

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE
EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES IN KINDERGARTEN SCHOOLS IN THE LA
NKWANTANANG MUNICIPALITY**



2023

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**A dissertation in the Department of Early Childhood Education,
Faculty of Educational Studies, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirement for the award of the degree of
Master of Education
(Early Childhood Education)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

AUGUST, 2023

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

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

Signature:

Date:

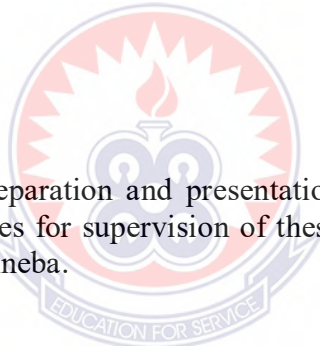
Supervisor's Declaration

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

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Michael Subbey

Signature:

Date:



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband, Mr. Oduro Yeboah Nicholas.



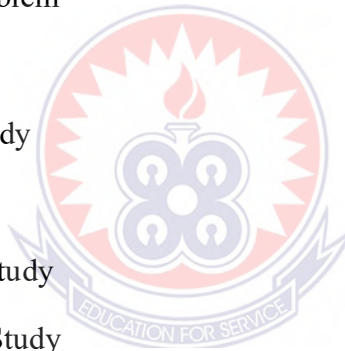
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I first of all thank God almighty for how far he has brought me. I express my appreciation to the following individual who encouraged me to finish with the work. My husband Mr. Oduro Yeboah Nicholas, my friend, Elizabeth Amfoh. The greatest of all goes to my supervisor, Dr. Michael Subbey, Senior lecturer with the Department of Early Childhood Education. I am very grateful for everything.



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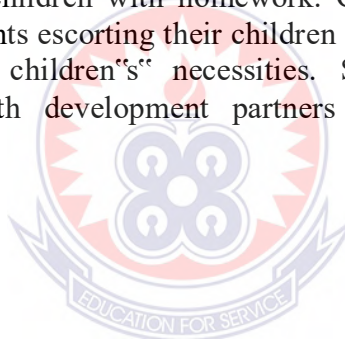
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ABSTRACT

The study set out to investigate parental involvement in the implementation of inclusive educational practices in kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality. Case study design was adopted for the study. Purposive sampling was used in selecting the 20 participants for the study. Data obtained from interviews and focus group discussions were processed and analyzed using thematic Analysis. Data from audio recorded interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed and translated from Ga and Twi to English to ease the process of analysis. After the transcription as per category of data, the recorded information was written down systematically and chronologically citing important aspects of the dialogue. The study was based on worked with children with special needs and presented a model of partnership between parents and school management. Methods for data collection included focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. The study findings showed that parents had interest in supporting their children's inclusive education through buying scholastic materials, fees and food contributions. Poverty was the major barrier to parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities. It was revealed that lack of knowledge in Braille and braille writing slates by parents; severity of the children's disabilities to some extent prevented them from helping their children with homework. Conclusions drawn from the study among others include parents escorting their children with disabilities to and from school and providing for their children's necessities. Similar recommendations include government to work with development partners to empower parents of CWDs economically.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In the world today, inclusive education has gained popularity and high significance such that all countries have made it accessible to all. In Africa, some countries such as Ghana, South Africa, Uganda and Lesotho have a national policy on inclusive education (Jevnes, 2011). In the Ghanaian context, the policy draws on a number of national and international commitments to the provision of education for all. At the national level, it confirms government pronouncements in the 1992 Constitution to ensure that every Ghanaian is afforded equitable opportunity in terms of access to quality education. It draws on other national legal documents including the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA), the Education Strategic Plan (2010-2020), the Disability Act (2006) Act 715, and the Education Act (2008) ACT 778. It is also based on the international commitments to education to which Ghana is a signatory including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990); the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990).

The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 1993); the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994); the Millennium Development Goals (2000); the Dakar Framework for Action (2000); and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). Ghana has been addressing the educational needs of Children with Disabilities (CWDs) as part of Universal Primary Education (UPE) since 1992. The Ghanaian government is also a signatory to various international conventions and declarations such as UN declaration of

the rights of children (1948), World Conference on Special Needs Education (2014), World Conference on Education for All (EFA, 1990), Dakar Forum for Action (2000) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).

Peek (2002) stated that, it is necessary to build a strong foundation during a child's elementary years of education. Learning of culture, values and language by children starts from home and from parents. Parents are therefore tasked to take full responsibility of their children to become successful in school and in life. Education is a lifelong process aiming at making a person a well behaved and accepted in a social setting and not the mere acquiring of academic qualification. Epstein (2001) says the type of home climate whether positive or negative have effect on the child's emotional functioning and academic performance. In order for children to realize their full academic potentials in school, they need to be well socialized, obtain psychological traits, behavioural patterns and cognitive training from home and their parents in general. Parents' communication with children at home can improve their vocabulary, building their receptive and expressive language skills. Pierre-Velis (1999) established a strong relationship between good parenting and personality development traits such as achievement, orientation, cooperation and self-regulation. Good parents take responsibility of their child's physical, intellectual, social, emotional needs and welfare needs. When parents are able to meet the needs of children, they enjoy good family life and become useful people to the family, leading to better academic and social successes and greater achievement.

In the past two decades, the role of parents in pre-school education is significant as parents are the primary caregivers of children with special needs. They contribute greatly to their children's developmental growth and education. Warger (2001) recognizes the

importance of parental involvement in the personal and educational growth and development of children with special needs especially the pre-school years. Parents play active roles in their children's education, improvement in children behaviour, academic and social wellbeing in general. Turnbull and Turnbull (2001) argued that, parents contribute to reaching their children's developmental and educational goals. The transition to pre-school marks the beginning of an important relationship between home and school, children first experiences in schools are often parents first experience as critical stakeholders in their formal schooling as states by Senechal (2006).

Epstein, Sanders, Simon, Salinas, Jansorn and Van Voorhis (1997) revealed that, regardless of economic, ethnic or educational backgrounds, there is a strong relationship between children's educational benefits and various forms of family support ranging from encouragement, involvement in at-home activities and other school activities. Good parental involvement promotes higher test scores and grades, better school attendance, higher graduation rates and a more positive attitude towards school. Supporting young children's early development and learning requires parents to form partnership with schools as noted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2001). Early studies support the position that all types of parent involvement are beneficial as stated by Baker and Soden (1998). Trotman (2001) noted that, whether it is a routine task or a task that seems to be insurmountable, collaboration among parents, teachers promise positive outcomes. Where empowerment exists, there is a positive student and parent response, as well as improvement in motivation and self-confidence in learners. Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski and Apostoleris (1997) conceptualized three dimensions of parental involvement based on how parent-child interaction affects

children's education and development. Behavioral involvement refers to parents' publications representing their interest in their child's education, such as attending an open house or volunteering at the school. Personal involvement includes parent-child interactions that communicate positive attitudes about school and the importance of education to the child. Cognitive or Intellectual involvement refers to behaviors that promote children's skill development and knowledge, such as reading books and going to museums.

Epstein and Becker (2001) argued that school, family and community are important "spheres of influence" on children's development and that a child's educational development is enhanced when these three environments work collaboratively towards shared goals. Epstein encouraged schools to create greater overlap between the school, home and community through parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaboration with the community. The implementation of these activities can help improve students' achievements and experiences in schools. Epstein et al. (2009) indicated that, lack of parental involvement is blamed for low students' achievement or engagement in learning, therefore teachers are often tasked to communicate with parents to help motivate students with special learning needs and encourage parents to become more involved in the school and their children's education.

Although researchers have studied and discussed the parental involvement extensively in the literature and schools use models to implement parental involvement strategies, schools continue to struggle with increasing parental involvement with children of low socio-economic statuses. Ghana, through the Ministry of Education has realized the importance of parental involvement in education hence has made it an integral

component of the educational system. Beaty (1983) described a preschooler as a small person aged between three to five years. However, the ages of special needs like hearing impaired preschoolers in Ghana ranged from four to ten years. This may be due to the late identification of the child by parents and professionals. Furthermore, some parents are not aware of the existence of pre-schools. According to Keyser et al. (2006), parental involvement in their children's education is also beneficial to parents because it offers them mediums to have information, listening and support in an atmosphere of effective relationship. Parents and families get more information concerning child development as they interact with practitioners (Keyser et al., 2006). The information helps parents to strategize ways to respond to children's needs as and when they arise. This way parents know their involvement helps in addressing both short and long-term issues relating to their children's education. Besides, parent's trust and confidence increase in the relationship they have with practitioners bearing in mind their children's security in the educational process.

Practitioners who involve a great deal of parents understand how a child's classroom and school activities are rooted in school and community life. This therefore help practitioners to know more about children ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and provide the necessary skills and support needed for a child's schema. As the quality of the setting is enhanced through the benefits practitioners gain from the involvement of parents, the society is adversely affected. Schools that practice a long lasting and a comprehensive parent-teacher programme reflect in the children's achievement and quality of the school (Pena, 2000).

However, a number of barriers to parent involvement have been identified by both parents and teachers. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (2005) defines the greatest shared barriers as the lack of time, not being valued and not knowing how to contribute, not understanding the educational system, childcare problems, language, cultural changes and many others. Additionally, parents do not feel welcomed, little literacy levels, educational verbiage, boring meetings and parents who have unmet requirements themselves are also barriers to parental involvement. Teachers and schools create other barriers from opinions, assertiveness and arrangement, lack of commitment, role confusion, and concerns with territory and low expectations from at-risk families. Teachers and schools assuming a passive role in involvement, poor communications on the part of the schools, and schools that emphasize on negative involvement are definite barriers to parental involvement (Liontos, 1992).

Parent's beliefs may also act as barriers to effective parental involvement. The conceptualization of parent's role to their child's education is crucial. Passive parents may not be available for any form of involvement, as their beliefs have overtaken their responsibility and their children's education (Hoover-Demsey & Sandler, 1997). They added that, there is a higher likelihood for a parent to be involved in a child's education if the parent believes that how a child is brought up will have a major influence on his or her development. Another barrier to parental involvement is parent's perception on the level of invitation for involvement.

Parent's occupation and family status may also be another challenge to parental involvement. Families with large members and single parents with young children may find it difficult to get involved since their caretaking responsibilities do not leave much

time for parent's involvement programmes. Parents work schedules also poses a crucial challenge to parental involvement. In instances where both parents work, there will be little time to help in some home-school activities (Homby & Lafaele, 2011). However, both parents and practitioners have different goals and agendas for parental involvement. Parents intend to focus on helping child improve their performance, influence the school's curriculum and in some cases want to understand the school life (OECD, 2001). Practitioners on the other hand concentrate on parental involvement in the areas of giving a nurturing environment, fundraising, home activities, attending parent-teacher meetings and school events (Rudney, 2005). Parents and Practitioners possess attitudes they are rooted in historical, educational, class and gendered experiences. The differences in goals results in a conflict and frustration as both parties involved seek to maximize their agenda, dealing with the differences and converting agendas provide an illustrative means of the complex context in which parental involvement operates (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). To increase parental involvement in schools, Pena (2000) suggest that, practitioners and parents should have a share understanding of parental involvement, paying attention to strengths and weaknesses of each other. Practitioners must be fair and honest and explain to parents during and after making major decisions that affects children and ultimately parents' reasons (Whalley, 1997). Practitioners can always engage parents to meet the needs, interest and availability of children, parents and that of the school (OECD 2001). The Parent-Teacher Association is another avenue for open communication to address general education issues and those related to parental involvement (Vincent, 1996).

Parents are stakeholders when it comes to the education of any child. They are the first teachers of the child, and they are expected to play very important duties in the education of their children. As any disability of child comes to affect the family and the entire community not only the child, it is therefore important for parents to contribute immensely to the entire teaching and learning process of their children most especially who's with special needs. Ghana has promoted inclusive education in many ways such as the introduction of capitation grants, the school feeding programme, the introduction of free uniforms and books. All these policies have come to help increase the enrollment in schools and have created the opportunity for children with special needs to have equal opportunity to access pre-school education. In this regard, the researcher is motivated to research into the influence of parental involvement in the implementation of inclusive educational practices in kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Early childhood education is very important as far as the government's quest to provide quality education and care is concern. Likewise, the role and importance of stakeholders in education cannot be ignored. The collective role of teachers, parents, community, peer influence and other formal and informal institutions brings about attainment of educational goals and objectives at different stages of the learning process. However, Parental involvement in the implementation of inclusive education in public kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality seemed not to be encouraging. Experiences and communication with some teachers and parents revealed that, there is little involvement of most parents in the education of these children. This may imply that some parents of these children in the municipality find it difficult to provide for the needs of

their children with disability. Some children are deprived of vital learning resources such as reading glasses, learning aids and assisted devices, special equipment as well as other necessities. A study conducted by Casley-hayford (2000) revealed that most parents do not show interest in their special needs children's school and this has partly contributed to poor academic performance in Ghanaian public kindergarten schools.

Ghana has been addressing the educational needs of Children with Disabilities (CWDs) as part of Universal Primary Education (UPE) since 1992. Despite the efforts of the government and other stakeholders to improve the infrastructure and to provide free public kindergarten schools to enhance the universal acceptance of inclusive education, evidence shows that a major significant contributor to the implementation of inclusive education is the meaningful engagement of families of learners with exceptional needs in public kindergarten schools (Bennet, Wood & Rogers, 1997). Parents' motives to place learners with special needs in education in a mainstream school varies due to factors such as family's economic status, family's understanding on inclusive education, and challenges they face in involving in their children education (Scheepstra, Nakken & Pijl, 2009). According to Dyson et al, (2013), financing educational services for learners with special needs in education is a primary concern for all education stakeholders. However, this varies with the economic status of a family. Higher-class families are active in managing their children's education, feel more comfortable communicating with teachers and are more involved with school activities while the vice versa is true (Lareau, 2013). Words used to describe a disabling condition, for instance, easily morph into a label for the individual, thereby influencing the attitudes and behaviours of others toward that person. A parent who is not learned in most cases will not see the sense of taking his or

her child to school especially when the child has special needs in education. Kabiru & Njenga, (2007) observed that children imitate their parents in what they do and what they love most. If they are educated and love knowledge, their children will imitate the same irrespective of their status of disability. They will also have high aspirations for the future (Coleman et al., 2007).

Studies conducted have shown that various factors have great influence on the implementation of inclusive education. Boakye-Akomeah, (2015) studied the perception of teachers on inclusive education in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Kithuka, (2008) studied factors influencing implementation of inclusive education policy of children with special needs in the North. Kurumei, (2012) studied effectiveness of inclusive education in public primary schools in Keiyo District. Nyaigoti, (2013) studied Institutional factors influencing implementation of inclusive education in Rigoma Division. Nyamira County & Owuor, (2014) studied determinants of inclusion of learners with special needs in Kisumu Municipality. To the best of the researcher's knowledge little of studies have been done on Influence of Parental involvement in the implementation of Inclusive Education in public kindergartens. It is in this view the researcher research on the influence of parental involvement in the implementation of inclusive education in public kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate parental involvement in the implementation of inclusive education practices in public Kindergarten schools in La Nkwantanang Municipality.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study sought to find out the following;

1. Views of parents regarding inclusive education in kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality.
2. Challenges parents face in their involvement in the implementation of inclusive education in kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality.
3. Ways of involving parents in the implementation of inclusive education in kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the views of parents regarding inclusive education in kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality?
2. What are the challenges parents face in their involvement in the implementation of inclusive education in kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality?
3. Which ways can we involve parents in the implementation of inclusive education in kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality?

1.6 Significance of the study

The information gathered from this study will form a basis for educational planners and curriculum developers to re-examine the curriculum with view of making it rich in the implementation of inclusive education by involving families. The Ghana Institute of curriculum development may benefit from the findings of this study in preparation and development of the school syllabuses and learning materials that meets the learner's diversities without any form of discrimination. Furthermore, the study will be of importance to future scholars and academicians as it will form the basis for further

research as well as provide literature to future studies. The study will add to the body of knowledge on the parental involvement in the implementation of inclusive education in public kindergarten school.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to parental involvement in inclusive education in public kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Selected public kindergartens in the municipal were the focus of the study. Also, parents and teachers in the selected public kindergarten in the La Nkwantanang were involved in the data collection process. Furthermore, the study adopted case study design together with qualitative research approach.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study was organized into five chapters. Chapter One outlines the background to the study, problem statement, objectives, research questions, significance, delimitation of the study and the organization of the study. Chapter Two presents an in-depth review of related literature. Chapter Three discusses the methodology. This includes the design, population, sampling technique, research instruments, data collection procedures, analysis and ethical issues. The Fourth Chapter focuses on the discussion of the field data and findings. Chapter Five presents summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

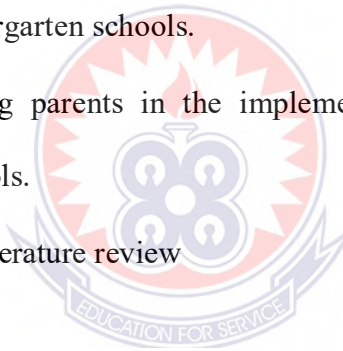
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

The chapter presents the literature review of the study. The following strands are discussed under the review:

- Theoretical Framework.
- The concept of inclusive education
- Views of parents regarding inclusive education in kindergarten schools.
- Challenges parents face in their involvement in the implementation of inclusive education in kindergarten schools.
- Ways of involving parents in the implementation of inclusive education in kindergarten schools.
- Summary of the literature review



2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Dale's Models of Parental Involvement

Dale (1996) worked with children with special needs presented a models of partnership. Dale developed this frameworks at the time when partnership was introduced as the centre, she worked in but then adds that partnership was assumed “cooperation” between parents and professionals and as a result did not reflect the real conception for practice. Dale (1996) then suggested that the Negotiating model might only be hypothetical such that they introduce nearly a new pattern of relation between parents and professionals.

Dale's (1996) model is relevant to this study because it provides explanations as to how parents can be involved in the education of their children. Some of these ways include, respecting the views of parents and engaging parents in frequent discussions, as well as teachers and practitioners soliciting the views of parents in order to get their full participation and being careful not to impose and dictate to parents. Dale's (1996) model is discussed below.

2.1.2 The Negotiating model

Dale (1996), as the most integrated mode of partnership suggests the negotiating model. It is termed negotiating, as the feature in this approach is the frequent discussion between professionals and parents to overcome their differences and resort to best decisions for a child's problem. Negotiation model recognizes the power relation between both partners in the decision-making process. The underlying principle in this model is that parents and professionals have different perspectives to issues as they have different responsibilities in the wider social situation. Nonetheless, both partners are different responsibilities could lead to shares understanding and result in satisfying decision. What is visible in this approach is that, though a professional skill holds on to his power position, a parent at the same time has every right to get involved. The role of the most dominant much change over time by respecting both viewpoints and shifting perspectives and beliefs to reach the required solution.

The negotiating model is related to this study because there is the need for frequent discussion between professionals (teachers and educational administrators) and parents in order to resolve any differences or whatsoever they may be serving as hindrances to parental involvement and adapt best decisions and practices for addressing the various

concerns that parents and children may have. In doing this, the views of parents should be respected by the school authorities in order to encourage parents' participation.

2.2 The Concept of Inclusive Education

Inclusion in education is a practice where all children feel accepted by their school communities through supported teaching and learning for them to equally participate for meaningful learning (Australian Department for Education and Child Development, 2018:4). Florian (2011:320) refers to inclusion in education as a means of increasing the participation of diverse children including those with disabilities at the same time reducing their exclusion from the culture and curriculum of their school communities. Inclusion in education is the accommodation of all children, regardless of the physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions, in regular schools and the provision of child-centred pedagogy capable of successfully educating all of them (Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2008:109).

According to Farrell (2010:3), inclusion in education is a process in which school communities with collaboration from local and government authorities eliminate barriers to interaction, participation and learning in schools. UNESCO (2009:126) refers to inclusion in education as a response to children's diversity and their unique needs and abilities through the promotion of individual participation and the elimination of all types of discrimination. In this study, inclusion in education or inclusive education is a process that promotes acceptance by teachers and the school system of children with diverse backgrounds through removal of barriers to their access, participation, acceptance and success in ordinary/mainstream/regular classrooms in their neighbourhood schools.

According to UNICEF (2017:1), children with disabilities are those who are vulnerable to marginalization, exclusion and discrimination manifested by lack of supportive legislation to an extent of failure to realise their human rights. The World Report on 30 Disability (2011:5) defines children with disabilities as those with physical, sensory, cognitive, language and health impairments that interfere with their learning. In this study, children with disabilities are learners with challenges in their physical, cognitive, communication and social adjustment.

Disability is defined by the WHO (2011:7) as the negative aspects of the interaction between individuals with a health condition and their personal and environmental factors. Trolley, Haas and Patti (2009:3) define disability as the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by society that takes no consideration of individuals with impairments leading to their exclusion from mainstream activities. In this study, disability is a functional limitation in individuals which is a result of physical, intellectual or sensory disabilities.

2.3 Views of Parents Regarding Inclusive Education in Kindergarten Schools

The term parental involvement in their children's education is used very often in educational discussions and is conceptualized based on the context of these discussions. Redding as cited in Coleman 2(013) defines parental involvement as "parent engagement in learning activities, mostly although not exclusively in the home. Involvement is not limited to actual learning tasks. It includes the notion of the "curriculum of the home", the patterns of habit formation and attitude development that prepare a child for academic learning and (that sustains) the child through the years of schooling" (p.2).

Hill (2009) later highlighted the definition of parental involvement in the „No Child Left behind Act“, of the 107th Congress in 2002, which states that: the participation of parents in regular, two-way and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities”. She further added that parental involvement in education involves “parents” interactions with schools and with their children to promote academic success”, (Hill, 2009).

Also, Harris, Andrew-power and Goodall (2009) postulated that, the terms parental engagement“ and „involvement“ (although) often used interchangeably may mean different things. They have stated that “parents can be involved“ in school activities without being engaged in their children’s learning”. To them, „parental involvement means parents coming to the school either informally (e.g., to bring children to school or to provide some information for the school) or formally (e.g., For parents evening, meetings or adult learning classes)” whereas “parental engagement occurs where parents are actively involved in supporting learning in the home through extension or support activities, homework or online activities” (p.12).

Myeko (2000) refers to parental involvement as the process through which parents meaningfully participate in the various educational activities of their children. Nye, Turner and Schwartz (2006) define parental involvement as the effective engagement with the child outside of the day in an activity which centers on enhancing academic performance”. They emphasize activities out of the school, such as trips to the zoo where the child is learning something, or when parents play games with their children.

Parental involvement therefore focuses on the relationship between parents, teachers, learners and the community at large, in order to motivate, support, encourage and participate more actively in school activities, including curriculum support, extra-mural activities, helping children with homework, and supporting parenting by creating a positive home school environment. Parent's involvement in their children's education is a shared responsibility, in which the school and other community agencies and organizations are committed to becoming involved in meaningful ways, and parents are committed to actively support their children's learning and development (Ngwenya, 2010:17).

Finally, Epstein (1995) describes six types of involvement in which schools can encourage parents to participate. Parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with community are areas she suggests schools focus on. Schools can use these focus areas to design parent involvement programs or activities that are tailored towards their schools' needs.

Similar to Epstein's six types of involvement, the National Standards for Family-School Partnership (National Parent Teacher Association [PTA], Alexandria, Virginia) are a set of six standards schools can use to develop partnerships with the families they serve. These standards include; A. Welcoming all families into the school community; B. Communicating effectively; C. Supporting student success; D. Speaking up for every child; E. Sharing power; and F. Collaborating with community (Dekker & Lemmer, 1993).

2.4 Challenges that Influence Parental Involvement in the Education of their Pre-School Children

Working with parents in pre-school centers is very important and no one can do away with them. However, there is a number of factors that may hinder this work. These factors show how aspects of the activities and issues related to staff and parents influence parental roles. These factors are any condition that makes it difficult for parents to make progress or achieve objectives in playing their roles as family. The fact that are various advantages that linked parents „active roles to their ward“s education; it is seen not to be easy for teachers to get parents to be involved in the education of their children. In studying why parents should be active participants in their children`s education, some researchers have outlined a number of factors that could be barriers to active practicing of parents in their children education.

According to Hodge and Runswick-Cole (2008), there is a rhetorical gap between literature and a typical practice on parental involvement. Parent`s views and beliefs may be barriers to how effective parental involvement will be. However, how parents view their role in their children`s education is vital. There are some parents who believe that taking children to school is their greatest role and such parents will not make themselves available for any form of involvement as their beliefs have overtaken their responsibility of their children`s education (Hoover-Demsey & Sandler, 1997). However, they added that, there is greater possibility for a parent to be involved in a child`s education if the parent believes that how a child is brought up will have a major influence on his or her development.

2.4.1 Time Constraints

For parents (families) to effectively perform, it requires commitment by parents and teachers and the allocation of time and resources to help implement it. Pugh and De Áth (1989) pointed out that, the importance of time "to change the attitudes and expectation of parents and professionals, and begin to work towards more open relationships Lack of time is considered an obstacle to building relationships (Rodd, 2006). However, Martin (2003) is of the view that while parents considered staffs lack of time hindered partnership, staff did not consider time constraints an issue in partnership. Mac Naughton (2004) stated that there must be increased staff time for work with parents, a redesign of physical spaces to enable this work to grow, and active professional support. Without these changes staff will remain living with guilt, stress and work intensification. Modern family pressures may prevent most parents from being physically present in their children's early years" services and from involvement in their learning (Bridge, 2001). However, Pugh and De'Ath (1989) and Dale (1996) believed that many programmes assume parents are free, willing and able to take on various roles. Parent's employment is considered a major barrier to their involvement (Hughes & Mac Naughton, 2000; OECD, 2001). Low levels of direct school contact and parents who have experienced barriers to involvement, such as family stresses and work responsibilities are related to children's externalizing and internalizing problem behaviors in school (McWayne & Owsianik, 2004). Some staff may assume that lack of parental involvement shows no interest but research by Pugh and DeÁth (1989, Wolfendale (1992) and Tait (2001) confirmed parents" interest in their children. In addition, despite limited

availability, full-time working parents" welcome opportunities to get involved (NAEYC 2005).

Another factor to parental role is parent's perception of the level of involvement. There is less involvement from parents when they think that teachers, heads of schools and school's motives are different from how they understand parental involvement. When parents think that much worth is not attached to their involvement but is seen as just way practitioners and schools have to fulfill, the effectiveness of parental role reduces. Again, positive attitudes from teachers also encourage parents to be involved whenever they are invited. Parental role does not end in fundraising and open-days only: the whole of home-school environment is included (Hoover-Demsey & Sandler, 1997, Epstein, 2001). However, both teachers and parents have different goals and agendas for parental involvement. Parents are inclined to focus on helping children improve their performance, and influence the school's curriculum. Teachers on the other hand, concentrate on parental involvement in the areas of giving nurturing environment, fundraising, home activities, attending parent-teacher meetings and school events (Rudney, 2005). Parents and teachers possess attitudes that are rooted in historical, educational, class and gendered experiences. Though, perceptions have changed in some communities due to certain lay down system which parents understand as an approved right, many teachers view parents as "less able" or problems and so keep parents out of school while practitioners still hold on to being "expert" in education (Hornby, 2000). The differences in goals result in a frustration and conflict as both parents and teachers involved seek to maximize their agenda. Dealing with the differences and converting agendas provides an illustrative means of the complex contest in which parental

involvement operates (Mendez, 2010, Coleman & Wallinga, 1999; Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

Furthermore, lack of policy may also be another basic barrier to parental involvement. Hornby (2000) suggested that voluntary participation by schools“ results in uneven practice with an absence of specific legislation on parental involvement. Cooper (2010) also pointed out that inconsistency within different educational sectors and government policy also account for the practice of parental involvement. Again, governments' policy affects how teacher education programmes are run in the schools. The inclusion of parents course in teacher preparation is highlighted but not realized because government policies do not recognize it and in other situations not enough practical experiences is gained to prepare teachers adequately to work with parents (Coleman & Wallinga, 1999 Epstein, 2001; Flanigan, 2007).

Parents“ occupational and family status may be another challenge to parents“ involvement. Families with large members and single parents with young children may find it difficult to get much involved since their caretaking responsibilities May not leave much time for parents“ involvement programmes. Parents work schedules also pose a crucial challenge to parental involvement. In instances where both parents work there will be little time to help in home-school activities, (Hornby & Lafacle, 2011). It may be particularly difficult for families of such background to meet during their regularly scheduled work time.

2.4.2 Staff preparedness to involve parents

Families are important for children's learning, development and success (Garcia, 2004). But staff need to consider how they encourage parents (Elliott, 2003) as parents may know how to become involved (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997, Martin, 2003). In addition, what prevented some parents from being involved was the perceived level of staff discouragement. Numbers of steps are needed to help parents feel connected to their children's school or center (Stonehouse, 1995, Murphy, 2001).

According to OECD, (2001), staff needs to continuously put in maximum effort in engaging parents in ways that will meet their needs, strengths and interests allowing parents decide on the type and level of involvement that suits them. Inviting parents to visit school premises before children start school is important as it begins contact and sets the stage for future involvement and subsequent relationships (Laloumi-Vidali, 1997, Keyes, 2000) while teachers' invitations influence parents' decisions to become involved (NAEYC, 1999 Arnold, 2001; Keyes, 2002). Staff also needs to continuously review involvement activities with parents, whilst ensuring that parents have sufficient information to make a meaningful contribution (Wilks, 2000). There is evidence in NAEYC (2005) report that parents would like teachers to ask about their experiences with their child and what is important to them as parents and when staff use this information to develop activities, parent involvement is encouraged. Parents can play major role in the home by encouraging them to help their children in doing homework. Again, parents can be encouraged to provide materials and ideas for activities for their children. In addition, as children approach school-going age responsibility for learning, such as, reading in the home, may be the family involvement process that is most

important for children's outcomes (Harris & Goodall, 2007). Research highlights those practitioners who wish to promote parent role, should act as facilitators rather than experts, recommending activities to help parents promote their children's learning (Erwin & Rainforth, 1997). This brings about positive reactions from the parents to the school and to the teacher.

However, Mapp (2004) suggested that, while parents may be involved in a range of activities, if these activities are not directly connected to learning, they may have little impact on pupil achievement. Bridge (2001) suggested that if parents are not participating as much as they would wish, the partnership relationship needs to be redefined to redress this imbalance. Bridge (2001), however, demonstrated how the concept of parent involvement in pre-school became merged with the concept of pre-school involvement in the home, as activities initiated in the home were implemented in the school. However, Wilks (2000) reported that few parents introduced new activities from home to the pre-school unless it was a specific resource or skill, such as a parent's musical talent. According to OECD (2012), parents and families are important in the life of children's learning, development and achievement. It is therefore, very important for teachers to find means of encouraging parents to be engaged in their children education for successful parent's involvement programmes in schools. To promote parental involvement in schools, Pena (2000) suggested that practitioners and parents have a shared understanding of parental involvement paying attention to strengths and weaknesses of each other. Whalley (1997) also emphasized that practitioners must be fair and honest, and explain to parents during and after making major decisions reasons such decision are taken. Practitioners can always engage parents to meet the needs, interest and availability

of children, parents and that of the school (OECD, 2001). Another means of reaching parents for their roles is through parents-teacher associations meetings. This medium, gives parents and practitioners to have the chance for free communication to solve general specific educational issues and those that relate to parental roles. Pena, (200) believed that it might be difficult to get all parents involved and or meet their needs, considering factors that influence parents to be involved might lead to increased parents' participation. However, Halley (1997) suggested that practitioners have to act like facilitators and flexible but not "experts" to draw more parents on board for effective involvement.

2.4.3 Social Class of Parents

According to Keyes (2002), social class plays an important role in parent involvement. Economically disadvantaged and minority parents in our society face many challenges to their involvement parents and there is some evidence to show they are unlikely to develop partnerships with staff (Martin & Vincent, 1999). A study on parents and schools Conducted by Crozier (2000) showed that, social class had a linked-on parent's material wealth conditions which later affected whether parents became concern or not. This in turn affected the way teachers behave towards parents and the confidence and knowledge that parents had or did not have in intervening on their child's behalf or becoming involved in other ways. Some factors that may prevent the growth of stronger relationships with parents include inability to speak and write English language, lack of access to information, the rights of parents and lack of experience in asking questions (Mapp, 2004).

However, Elliott (2004) pointed out that low status may affect staffs' self-esteem as self-esteem is developed mainly in response to the way individuals perceive they are valued by others. Katz (1995) was of the view that, the public must understand and recognize the potential benefits of high-quality education in the early years and deeper public commitment to the welfare of young children. Bronfenbrenner (1979) also argued that the expectations of particular behavior associated with particular roles in society may affect how a person is treated, how they act, what they do and even how they think and feel. Katz (1995) stated that, the younger the child with whom the practitioner works, the less training is required, the less ability is expected, the lower the pay, the fewer employment benefits and the poorer the working conditions. Too often, young women are advised to enter early childhood education because their shyness makes them unsuitable for work with older pupils or because they are not academically strong enough to take up a more challenging or profitable occupation, pre-school teachers have been urged to transfer into secondary teaching because they were judged too good for infants (Katz 1995). According to OECD (2001), report, the situation for children less than 3 years is less favorable in terms of quality, with countries with large private and voluntary sectors having a significant group of low-trained and untrained staff working in early childhood centers, mainly with infants and toddlers. However, this is the age group that parents might want most contact with staff (Mapp, 2004).

A study by OECD (2006) also identified appropriate training and working conditions as one of eight key elements of successful early childhood policy, stressing a critical need to develop strategies to recruit and retain a qualified and diverse, mixed gender workforce

and to ensure that a career in ECCE is satisfying, respected and financially viable. Katz (1995) suggested that the best possible environments will not be the norm for children unless there are optimum environments for the adults who work with them. Parents' involvement is more likely to be fruitful when teachers and care givers are supported and motivated for their efforts. Heather, Weiss, Bouffard, Bridglal and Gordon (2006) cited in Jeffries (2012) highlighted the necessity of putting standards in place to guarantee that early childhood teachers are well paid and trained so that they have the ability and time to invite parents' participation and the knowledge to provide parents with clear strategies for rich relationships with their children. However, practitioners' belief in the need to defend their professional status may result in partnership being unlikely (Edwards & Knight, 1994).

Another benefit of parental involvement is that there is a stronger association with classroom grades than standardized test scores. There is a higher likelihood of parents helping their children with class assignments and other preparation towards examination explained by teachers than on a standardized test. Coleman added that caution must be taken to avoid generalization of the statement that all parental involvement leads to student achievement. Emphasis must however be placed on the positive link between parents' involvement and classroom grades as far as standardized test is concerned (Desimone, 1999, Coleman, 2012). What the above could mean is that, a parent who plays an active role in a child's education has information about the learning strategies of his or her child and this informs the teacher about ways of planning to meet the child's educational needs. This may help influence the class grades of the child than a standardized test designed by a specialist outside the classroom. Active parental

involvement, according to Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems and Holbein (2005), helps promote children's interest in learning and responsibility for the future. The research finding suggested that children find a deal of motivation when their parents and/or families are active participants in their education. This motivates children to develop great interest and confidence and to put more effort and to take up greater personal responsibility towards learning.

According to Epstein (2001) as cited in Richardson (2009), parental involvement is the most powerful influence in a child's education. It can have various effects on students both academically and behaviorally. Initially, research on family involvement generally did not aim at differentiating between the efforts of specific types of involvement on definite student outcomes (Sheldon, 2009). However, the connections between general measures of parental involvement with students' test scores and grades were analyzed.

However, recently, researchers started studying how different types of involvement connect to specific student outcomes. Research has provided ample evidence that parental involvement affects achievement in core subjects such as reading, Mathematics and science, and the behavior of students, their school attendance and their attitude and adjustment to school (Sheldon, 2009, Sanders & Sheldon, 2009). According to Henderson and Mapp (2002), student perception of their parents' involvement and expectations are also highly effective and influential in their education. Moreover, students who feel their parents' support for their education and have good communication are more likely to continue their studies past high school.

Research findings have demonstrated that there is an overwhelming connection between literary resources in the homes and children's reading skills (Sheldon, 2009, Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Glasgow & Whitney, 2009). Children who come from reading oriented homes, where books are readily available to them and their parents are avid readers, have a tendency to score higher on reading achievement tests than children from less reading-oriented homes. It also affects their literacy skills to have their parents read to them. Thus, parents can have positive effects on their children's reading skills. Most of the research on the effects of parental involvement on students' literacy skills and reading has been done with families of preschool children and children in the grades of primary school (Sheldon, 2009; Sanders & Sheldon, 2009). However, studies have been conducted with families of older students and it is evident that, although teachers and schools have significant influences on children's learning to read in the first grades, parents still remain very influential (Sheldon, 2009). Furthermore, studies have reported that parental involvement does not cease to affect reading achievements of students in the early years of schooling. Instead, it appears to continue to positively affect the reading achievement and academic development of students well into primary school, secondary school and even high school (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009). According to Sheldon (2009), findings, such as these, confirm that parents support and interest for reading continues to be an important factor in young people's academic development through high school.

These findings emphasize the importance for both parents and schools to establish and maintain a good strong relationship throughout our children's school years. Especially in secondary schools where we, as parents, often lack confidence in our ability to assist our

children with their school work. To read for our children in the early years and to continue to be involved with their schoolwork are all things that each of us as parents can in spite of our socio-economic status or level of education. Furthermore, it is worth considering that good reading skills and reading comprehension affects student achievements in other subjects as well, since reading is fundamental in almost all subjects. In furtherance to the above assertions, other studies have shown that parental involvement directly affects their children's math achievement (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Yan & Lin, 2005). Students whose parents are involved in their education are more likely to perform better in math and achieve more than other students.

Sirvani (200) agreed with this and claims that parental involvement contributes significantly to achievement of both primary and secondary school students in math. In addition, these students are more likely to continue further in mathematics (Sheldon, 2009). Yan and Lin (2005) also claimed that the higher the expectations parents have for their children's mathematics achievement the more the children achieve. In addition, there appears to be a large body of evidence that suggests the home environment not only affects students' achievement, but also their abilities and attitudes towards math (Sheldon, 2009). Sanders and Sheldon (2009) claimed that partnership and cooperation between homes and schools are important when it comes to mathematics because how the parents socialize their children can greatly affect their children's self-perception of their own ability and achievement. According to studies, children's self- concept of their math ability is more closely related to how their parents perceive their ability rather than the actual grades obtained (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Glasgow & Whitney, 2009; Sheldon, 2009; Blecker & Jacobs, 2004). Blecker and Jacobs (2004) claimed these psychological

effects to be important, since other evidence suggests that Children's self-perceptions influence their later career decisions. Sanders and Sheldon (2009) and Sheldon (2009) argued the importance for schools to bring about strong partnership with families when it comes to math and to reach out to parents. Studies suggest that many families need help and assistance with their interactions with their child with math (Sheldon, 2009). This is a result of parents feeling a lack of confidence regarding their own ability to assist their children with math. In addition, it seems that the approach to teaching math has changed since many of the parents were in school (Glasgow & Whitney, 2009). Therefore, it is essential for schools to implement activities and partnership programmes with parents. Unfortunately, this is seldom done. Baker, Gersten and Lee (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009) found by reviewing research, that few math programs actually try to connect with parents. They claim that this failure to get parents involved is contradicting to study findings that suggest that efforts to get parents involved in students' math learning can indeed improve the students' performances.

Importantly, far less research has been done on the effects of parental involvement on students' science achievement than on reading and mathematics. However, Sanders and Sheldon (2009) claimed that because of the increased interest in science achievement today, it is important to recognize the findings of those few studies that actually have been conducted.

According to Sanders and Sheldon (2009), it is evident that parental involvement does affect children's science achievement, and particularly those children that are at risk in the subject. A study by Senler and Sungur (2009) revealed that parental involvement is connected to how students perceive the subject, and thus their attitude towards it. In

addition, parental involvement contributed positively to student achievement in science. They concluded that students, whose parents make time to talk with them about science, who have confidence in their children's ability in science, and who have higher expectations, are inclined to be more interested in the subject. In addition, when it comes to higher levels in science, these students are more likely to succeed. Sanders and Sheldon (2009) concurred and claimed that parents play a considerable role in the development of their children's attitude towards science. By engaging in science activities at home and by taking their children to visit museums and libraries they help their children to develop a positive attitude towards the subject.

2.5 Ways of Involving Parents in the Implementation of Inclusive Education in

Kindergarten Schools

The parents of young children with special needs play an important role in the children's developmental growth and education. Many young children between the ages of three years through six years old with disabilities are involved in early childhood special education to receive an education and services to meet their developmental needs.

Parent's involvement has been associated with the children's success in reaching developmental and educational goals (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001). For many decades, parental involvement in education has been a topic of interest for those concerned with optimal developmental and educational outcomes for schoolchildren. The amount of involvement a parent chooses or is able to provide in his or her child's education varies based on individual differences of the parent/family, family resources and stressors, child characteristics, the school's expectations, and many other variables (Martin, 2003).

Researchers, policy makers and practitioners highlight the relevance of parental involvement in their children's education, particularly the benefits that come when parents and teachers work together in the interest of preschoolers. This study examines the research literature on key issues relating to the involvement of parents in their children's early years education. A broad range of research is included in this review to reflect the fact that most research is focuses on parent's involvement in the school system of children. According to Elliott (2003) and Martin (2003) the term parental involvement and partnership are widely used in early childhood education and despite increasing emphasis on the topic and on the necessity of staff involving parents, a consensus has not been reached as to what involvement constitutes. Bridge (2001) stated that, no research specified which type of involvement benefits children is learning. Moreover, while the term parental involvement is used, there is an expectation that mothers should be the involved parent, and mothers are always expected to be expected to be available for child-related duties (Crozier & Reay, 2005).

Definitions of parental involvement vary. McDermott (2010) described involvement as any connection between parents and teachers. Hill and Taylor (2004) defined parental involvement as parents' engagement in activities such as volunteering at school, communicating with teachers, participating in academic activities at home, and attending school events, meeting and conferences. This implies that, involvement requires the actual day-to-day participation by parents in activities of the school. Again, McDermott (2010), citing OECD (2001) is of the view that, parent engagement may take different forms and operate on different levels. Not every parent can or would want to be involved in the same way. „Parent engagement is described as all opportunities available to parents

to contribute their voices in various ways to the service providing care and education for their under-school aged children" (Elliott, 2003). However, while "parent"s engagement may take different forms and operate on different levels. It is important to develop steps to involve them.

The idea of parental involvement is to create relationships between families and teachers in which each partner recognizes the strengths, needs and uniqueness of the other. Partnership is described as relationship among equals, with mutually agreed upon explicit goals, clearly negotiated roles, and decision-making authority equitably distributed among participants (Mendoza et al, 2003). Genuine collaboration results when families receive the support, they need to make informed decisions, which involve consulting parents; initiating two-way communications; determining their needs and expectations and encouraging their involvement by advising them of the opportunities and benefits from their involvement (Erwin & Rainforth, 1996). However, many staff have a narrow definition of involvement, which includes ways to involve parents in special activities or circumstances (Logsdon, 1998). Again, parents are viewed as helpers, rather than an active and equal partner in providing good education for preschoolers.

Parent"s involvement may be unlikely for various reasons. Parents may not know to become involved in the education of their children. Parents may feel embarrassed, intimidated or unsure if they are not well informed with organizational and managerial structures. Stonehouse (1995) is of the view that, parents make a major contribution by sharing their knowledge of their child emphasizing that when professionals seek and value parents" knowledge and perspectives, parents are empowered and feel legitimate partners.

Moreover, Karila (2006) believed that partnership is more than information sharing. The way parents and practitioners hear and interpret each other's beliefs is crucial in the development of partnership, as partnership required shared interpretations and decision-making. The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) project reported that in setting where outcomes for children were excellent, a special relationship in terms of shared educational aims had been developed with parents, and „child-related information was shared between parents and staff. Parents were often involved in decision making about their child's learning program (Taggart, 2007). Parents' roles in education of their children are very important to the educational success of their ward.

Epstein (2001) believed that parents are the child's first teacher therefore they play many and important roles in the education and upbringing of the child. They provide the most basic psychological and emotional needs of children. The success or failure of a child depends on the active involvement and support given by the parents. Parental roles not only limited to home, community but the school. They help to provide teaching and learning materials to schools and in the community, parents monitor the behaviour of their children. Larbi (2011) noted the role of parents is far greater than any influence that educators or health officers could have on children or adolescents.

The support of parents in the educating their wards travels a long way in achieving the educational goals for their children. This means that, parents should join effort of teachers, make education of children with special needs less stressful. In the education of their preschoolers with special needs, parents play different roles, so that the goals set for

preparing their children for formal education is achieved. Some of the role's parent's play in the provision of pre-school programmes for the special needs children are as follows: providing for basic needs both at home and in school, parents as counsellors, parents as teachers, visit to schools, parents as decision makers, and parents as volunteers.

2.5.1 Provision of School and Basic Needs

Parents have basic obligation like providing for a child's health safety, getting the child ready for school, and building the kind of home environment that supports learning (Ysseldyke & Algozzine, 1995). The above statement implies that, both parents with or without children with special needs preschoolers provide food, clothing, shelter, security and educational materials for their children to create the enabling environment that would enhance effective teaching and learning. Parents also pay school levies to support their children although preschoolers with special needs in Ghana do not pay school fees. On the other hand, some parents are not able to provide basic needs such as school uniforms, arm boards and toiletries for their children. This implies that the affected children would not actively participate in teaching and learning. This also affects the health of the children. Parents who are able to provide these basic materials to their children would participate and benefit from the teaching and learning process.

2.5.2 Parent as Counselors

Another role played by parents in the education of their children with special needs is counseling. Parents who have accepted the conditions of their children also counsel other parents whose children have been identified with similar problems. This helps the parents of newly diagnosed preschoolers to accept their children's condition. Heward (2003) posited that all parents are counselors in the sense that they deal with their children's

feelings, (emotions) and attitudes. This writer further suggested that in all of the normal toils and pains of raising a child, parents of a child with disabilities must deal.

2.5.3 Parents as Teachers

Parents assist their wards in doing homework. Finn (1998) is of the view that helping with homework is a concrete way parents demonstrate the commitment they have to education. To work towards quality education for preschoolers with special needs, there should be a carry-over effect of what is learnt at school to the home. Parents therefore assist their children to do their homework and teach them what they have learnt in school. Students whose parents held a college degree benefitted more from parental involvement with homework than those whose parents lack a college degree (Balli et al, 1997). Supportive home and learning environment, with parents having direct and regular contact with school's results in children having high levels of social skills and greater academic motivation (McWayne & Owsianik, 2004). When parents assist at home, it also eases children's transition from their home to the schools and this help preschoolers settle academically at school.

Moreover, when parents help as teachers for their children at home, it gives them the opportunity to know the strength and weakness of their children. Parents are also involved at home by ensuring their children attend school; provide a variety of reading materials and learning opportunities and limiting excessive television viewing. One of the important ways parents can influence their children's achievement, however, is by conveying to their children's high expectations that they will do well in school. This gives the parents the privilege to give special assistance needed to overcome the challenges. In a developing country like Ghana, some parents of special needs

preschoolers cannot play their role effectively. However, parents take active part in training programmes organized for parents. This helps them acquire relevant skills to assist their children with special needs especially when these children are of school age (Hayford, 1998).

2.5.4 Visit to schools

Parents visit to school is very important since this creates a strong relationship between the school and parent. Parents visit to their wards' school, allows parents to observe what is being taught and how their children are participating in their school activities. Further, parents can discuss the challenges facing their children, the problem of the school and how to solve them. Parents pay regular visit to school to know the behaviours and observe the sort of language their children use (Gadagbui, 2007). This implies that when parents visit their child's school, they know the kind of friends your children make, and helps interact with them regularly. Through this visit's teachers, caregivers and attendants would see parents as partners in education. However, in Ghana some parents with children with special needs do not visit their children at school. This shows that parents "dump" in the children in schools.

2.5.5 Parents as Advocates

Parents and other family members play the role of advocates to contribute to the education of their children. Parents search for ways to protect the interest and welfare of individuals or groups of handicapped children including the hearing impaired. This is, through their advocacy role, parents are able to gain or improve services for their children. These parents also provide information to new parents struggling to find help for their children with disabilities. For example, in Ghana, parents of children with

disabilities made inputs to the Disability Bill. Hallaham & Kaufman (2003) asserted that, an impact that parents and other family members contribute to the education of their children through advocacy. Parents of children special needs have to develop structures and have to learn to use the legislative and judicial processes to fight for the interest of their children. Advocacy role of parents in the advanced countries has contributed to the education of children with disabilities.

2.5.6 Parents as Volunteers

Parents can provide a pool of talents, which contribute to education of their children. When parents act as volunteers in the classroom actively, they provide a stronger base of support for schools and families. If parents come to the schools, they benefit by getting firsthand information about the schools functioning and the teacher's interactions with the children. This helps parents to offer the needed assistance to the school especially the children. Volunteer provision of pre-school facilities such as playgroups, crèches or community nurseries, depend on parental involvement. This has become an economic aspect in that parents organize and run a service, and a participatory meaning, in that parents have rights and responsibilities for how that service is organized. In many areas, playgroups are the main experience of pre-school education of both parents and children. The type and the amount of participation should be carefully considered so that parents are not overburdened and would be able to offer the desired help to the school. Some areas in which participating are helpful include storytelling, music and art activities, field trips and celebration of special events.

In the classroom, parents are able to share their experiences with the children. Parents who volunteer to help in the schools can tell the history of their towns, or country, teach

drumming and dancing of a particular group of people in their locality to the children. When parents involve themselves in classroom activities, they help the children become enthusiastic about what is happening in their children as resource persons in the schools. Many resource centers find that parents „who come into settings as helpers are able to bring in many skills and different areas of expertise (Tassoni et al, 2002). Working as volunteers in the schools can sometimes boost parents’ confidence and give them the chance to meet other parents. The various roles of parents discussed under this strand suggest, that being a good parent requires all these kinds of time, energy, resources and unconditional love. A preschooler requires all these kinds of support from their parents and families in order to grow up useful, participating actively in the community.

Hayford (1998) also agrees that, pre-school and school placement decisions are roles of parents taken jointly with professionals. Parents and other family members should therefore show interest that would affect their children’s education. Parents should try to be involved in programmes planned for their wards with special needs.

2.6 Summary of Literature Review

This chapter presented the literature reviewed for the study. Model of parental involvement was described, Thus Dale (1996) developed this theory at the time when partnership was introduced at the centre, and she worked in but then adds that partnership was assumed to be "cooperation between parents and professionals and as result did not reflect the real conception for practice. She suggested the Negotiating model.

The benefits of parent involvement for children, parents, staff and society were described. Children are believed to be more motivated, comfortable and achieve more academically. They are happier, have better social skills, their self-esteem is enriched and they have a more positive self-image. Resulting from involvement in their children's education parents are believed to develop new skills and confidence, they feel acknowledged and valued, they have a greater knowledge of school programmes and school experiences while improved aspirations and relationships with their children were also reported. Working in partnership with parents adds a new dimension to staff work, resulting in mutual growth and understanding. A family-centered approach is also believed to benefit society with parent involvement particularly beneficial for disadvantaged children resulting in positive economic benefits.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology for the study. This chapter covers the study area, research approach, research design, population, sample size, sampling technique, instrumentation and procedure for data collection, ethical considerations and methods of data analysis.

3.1 Study Area

The study was carried out in the La Nkwatanang Municipality in Madina, Accra. This area was preferred because it would provide a multi-representation of situations that prevailed in this locality with people of different cultural practices and thoughts about the inclusive education of children with disabilities. About 2.7 percent of the municipal's total population has one form of disability or the other. This proportion is the same for both male and female population (Ghana Statistical Services, 2020). The types of disability in the municipality include sight, hearing, speech, physical, intellect, and emotion. Persons with sight disability recorded the highest of 42.1 percent followed by physical disability (22.9%). About 2.7 percent of the population with disability are in the urban localities. There are more males with speech, hearing and intellectual challenges than females in the municipality. Of the population 11 years and above, 91.3 percent are literate and 8.7 percent are illiterate. The proportion of literate males (95.4%) is higher compared to that of the females (87.5%). A little more than half (55.4%) of the literate population indicated they could speak and write both English and Ghanaian languages. Of the population aged 3 years and above (102,325) in the municipality, 6.3 percent has

never attended school, 37.3 percent are currently attending and 56.4 percent have attended in the past. Of the employed population, about 35.5 percent are engaged as service and sales, 22.0 percent in craft and related trade, 10.5 percent in Professional technicians, and 8.4 percent are engaged as elementary occupation.

Of the population, 15 years and older making 43.4 percent are self-employed without employees, 8.5 percent are self-employed with employees, 2.5 percent are contributing family workers, and 3.9 percent are apprentices. The private informal sector is the largest employer in the Municipality, employing 69.7 percent of the population, with females having relatively higher proportion (78.8%). The reverse is the case for private formal sector, which engages 17.6 percent of working population; the proportion of male working population is higher relative to their female counterpart (23.7% against 11.6%).

3.2 Research Approach

Using the qualitative method, knowledge was interpreted from the meanings and responses obtained from the interviews and discussions with the participants. Thus, it was believed that a qualitative approach would provide the thick description of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon as it looked for those who “have had experiences relating to the phenomenon to be researched. Qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than numbers in the collection and analysis of data (Bryan, 2008). It describes how, when, where and from who data is to be collected and analyzed (Cresswell, 2007). Qualitative research argues that understanding a phenomenon, situation or event comes from exploring the totality of a situation. Since qualitative research aims at understanding people, not measuring them and operates within communication of which it is part and employs value added inquiry (Sarandakos,

2005). Qualitative research can adapt to the quality of information that is being gathered. If the available data does not seem to be providing any results, the researcher can immediately shift gears and seek to gather data in a new direction offering the researcher more opportunities to gather important clues about any subject instead of being confined to a limited and often self-fulfilling perspective (Sarantakos, 2005).

In view of the fact that qualitative research is also used to uncover trends in thoughts and opinions, the study took on an exploratory plan which was conducted for the type of problem that little was known about or was not yet clearly defined, providing insights into the problem or help to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential qualitative research. This study was posited on the assumption that knowledge was socially interpreted as individuals sought to make meaning of the world in which they lived.

3.3 Research Design

In order to arrive at a detailed description and understanding of the influence of parental involvement in the implementation of inclusive educational practices in kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality, case study design was adopted for the study. Case study design is a process of finding out the realities of a specific situation which presents a problem that needs to be solved and is of interest to the researcher (Yin, 2013). Also, Denzin and Lincoln (2013) defined a case study as an investigation of a single or multiple units of human action and behaviour in contemporary real life contexts. To the researcher, case study design is a research design in which one or a few instances of a phenomenon are studied in depth. The purpose of utilising case study design was to have a deeper understanding of an inquiry in order to produce knowledge or to contribute to policy development (Cohen Monion & Morrison, 2013). Furthermore, the use of case

study design allowed for interaction between the researcher and the participants during the course of the research process. It also helped the research to become a self-reflective practitioner, which allowed her to immerse herself in the data to better understand it (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2010).

3.4 Population

The target population of the study comprised 30 respondents who are residents of La Nkwatanang municipality. The parents of learners with disability and teachers were targeted for the study because they were guardians or parents of children with disabilities who are in schools and were expected to have the needed information pertaining to the study at hand.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

In a case studies, it is essential that all participants have experience of the phenomenon being studied so that they can contribute to building the opening and actual coding of the theory (Creswell 2013). Purposive sampling known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling is a non-probability sample selected based on characteristics of a population of the study (Creswell, 2013).

For purposes of the study, the researcher employed purposive sampling procedures to select 20 participants for the study because it was an important criterion for judging the merits of the study (Cohen, 2011). The researcher took on a homogeneous procedure to select participants for the study. The researcher began by paying visits to the area of study, introduced himself to the local authorities, visited homes of the participants with an aim of identifying and selecting a homogeneous sample of individuals with who she

would discuss and have them sign a consent informed sheet to affirm that they voluntarily accepted to be part of the study. The identified respondents were selected because they were parents or guardians and teachers of children with disabilities with wide experiences regarding parental involvement in the inclusive education of children with disabilities which would enable her gather adequate information for the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2013).

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

In this study, data were collected using interviews and focus group discussions guide which were aligned to the objectives of the study as Bell (2005), pointed out that methods for data collection should be aligned to the objectives of the study so as not to go off track in the cause of eliciting for information.

3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interview Guide

The researcher employed Interview methods to gather the needed information for the study. An interview is an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Interviews may involve one-to-one interactions, and may take place face to face, or over the telephone or the Internet (Mason, 2002). The researcher used the methods because they enable the researcher to obtain firsthand information on how parents and teachers were involved in the inclusive education of children with disabilities. Interviews were particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences.

The researcher developed a semi-structured interview guide, had it reviewed following topics and questions that he asked in different ways for different respondents, the semi-structured interview guide prepared was divided into two parts, demographic characteristics and research questions. The items were focused on the bio-data of respondents and any other necessary information. Before the interview sessions, the researcher made several interactions to build trust and rapport with participants on the various aspects.

The researcher used a good voice recorder with good battery life and transcribed the recorded audio soon after the conversation was completed, so that the nuances of the dialogue were not lost in the annals of time. He took short reflective notes in the course of the dialogue because they would facilitate him in making a strong qualitative data.

3.6.2 Focus Group Discussion Guide

A focus group is a form of group interview that exist between interviewer and group of participant. The reliance is on the interaction within the group who discuss a topic supplied by the researcher (Cohen et al. 2011). Focus group contains elements of two methods that is to say, the group interview, in which several people discuss a number of topics; and a focused interview, in which interviewees are selected because they are known to have been involved in a particular situation and are asked about that involvement (Brymann, 2016).

This method was suitable for this study because it allowed the researcher to develop an understanding about why people feel and act the way they do. In individual interviews, the interviewee is often asked about their reasons for holding a particular view, but the

focus group approach offered the opportunity of allowing people to share and complement each other's views. This could be more interesting than the sometimes predictable question and answer approach of conventional interviews because an individual may give their view but as they listen to others' views, they may choose to modify theirs. An individual may also voice agreement to something that he or she probably would not have thought of hadn't they heard it from others (Cohen et al. 2011). Such possibilities meant that focus groups were very helpful in eliciting for a variety of views in relation to a particular issue where different individuals shared and complemented each other's views. This implied that the researcher ended up with more realistic accounts of what people thought because they possibly revised their views as they were punctuated by lively collective interactions which brought forth more spontaneous expressive and emotional views in individuals. In the case of sensitive taboo topics, the group interaction made it possible for the expression of viewpoints that were usually not accessible (Brinkman & Kavle, 2015). The researcher coded the parents using **P** and **T** for teachers.

The researcher used a good voice recorder with good battery life and transcribed the FGD soon after the conversation was completed, so that the hints of the dialogue were not lost in the annals of time. She took short reflective notes in the course of the dialogue because they would facilitate him in making a strong qualitative data.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

Prior to data collection, the researcher prepared a focus group discussion guideline for two groups of parents of CWDs. Group one was comprised of male participants and group two female participants and a semi structured interview guide which comprised

open ended questions answered by individual teachers who teaches children with disabilities was organized systematically in sections to reflect and gather information that would answer the research objectives, sought approval of the research proposal and the data collection tools from the research supervisors, obtained an Introductory letter from the Head, Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Education, Winneba, to enable approval from the respondents introducing her to the places where the study was located. The researcher then paid preliminary visits to the municipal and the local authorities. The researcher then visited various homes and schools and introduced herself to the participants, explained the purpose for his visit, talked to the identified participants, explained to them the study he intended to conduct and its purpose.

The researcher met the participants, gave them explanations on the purpose of the research, aspects of confidentiality and anonymity and the anticipated use of the results. Procedures were taken to ensure that the settings for the interviews and discussions helped in promoting confidentiality by way of ensuring that participants were not overheard. English language and Ga were used for the interviews.

During the data collection process, the researcher sought for their permission to record the conversation using a voice recorder which would enable her compile and not lose any information obtained from participants. The researcher took time to listen to the interviews obtained to affirm her with what was said by the participants. She then transcribed the audio files to text as soon as he returned from the field and thereafter prepared it ready for analysis by rearranging it in chronological order according to the research objectives.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

Data obtained from interviews and focus group discussions were processed and analyzed using thematic Analysis. Data from audio recorded interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed and translated from Ga and Twi to English to ease the process of analysis. After the transcription as per category of data, the recorded information was written down systematically and chronologically citing important aspects of the dialogue such as missing information, emphasis, repetitions, quoting of words from some respondents, among others to simplify categorization as well as writing of opinions from individual participants using thematic Analysis.

The researcher read the transcriptions many times to familiarize herself with the data which enabled her have in mind what exactly was in the data. This was followed by the researcher generating themes and subthemes that emerged from the discussions held with participants. The coding process involved the researcher attaching labels or descriptions on a list of ideas developed from the transcription as already read as initial coding to the categories of data in relation to the objectives as A, for objective 1, B for objective 2 and C for objective 3. This helped in the identification of the specific responses for each objective.

Once the data were sorted and ordered, the researcher was able to make some interpretive sense of them and build their explanations and arguments (Mason, 2002). After the generation of initial codes, the researcher arranged the overall content of the themes and the message it carried in it was defined before producing a report.

Kothari (2004) emphasizes that, before embarking upon final interpretation, the researcher has to consult with other people with insight to the study and should be frank, honest and will not hesitate to point out omissions and errors in logical argumentation and that it is through such consultations that result in correct interpretations thus, enhancing utility of formidable research results of a research report would produce a study report. The researcher believed that parents who experienced this phenomenon would have different and varied experiences and as such there would be multiple realities.

3.9 Trustworthiness of the Research Instruments

Trustworthiness is when the researcher ensures to stick to findings obtained in the field by brushing off all thoughts of biasness (Palys, 2008). This study employed the followings methods to ensure rigor and trustworthiness

Credibility in research implies that a study needs to be believable, authentic or convincing before those expected to benefit from it Orb (2000). This method was used through participants checking and examining findings of the study at hand, how participants understood and responded to the questions that were available to them.

Transferability means that the study can bear the same results if done in a different area or location (Mason, 2002). This method was used to provide detailed description of the data obtained from the study participants and it enabled the researcher to ascertain the detailed support that parents provided for their children, the barriers that hindered parental involvement and those facilitators that made it possible for parents to get involved in the inclusive education of CWDs in La Nkwatanang municipality. Finally,

the researcher presented findings of the study as a true reflection of what the participants said other than that of the researcher.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The consent of the selected participants was sought before the questionnaires were administered. No participant was compelled to participate or answer the questionnaire. The questions made no provision for the respondent's name and other personal information about the respondent but rather coded to prevent the identification of information by respondent. Participants were made to decide whether they would take part in the study or not. Further, participants were assured verbally that data would be kept confidentially. Again, participants' identities were hidden while reporting on findings from the study. The researcher ensures all the ethical issues concerning confidentiality where the participants were assure that any information will be kept out of reach of any third party and anonymity where not identifiable information of the respondents were revealed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter comprised presentation and analysis of findings of the study obtained from interviews discussions with parents and teachers of children with disabilities presented in accordance with the research questions generated to guide the study.

4.1 Views of Parents Regarding Inclusive Education in Kindergarten Schools

All parents (20) shared a clear view that inclusive education for their children with special educational needs should be in accordance with the standards for inclusivity. A closer look shows that most were expecting their children to be accepted and socialised in general schools. They also expressed frustration over the fact that it is still very complicated to include children with SEN in general schools in the La Nkwantanang municipality, despite the country's inclusion education policy. For example, a parent stated that:

The only thing I want is an accessible and inclusive education for my children! I am frustrated that this has still not been realised. Through inclusive education, my children can socialised in society so that they do not feel uncomfortable or different among „normal“ children. (P1)

Another statement from a parent confirms that accessible inclusive education is important and that it should be suitable for each child in individual ways that help them adapt to real life:

Inclusive education should take into consideration my child's knowledge and abilities. Moreover, an accessible environment is strongly needed so that our

children can study in a class with everyone and on an equal basis with everyone.
(P2)

Parents and teachers were appreciative of individual forms of education within certain inclusive contexts and wanted to see even more of a focus on children's individual development and specialised support. Responses captured include the following:

The child must have an individual development plan and form necessary personal, social, household and educational skills in accordance with his capabilities. It is necessary to assess the individual capabilities of the child. (P5)

Another stated that

To grasp basic skills such as reading, writing and counting, as well as behaviour in society and obedience to the general requirements of decency, the individual approach is essential, for example, in a calm home environment. (TEC2)

Yet another parent stated

I want my child to be accepted by society and to be a self-sufficient individual who enjoys a learning process in which there is no discrimination and no restrictions. I want the child to be like all other children, so that he will have a chance to continue his studies after school, a chance to study a profession in which he may get a real job and provide for himself later in life on his own. (P5)

Furthermore, a parent expressed the importance of recognising inclusive education as an equal right of all children, highlighting children's rights to co-determination:

The child should also decide whether he/she will study in the general classroom or can choose individual education or home education. (P3)

However, there were also statements reflecting parents' frustration over the notion that a lack of parental involvement, when combined with teachers' lack of proficiency, might negatively influence a child's opportunities for short- and long-term development.

The union of a parent and a teacher should be constant and fruitful, but it is not like that. Now I help by explaining everything to my child, absolutely everything, including topics all subjects they should learn in school. I make materials, draw diagrams, invent ways and methods to make my child understand the school programme, but it's very hard. I need to do it because the school is not as interested in a child's progression and results as much as parents are. And I am in a hurry because I know that in the next lesson at school there will be new homework and new topics, and it will also take us a lot of time and effort to make it through (it is sad that the child cannot remember everything, because of his disabled). I'm not just doing homework with my child. I am fully engaged in his education! (P3)

In addition, despite the desire to be more involved and even when doing so the parents still expressed a common view highlighting the need for help in supporting their children through the educational process. Most of the parents at times felt excluded and characterised their situation as helpless,

4.2 Challenges Parents face in their Involvement in the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Kindergarten Schools

The following sub-themes emerged under the major theme barriers to parental involvement in the inclusive education of CWDs in the La Nkwantanang municipality.

Poverty

This emerged as a sub theme under the theme barriers to parental involvement. Participants noted poverty to have been the major barrier that hindered them from getting involved in the education of CWDs receiving education in an inclusive school arrangement. One of the participants reported that:

“You know these things go hand-in-hand with money and due to the level of my income, I am unable to manage them single handedly.” (P1)

Negative attitudes from school administrators

Majority of the parents reported Negative attitudes from school administrators as a barrier to parental involvement in education of CWDs. This was confirmed by one of the participants who mentioned that

“I do not get involved in my child’s education because teachers do not give me the chance, they think that I am unable to advise them on my child’s learning needs.” (P4)

Yet another parent stated that:

I am ready to cooperation, but am practically excluded from the education of my children. The school must cooperate with us in continuous work on the education of our children with SEN. We can help teachers better understand our children! We can share knowledge about our children’s development, help to complete the teacher’s assignments. (P5)

Inability to understand sign language

From the interviews carried out, findings revealed limited communication skills in Braille and sign language as the hindering factors to parental involvement in education of CWDs. One participant mentioned that;

“Am not able to help my daughter with her homework because I miss out some information that my daughter signs because I don’t understand sign language well.” (P1)

Single parenting

Single parenting was another sub-theme identified in theme barriers to parental involvement in education of CWDs, one participants cited that:

“I am hindered from getting involved in my children’s education because my husband the father to my sons neglected them living me to work on them alone because in their clan, they do not give birth to disabled children.” (P3)

Unfavourable school environment

The composition of a school environment that can be accessed and used to the greatest extent possible by children with disability like cerebral palsy, autism, hearing problems or visual impairments, is totally absent. One participants cited that:

In our town, there is also a lack of accessibility to transport, so all parents have not only to teach their children, but also to be their assistants, drivers and so on, and that becomes heavy load on parents, so many cannot bear it. (P5)

4.3 Ways of involving Parents in the Implementation of Inclusive Education in

Kindergarten Schools

Under this research question, strategies to improve parental involvement as presented below with their subthemes respectively.

Parents-teachers meetings

Inquiring about implementers that enabled parents to get involved in the education of CWDs receiving education in the inclusive schools, half of the participants reported that they participate in parent’s teacher meetings. One of the participants mentioned that;

“When teachers invite us at school we are prepared about our roles as parents and how to get involved in the inclusive education of our children.” (P2)

Positive Parental Attitudes

Parental attitudes emerged as a sub theme under the main theme. From the interviews carried out, findings from participants suggested that positive parental attitude towards children with disabilities facilitate parental involvement in education of their children.

One of the participants said that:

“A parent’s positive attitude towards his or her child with disabilities surely makes it possible for him or her to get involved in the child’s education” (TEC 3)

Teachers’ positive attitudes

The teacher’s positive attitude towards CWDs was another sub-theme which emerged under the theme facilitators. All ten participants agreed with the response from one of the participants who noted that:

“When teachers have good thoughts about our CWDs it encourages us parents of Children with disabilities to draw closer to the learning programme of our children.” (P4)

Parental social economic status

The following sub-themes emerged from the theme of parental social economic status.

- **Money to support education of CWDs**

Results under this sub-theme revealed that the parent’s social economic status plays a role in facilitating them to get involved in their children’s education. One of the participants stated that:

“As a parent I will have the ability to purchase school requirements, pay fees in time and visit the child when required.” (P3)

- **Parental support groups**

The views from interviews indicated that parental support groups were instrumental in giving rest assurance to parents who have just acquired a disability. One participant reported that:

“Before I became a member of a parents’ support group I used to think that I was the only one who was in a bad situation however, joining this group showed me that I was not alone but there were others like me.” (P1)

Engaging Non-Government Organisation services

Concerning ways schools promote parental involvement, findings pointed out that it was through engaging the services of NGOs as reported by one of the participant who said that:

“Schools work with non-governmental organizations to buy Braille machines that the blind use in class, mobility devices, magnifying devices, walking sticks and providing educational materials.” (TEC 3)

School visits

This was another sub theme that emerged under the theme ways schools promote parental involvement. Majority of participants cited school visits were crucial in enabling parental involvement. One of the parents reported that:

“As parents, we need to pay visits to schools and talk to the teachers about the social and education needs of our children.” (P2)

Sensitization campaigns

Inquiring about the strategies employed to improve on parental involvement in the education of CWDs, Disabled persons organizations and the District community development office jointly needed to arrange for parents’ sensitization workshops for

parents of CWDs to enlighten them on their responsibilities regarding education of CWDs. One of the participants mentioned that:

“A workshop organized and facilitated by persons with disabilities would enable parents with negative attitudes towards their CWDs to change their attitudes and embrace the educational needs of their children.” (P4)

Possibilities to enhance parental involvement

This was another sub-theme which emerged under the theme strategies to improve parental involvement. Findings revealed that parents’ social economic status played a key role in facilitating parental involvement in the education of CWDs as one pointed out that:

“When I have money, I am able to pay fees on time, and visit my child when am required.” (P1)

Buying scholastic materials

This emerged as a sub theme under parental support. The findings showed that buying scholastic materials was cited by majority of the participants to have been the support parents provided for CWDs in inclusive schools. One of the participants stated that:

“I use money from my small business to buy scholastic materials such as books, pens, and mathematical sets for my child”. (P5)

Escorting Children to and from school

From interviews carried out, participants mentioned escorting their children with disabilities to and from school. As one parent stated that:

“I escort my children to school because they are young and need my support via transport.” (P3)

Support from NGOs

In connection to parental support, findings revealed that parents sought for support from NGO's to support education of their children. Parents of children with epilepsy mentioned supporting their children with medication however, they noted that drugs were expensive to be handled single handedly thus looking for support from nongovernmental organizations. One of the participants stated that

“It is a friend of ours who directed us to any NGO she hears about in the district to support CWDs, which gave us money to buy drugs for our children”. (P1)

Children with Disabilities involved in practical activities

This was another sub-theme that emerged under theme of parental support. Participants reported involving their CWDs in practical activities. One of the participants reported that:

“I involve her in artwork because she can't grasp class work yet she has interest in artwork” (P2)

Counseling and Guidance

The rest of the participants reported Counseling and guidance. This encouraged CWDs to remain at school to go ahead with their studies. One participant said:

“I told my child, be firm those who laugh at you just leave them alone. Tell them what has come has come there is no way I can change it. What I am is what the Lord has decided.” (P3)

- **Social Economic Support**

The following sub-themes emerged from the theme of social economic support.

- **Capacity to support Children with Disabilities education**

The study noted participants have had capacity to support CWDs education. Two participants said that;

“We are able to support our children’s education from the income generating projects like roasting plantain and growing of vegetables. (P1 & P3)

The other findings exposed some the participants saying that they did not have the capacity to support their CWDs education. One of the participants mentioned that:

“I am unable to pay fees for granddaughter with disability because of the many illness like diabetes and pressure I have, that take most of my money” (P5)

- **Possibilities Children with Disabilities benefiting from education**

This was another theme identified under objective one. The sub-themes emerged from this theme as presented below;

- **Children with Disabilities benefit from School.**

When asked if CWDs benefited from school, participants acknowledged Children with disabilities benefiting from school. One of the participants said that:

“My child used to be aggressive before she joined school, but when she enrolled for school she was no longer aggressive because of having interacted with other non-disabled peers.” (P2)

- **Studying in a Conducive learning environment**

The study findings revealed children with disabilities benefit from school when they studied in a conducive learning environment. One of the participants stated that:

“When children with disabilities have teachers trained in sign language, braille they benefit.” (P1)

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

This chapter deals with the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The summary of the study revealed that:

1. All parents supported their children in different ways for example providing scholastic materials like text books, pens and some food contribution, fees contributions and other necessities.
2. Challenges confronting parents in getting involved in the education of their children education include poverty and limited communication skills in sign language.
3. Ways to improve parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities revealed that preparing parent“ workshops, district administration to work with an active association of disabled persons to identify parents of children with disabilities and have them sensitized on their roles regarding their children“s“ education, parents should love their children and not leave them behind but take them to schools so that they learns.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that

Challenges that hindered parents from getting involved in their children's education, are parental social economic status, poverty was the major barring factor to parental involvement in the education of their children with disabilities.

Also data gathered cited parents' positive attitude towards children with disabilities by majority of participants. It was noted that a parents' positive attitude built confidence in the learning of CWDs and improves on their academic achievement.

The study concluded that strategies to improve parental involvement were parents attending school meetings and fellowships to complement each other needs.

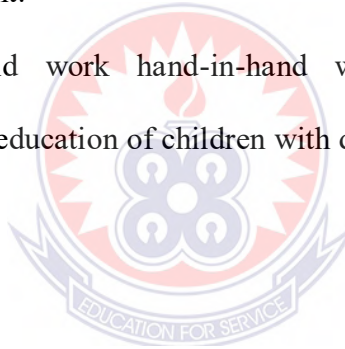
5.3 Limitations of the study

Though the opinions of more parents, community and other stakeholders would have been very useful in this study, it was not possible to cover them because tracing them required considerable amount of time, resources and other logistics. However the researcher gathered enough views regarding this category from the other respondents who closely work and interacts with them.

5.4 Recommendations

In light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations were put forward:

1. Government should encourage formation of support groups of parents of children with disabilities. There is need for government and its line ministries, disabled persons organizations and parent's organizations to sensitize parents of children with disabilities on their roles and significance of supporting education of children with disabilities.
2. There was the need for schools to develop effective communication strategies while working with parents of children with disabilities to enhance increased parental involvement.
3. Government should work hand-in-hand with NGOs to support parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Guide for Teachers and Focus Groups

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Dear Sir/Madam,

This interview guide is meant to collect data for a study being conducted by Lydia Febiri, a student from the above mentioned University in connection with a Master of Education (Early Childhood) thesis titled **“influence of parental involvement in the implementation of inclusive education in public kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality, Ghana”**. The information you would provide would help the researcher, management of Early Childhood Education and other stakeholder of education to better understand the extent to which parental involvement in the implementation of inclusive education in public kindergarten schools helps to provide data for improvement. You are assured that information you would provide would be given the utmost confidentiality in addition to non-disclosure of your identity should the data be published. Taking part in this study is however voluntary. Thank you.

BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

Sex

Age

What is the highest education level you have completed?

Occupation.....

How many children do you have in your household?

Number of children with disability.....

How many of your children with disabilities are attending school?

How many of your children without disabilities are attending school?

Are you presently staying in your home alone or with your spouse?

Interview date: Duration:

Views of parents on inclusive education

How do you understand the term inclusive education?

.....
.....

Describe your experience as a mother with a special need child attending school with non-disability children?

.....
.....

Which practice of inclusive education do you think is not good for your child's development?

.....
.....

Challenges to parental involvement in the inclusive education of children with disabilities.

4. As parents of children with disabilities, what factors hinder you from getting involved in the inclusive education of your child or children with disability? Explain as many barriers you are experiencing as a parent or a teacher

.....
.....
.....

Ways of involving parents in the implementation of inclusive education in kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Municipality.

5. How do you deal with the challenges you encounter in supporting your child's education? How do you teach pre-number activities to children at the ECC?

.....
.....
.....

5. What things have been made possible for you to get involved in your child's education?

.....
.....

6. What strategies do you recommend to improve parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities?

.....
.....

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

1. What are the things that a parent should do in order to support a child with a disability in school?
2. In your opinion, do you believe that involving parents in the education of children with disabilities is important? In what ways is it important?
3. As a parent, what things have you done or are you doing to get involved in the education of your child with disability?
4. What factors enable you as parents to get involved in the education of your children?
5. In what ways is the school involving you in the education of your child with disability?
6. What challenges do you experience in getting involved in the education of your child with disability?
7. How do you think your involvement in the education of your child with disability can be improved?

Thank you for Participating

APPENDIX B

Introductory Letter

 FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
P. O. Box 25, Winneba, Ghana
+233 (020) 2041072 ee@uew.edu.gh

FES/DECE/I.1

21st December, 2022

The Director
Municipal Education Office
La-Nkwantanang
P. O. Box MD 545
Medina - Accra

Dear Sir/Madam

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

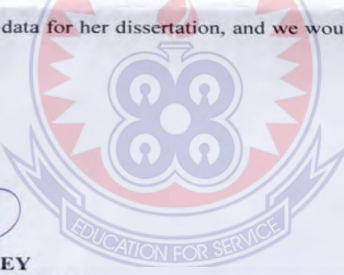
We write to introduce to you **Ms. Lydia Febiri** with index number **220015416** who is an M. Ed student in the above department. She was admitted in 2020/2021 academic year and has successfully completed her course work and is to embark on her thesis on the topic: "*Parental involvement in the implementation of inclusive education in public kindergarten schools in the La Nkwantanang Medina Municipality*".

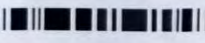
Ms. Febiri is to collect data for her dissertation, and we would be most grateful if she could be given the needed assistance.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,


DR. MICHAEL SUBBEY
AG. HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

 EDUCATION FOR SERVICE

 www.uew.edu.gh