1991). However, understanding the causes and manifestations of learning and behavior problems of learners by resource teachers would created the avenue for understanding and accepting individuals with special needs in the inclusive classroom.

Moreover, majority 63 (60%) of the resource teachers believe that they can use informal methods of gathering information to collect data on special individuals in the classrooms. This means that resource teachers have been using methods like, observation, interview, checklist, rating, scales, anecdotal records and etc. to gather information on

special needs children. These means offer resource teachers easier and cheaper medium in collecting data. This revelation supports Godbard (1995) opinion that resource teachers should be equipped with relevant skills and competencies in gathering relevant data in connection with the learner's problem by means of informal media such as observation and home visit. This method offers resource teachers the opportunity to get first hand information in its natural state about learners in inclusive settings.

Additionally, the greater number 95(95.1%) of the resource teacher agreed with the statement that resource teachers know the importance of valuing diversity among pupils in the classroom. This means that resource teachers respect individual differences and collaborate diversity. Resource teachers do not work down upon special needs individuals. According to Hyam, (2004, pp. 36-41) resource teachers will need to have a working knowledge of the skills, values, principles, methods and procedures of area or phrase of expertise; know about different teaching methods and use them according to the needs of the learners in the class, have understanding and knowledge of his/her area of expertise.

Table 4.1 further revealed that the majority 55(52.4%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement that resource teachers are competent in teaching children with disabilities in the classroom. This means that children with disabilities in the regular classrooms with resource teachers or consultation are not left out in the teaching and learning process. The resource teachers assist the regular teachers in dealing/handling their specific needs. This therefore creates an enabling and conducive environment for individuals with diversity to have equal access, equal opportunity and equal participation in all the classroom activities. Elliot (1996) points out that mainstream classroom

educators must be prepared to buy into the philosophy that if material is presented appropriately, all learners can learn; it may have to be at their own rate, but they still can learn. Resource teachers must be willing to look at the same situation in a different way and even risk failure in order to grow, and to work at obstacles as opportunities.

However, 65 (61.9%) of the resources teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers are skillful, knowledgeable and competent in instructional resource and assistive technology for children with special educational needs. This implies that resource teachers are not technologically inclined to use both scientific and technological means in preceding their duties. They still use the old, traditional approach in carrying out their duties. This attitude therefore put individuals with special needs in an obscure corner in terms of science and technology. Thus the findings and the projections made by resource teachers are scientifically and technologically questionable.

Meanwhile, Nell (1996) posited that scientific and technological knowledge includes educators being adequately prepared to access special needs child to adapt curriculum content to the needs of the learners in the classroom, to utilize special orthodidactic devices and instructional aids as well as medical and Para- medical assistive devices require by some of the special needs children. It also includes the use of appropriate teaching strategies based on the learner's total level of functioning. Lewis and Doorlag (1991) maintain that limited knowledge and experience can lead to the development of prejudice and non-accepting attitudes and to a natural discrimination against learners who are different.

Research Question 2: What role do research teachers play in the use of assessment in inclusive classrooms?

Findings from 4.2 reveals that the majority 65 (61.9) of the resource teachers in the study disagreed that they are knowledgeable on how to select criteria for evaluation of work sample. This means that as part of their routine duties, they are not able to do work sample analysis to identify the patterns of error in pupils work done previously. However, when this is done, it gives the class teachers holistic picture of the pupils academic progress. Thus the necessary remediation's are easily put in place to curb the error patterns identified. This revelation supports what Darling-Hammond (1995) reiterated. He posited that in assessment, learners must be involved in the evaluation process.

Again, the majority 75(71.4%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers involve parents in the portfolio assessment process to underscore the importance of the pupils. This implies that most of the resource teachers do not involve parents of the individuals with disabilities when assessing them. The parents are kept out in the dark. Thus the principles of parental involvement in assessment are defiled to the later. This therefore restrains parents from knowing and understanding their children's work. When parents are not involved in pupils assessment to give them the necessary feedback, their level of participation and interest in their wards education drops.

Again, the majority 55(52.4%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers are aware of how to schedule and conduct portfolio conference with pupils. This implies that majority of the resources teachers in the Ghanaian schools do not have the technical know-how in conducting portfolio

assessment conference. This means that, resource teachers are still using the traditional methods of assessing learners in schools. Their level of knowledge in alternate assessment is on the lower side. There are numerous types of portfolios which can be used to assess a students' progress based on a varied collection of the students work (UNESCO, 2004). The items in a portfolio can include work samples, homework, assignments, final products and classroom test results. According UNESCO (2004), resource teachers are to sit with pupils and their parents (conference) to discuss the progress and difficulties pupils encounter in assessment. This helps parents to get feedback and actively involved in their wards education.

However, the majority 80(76.2%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement that resource teachers know how to encourage pupils to do self-evaluation. One of the cardinal principles in inclusive education is the ability of pupils to do self-evaluation (Vaidya, 1997). This exercise therefore gives pupils opportunities to know and reflect on their own work which in effect motivates them to learn.

Additionally, higher number 60(57.1%) of the resource teachers agreed with the statement that resource teachers are knowledgeable and skillful in designing assessment task which is truly representative of performance in the field of study. This means that resource teachers have been assisting regular classroom teachers in designing assessment task to collect comprehensive data on their progress. These works can be collected in a carton box, folder, drawer, cabinets, bags or other suitable container (Pleiss et al., 2003; UNESCO, 2004). When a student completes an assessment activity or task, it is placed in the portfolio and these pieces of work in the portfolio contribute to an overall evaluation

of student work. Portfolio therefore show a variety of assessment task the student has learned and the student progress over time (Pleiss et al., 2003).

Research Question 3: To what extent do resource teachers collaborate with other professionals and parents to enhance the inclusion of pupils with special needs in inclusive settings?

Findings from table 4.3 shows that the majority 70 (66.7%) of the resource teachers are not competent in the formation of school-based support team. This means that inclusion is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. The degree of support the educator receives is the most powerful predictor of positive attitudes towards inclusive education sharing information and working as a collaborative team can serve to alleviate concerns and resistance (Downing, 2002: 1989).

According to Foreman (1996) it is imperative that the school- based support teams become an integral part of the education system. The teams focus is on prevention, rehabilitation, social integration and equalization of opportunities. The school-based support team is not there to remove the “problem” learners from the classroom but acts as a support system to empower and prepare the educator to succeed within the bounds of the classroom.

Again, the majority 58 (55.2%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers are skillful in doing clinical consultation for identifying and assessing learning problems and describing intervention. This implies that majority of resource teachers on the field are using the traditional methods to identify and access pupils learning problems. Some of the traditional approach used by resource teachers in

identifying learning and behavior needs includes: observation and interviews. As posited by Engelbrecht and Green (2001), resource teachers need knowledge on clinical consultation so that when there is a need for more specialist guidance and intervention, the teachers can draw support from personnel who will be capable of offering support and advice.

However, the majority 60 (57.1%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that resource teachers know how to partner with parents in educating special needs children. This means resource teachers involve parents in their activities which supports the principles of parental involvement in education. Most parents see individuals with special needs as problematic and shame to their families. They are of the view that such individuals have nothing good to offer in terms of education and social development. This perception and attitudes of some parents towards individuals with disabilities deepens the practices of exclusion. According to Obi-Banku (2004), when professionals and for that matter schools/resource teachers take decisions single handedly, the non-involvement of parents in decision making about their children usually lead to less commitment to the educational achievement and the advancement of children with special needs.

Again, the majority 81(77.1%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that resource teachers are skillful and competent in collaborating teaching skills. Resource teaching and for that matter teaching is based on the principle of collaboration or team work. Within the ambient of team work, ideas are shared in the principle of selecting; teaching and learning materials (TLM), content, learning environment, methodology and etc. This therefore implies that certain duties/roles that seem impossible

to be overcome are left unattempted which in effect, are detrimental to the academic upliftment of individuals with disabilities. According to Schumn and Vaughn (1995), resource teachers are to be trained to use collaborative teaching skills through the collaborative teaching model.

Finally, the greater number 85 (81%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers are skillful in collaborative lesson planning and evaluation. This means that resource teachers plan and evaluate their lessons or duties single-handedly. They lack the requisite techniques in collaborating or liaising with other professionals in selecting the assessment technique, instrument, data collection procedure, placement options and etc. According to Downing (2002), collaborative planning and evaluation of students can be used as a means of demonstrating how inclusive practices can be done effectively. Sharing information and working as a collaborative team can serve to alleviate concerns and resistance.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study is to explore the role resource teachers play towards the development of inclusive education in Ghana. The researcher raised three (3) research questions to help achieve this purpose. These questions were drawn into themes to review literature to guide the study. The descriptive survey was used as adopted to provide a framework of the study. Through purposive sampling technique, the researcher selected and involved a sample of one-hundred and five (105) resource teachers. A thirty (30) item self-completed, closed-ended questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The study employed descriptive statistics (simple frequencies, tables and figures) to analyse the data. Based on the analysis and discussions made, summary, conclusions and recommendations were made.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher drew the following conclusions from table 4.4.

- A total of (68.2%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that resource teachers have the skills, knowledge and competencies needed to function in an inclusive setting.
- The majority (55.8%) of the resource teachers who answered the questionnaire agreed with the statement that resource teachers play active role in assessing individuals with special needs in an inclusive setting.

- Finally, the majority (60.5%) of the resource teachers disagreed with the statement that resource teachers collaborate with parents and other professionals in an inclusive setting.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the researcher made the following recommendations.

- Resource teachers are to be given in-service training and orientation on how to collaborate with professionals and parents in managing individuals with disabilities in the inclusive setting.
- Resource teachers should be given special training on the use of technology and assistive devices to enhance their role in this technological era.

Implication for Further Studies

The researcher suggests that there should be further studies to cover the challenges faced by resource teachers in the inclusive settings.

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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTION LETTER



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

June 24, 2014.

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.....
.....

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I write to introduce to you Ms. Sarah Yalley a student at the Department of Special Education of with index number 7120150017 in the University of Education, Winneba.

She is currently working on his thesis: **“The role of resource teachers in inclusive education in Ghana. (Greater Accra Region) in UEW”**.

She will need your assistance to access data from your Department. I should be grateful if every support is given her to enable her succeed in this endeavour.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Samuel K. Hayford'.

SAMUEL K. HAYFORD (PhD)
Ag. HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESOURCE TEACHERS ON THEIR ROLE
TOWARDS SUCCESSFUL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN GHANA**

Dear Colleague,

I am an M.E.D student of University of Education, Winneba. I am conducting a research on the topic The Role of Resource Teachers towards Successful Inclusive Education in Ghana.

I would be very grateful if you would respond to these questions for me. I assure you of every confidentiality. Thank you very much for accepting to answer the questions.

Yours faithfully,

.....

Yalley Sarah

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESOURCE TEACHERS ON THEIR ROLE TOWARDS SUCCESSFUL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN GHANA

SECTION A

Bio-data on the respondents

INSTRUCTION

Please tick in the correct box that best represents your views on the statement below;

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Gender | Male | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Female | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Age Range | 20-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 31-40 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 41-50 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Academic Qualification | Cert A | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 1 st Degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 2 nd Degree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Any Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Teaching Experience | 1-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 6-10 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 11-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 16-20 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 21-35 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 26-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SECTION B

Knowledge, Skills and Competencies Instruction:

Below is a table to be completed. It involves statement about your views on knowledge, skills and competencies resource teachers require to enable them function in an inclusive setting on a 4 point scale of 1,2,3 and 4. The figures stand for the following;

- 1 (Strongly Disagree), 2. (Disagree),
 3. (Agree), and 4. (Strongly Agree).

For each of the statements, indicate with a tick (✓) the one that best reflects your views.

Knowledge, Skills and Competencies

S/N	STATEMENTS	SD	D	A	SA
5.	Resource teachers know how to successfully do screening and identification				
6.	Resource teachers know the importance of early identification				
7.	Resource teachers are aware of the causes and manifestations of learning and behavior problems.				
8.	Resource teachers can use informal methods of gathering information.				
9.	Resource teachers are knowledgeable in instructional strategies for children with disabilities in inclusive classroom.				
10.	Resource teachers are skillful in the usage of appropriate behavioural intervention skills in inclusive class.				
11.	Resource teachers are skillful in recording and discussing information concerning special needs children.				

12.	Resource teachers know the essence of valuing diversity among pupils in the classroom.				
13.	Resource teachers are competent in teaching children with disabilities in classroom.				
14.	Resource teachers are knowledgeable on the appropriate instructional classroom management skills.				
15.	Resource teachers are knowledgeable, skillful and competent instructional resources and assistive technology for children with special needs.				



SECTION C

Roles of resource teachers in the use of assessment in inclusive classroom

Instruction

Below is a table to be completed. It involves statements about your views on the role of resource teachers in the use of assessment in inclusive classroom on a 4 point scale of 1,2,3 and 4. The figures stand for the following;

1(Strongly Disagree), 2. (Disagree), 3. (Agree), and 4. (Strongly Agree).

For each of the statements, indicate with a tick (√) the one that best reflects your views.

Role of resource Teachers in the use of Assessment

S/N	STATEMENTS	SD	D	A	SA
16.	Resource teachers are knowledgeable on how to select criteria for evaluation of work sample.				
17.	Resource teachers involve parents in the portfolio assessment process to underscore the importance to the pupils.				
18.	Resource teachers are aware of how to schedule and conduct portfolio conference with pupils.				
19.	Resource teachers know how to encourage pupils to do self-evaluation: students take responsibility for portfolio.				
20.	Resource teachers are competent in identifying observable aspect of the pupils' performance or product that can be judged.				
21.	Resource teachers are skillful in providing an appropriate setting for eliciting and judging pupils' performance.				
22.	Resource teachers are knowledgeable and skillful in designing assessment task which is truly representative of performance in the field of study.				
23.	The resource teacher knows how to collaborate with other professionals to form multi-disciplinary team in assessing pupils in inclusive class.				

SECTION D

Collaboration in inclusive setting

Instruction

Below is a table to be completed. It involves statement about your views on the extent resource teachers collaborate with other professional and parents to enhance the inclusive of pupils with special needs in inclusive settings on a 4 point scale of 1,2,3 and 4. The figures stand for the following;

- 1(Strongly Disagree), 2. (Disagree),
3. (Agree), and 4. (Strongly Agree).

For each of the statements, indicate with a tick (√) the one that best reflects your views.

Collaboration in Inclusive Setting

S/N	STATEMENTS	SD	D	A	SA
24.	Resource teachers are complete in the formation of school-based support team.				
25.	Resource teachers are skillful in doing clinical consultation for identifying and assessing learning problems and describing interventions.				
26.	Resource teachers know how to partner with parents in educating special needs children.				
27.	Resource teachers know that parents are to be offered opportunity to be part of the decision making process in the school.				
28.	Resource teachers are competent and skillful in collaborative teaching skills.				
29.	Resource teachers are skillful in collaborative evaluation.				
30.	Resource teachers are skillful in collaborative lesson planning.				