

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

AN EVALUATION OF VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND
TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS IN TWO SPECIAL SCHOOLS
FOR STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY IN GHANA



DOREEN ARABA OBU

AUGUST, 2011.

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B. ED (SPECIAL EDUCATION AND ART)

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UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA.

AUGUST, 2011

DECLARATION

CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research. With the exception of quotations and references contained in published works (which have all been identified and acknowledged) the entire dissertation is my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

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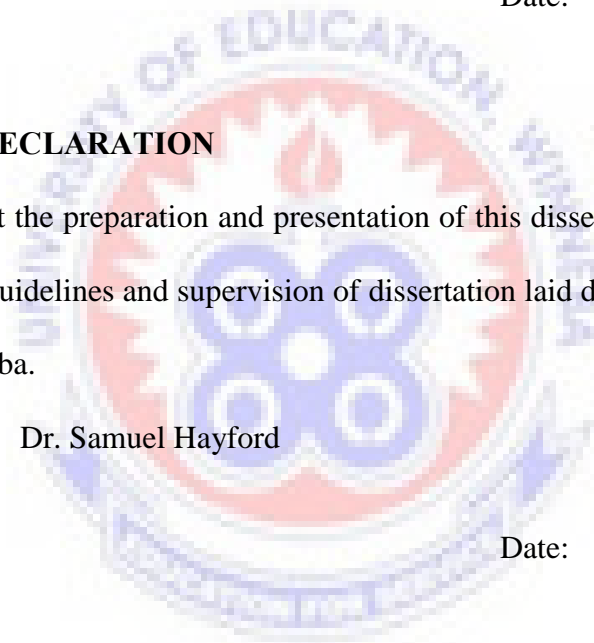
SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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

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ABSTRACT

The study was a descriptive survey that investigated vocational programmes offered in two special schools for individuals with intellectual disability in Ghana, and the transitional processes available in the schools to facilitate smooth movement of such individuals from school to the world of work. The problem was concerned with students who have gone through one vocation or the other and seemed unprepared to meet life demands after school. Forty teachers were sampled to complete a questionnaire designed on the topic.

The study found that the special schools offer vocational course in ten main areas including, poultry, batik/tie dye, basketry, woodwork, dressmaking, hairdressing, envelope making, gardening, bead making and door mat weaving. It was also found out that, most of the vocational courses were taught in classrooms, except in Three Kings Special School where only one workshop exists for batik/tie and dye. Lastly, even though students acquire sufficient skills in the schools before graduating, there has never been any transitional programme that links students to the world of work.

It was therefore recommended that, training facilities such as sheltered workshops should be made available in the special schools. Also, training requirements, materials and logistic should be regularly supplied to the special schools to enhance training. It was also suggested that future studies be conducted to explore ways of enhancing and promoting appropriate vocational and transitional programmes in special schools in Ghana.

DEDICATION

To my husband, Mr. Vincent Boadu, and my children, Portia, Emmanuel and Ernest, for their support, understanding and commitment during my study.



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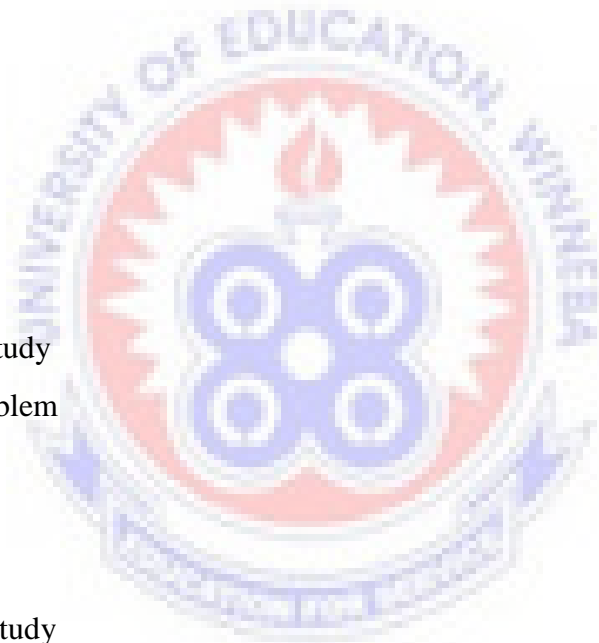
Thanks equally go to the Heads of Special Schools used for the study, the teachers and trainees that participated for without them it would have been simply impossible.

I pay tribute to the authors of the numerous books, journals and official documents I consulted as reference, as well as the unpublished pioneers of which I hereby duly acknowledge.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In recent years, persons with disabilities (PWD) in generally enjoyed co-existence in their societies, though at different times, the treatment and attitudes were at variance. In other words, they were never excluded from society by confinement to institutions. Rather, they lived with their families (Sitlington, Clark, Kolstoe, (2000). As far as education was concerned, the basic educational principles of special education for ascertaining the abilities and needs of each pupil, individualization of teaching targets and methods to match the skills and interests and preparing them to meet the social expectations of their prospective interests. However, for intellectual disability, unlike other disabilities, the history of special education has not been very encouraging. Out of all the types of disabilities, an intellectual disability poses greater challenges than the other types do. Persons with intellectual disabilities have a condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind, which is especially characterized by sub-normal intelligence, thus partially or totally restricting the person's ability to perform certain activities in their life (Taanila, Rantakallio, Koiranen, Von Wendt, & Jarvelin, 2005).

This is owing to impairment in cognitive, emotional or behavioural endowment. One of the key abilities for human beings to lead an independent life is to take decisions independently, which persons with intellectual disabilities are, unfortunately, not endowed with. Therefore they have special needs, which basically include activities for daily living (ADL); instrumental activities of daily living (IADL); reading, writing and arithmetic skills; extracurricular activities, namely sports and games, art and cultural

activities; social activities; vocational and employment activities; independent living skills; and community integration (Sparg, Winberg & Pointer, 1999). Every activity of persons with intellectual disabilities has a meaning in their life, which they have to acquire through individualized education plan supported by related services. viz. audiology services, counselling services, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, medical services, occupational therapy, orientation and mobility services, parent counselling and training, physical therapy, psychological services, recreation, rehabilitation, school health services, social work services in schools, speech-language pathology services, and transportation (Luckasson, Borthwick-Duffy, Buntinx, Coulter, Craig, Reeve, Schalock, Snell, Spitalnik, Spreat, & Tassé, 2002). As indicated earlier, the need for independent living for individuals with intellectual disabilities therefore is paramount. In order to achieve this, there is the need for vocational training which will transit such individuals into a kind of employment for their independence.

Vocational and transitional programmes are offered in special schools to prepare individuals with intellectual disabilities for adulthood and independent living. Such programmes enable such individuals to acquire relevant skills which promote quality of life, self worth, respect and dignity. The programmes also encourage a sense of empowerment, independence, and personal satisfaction, as to be able to participate actively and effectively in the different areas in the society. Specifically, transitional programmes consist of a well-coordinated set of outcome-oriented activities that include independent living.

Vocational programme for individual with intellectual disabilities can be implemented efficiently and effectively if transition programmes are put in place. Personal growth is

very crucial for people to live independently as well as increase their self-esteem (Zhang & Stecker 2001).

The aim of vocational training for individuals with intellectual disabilities in special schools in Ghana is to prepare them to acquire skills necessary to lead independent lives in future. These programmes can also equip individuals with disabilities with skills in vocations for employment. Vocational training is considered an essential tool for integrating individuals with intellectual disabilities in society by making them productive members. It has also been observed that some of the special schools provide appropriate training which prepares individuals with intellectual disabilities for the job market. Even though vocational training in Ghana is available at almost all the special schools and independent vocational training centres established by private as well as the government sector, very few opportunities are available for individuals with intellectual disabilities after leaving school. The level of training given in Ghana does not match with the job market requirements. With the technological development in the market it is difficult for the training centres to provide facilities that can make individuals with intellectual disabilities marketable.

In other parts of the world, especially the United States and United Kingdom, some individuals with intellectual disabilities have been successfully trained and placed in competitive employment (Cherono, 2003). Again, in African countries such as Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa, skilled individuals with intellectual disabilities engaged in doing jobs such as porters, kitchen helpers, house chores, labourers and so on (Cherono, 2003).

In Ghana, Special Schools for individuals with intellectual disabilities provide varieties of vocational programmes that are subsumed in different areas: farming, basketry, batik/tie-dye making, envelop making, broom making, poultry, sewing, craft and home management. These programmes provide a broad spectrum of skill areas for individuals with intellectual disabilities to pursue. However, the question is whether these skills are preparing such students towards independent living and employment.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Even though curriculum for special schools for individuals with intellectual disabilities in Ghana outline some vocational skills needed to enhance independent living and employability of students with intellectual disabilities, students who have gone through such programmes seem unprepared to meet the demands of life after school. As a special educator, the researcher has noted that many past students of the special schools are not able to demonstrate the skills they had learned at the schools. The researcher sought to investigate whether vocational programmes taught in Three Kings and Dzorwulu Special Schools enable individuals with intellectual disabilities acquire employable and independent living skills, and also to establish whether arrangements are available to enable students from school to work, that is whether there is any transition process.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the appropriateness of vocational programmes offered in Three Kings and Dzorwulu Special Schools for students with intellectual disabilities. The study also sought to investigate the transitional arrangements available for such students to prepare them towards school completion.

1.4 Research Questions

The study intended to find answers to the following questions:

1. What vocational courses do individuals with intellectual disabilities study at Three Kings and Dzorwulu Special Schools?
2. What are teachers' views about the appropriateness of the vocational programmes in preparing individuals with intellectual disabilities for employment?
3. What resources are available for effective training of individuals with intellectual disabilities in vocational skills?
4. What transitional arrangements are available to enable students with intellectual disabilities to move from school to work?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would reveal the vocational programmes of two special schools for individuals with intellectual disabilities in the country and ascertain whether the programmes enable such individuals to acquire requisite skills for employment and independent living. The findings would be relevant to staff of the two special schools where the study was conducted because the staff would know whether the programmes are beneficial to the individuals; the staff would know the areas of the programmes that should be improved to make the training of individuals with intellectual disabilities more useful.

1.6 Delimitation

Even though there are twelve public schools for individuals with intellectual disabilities in the country, the study covered only two; Dzorwulu Special School and Three Kings Special School. Also, the study focused on the vocational and transitional programmes offered by the two special schools.

1.7 Limitation

The present study used the descriptive survey design which used questionnaire as the method of data collection. The rationale was to generate data that could be easily manipulated. The use of only questionnaires rather than interviews or any other method to obtain information yielded rather shallow findings since certain issues could not be followed up into greater depth.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Vocation: A particular job or work that individuals are engaged in to enable a person to earn

a living (Brolin, 1995).

Intellectual disabilities: Intellectual disability is a disability characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behaviour, which affects many everyday social and practical skills. This disability originates before the age of 18 (AAMR, 1992).

Independent living: is about individuals with intellectual disabilities having the same level

of choice, control and freedom in their daily lives as any other person (Individuals with Disabilities Act Amendments of 1997).

Transition: a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented

process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living and community participation (Brolin, 1995).

1.9 Organization of the Chapters

The study is made up of five chapters. The first chapter dealt with the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions and significance of the study, delimitation and limitation of the study, and definition of terms. In chapter two, related literature was reviewed to support the study. This was grouped under themes to reflect the objectives. Chapter three provided the methodological framework where the researcher presented and discussed the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, the data gathering tools, procedures for data collection and how data was analysed. The fourth chapter presented and analyzed data, while the fifth chapter dealt with the summary of research findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides related literature to support the study. The discussions have been organized under the following themes:

1. Relevant Theories on vocational and transitional programmes for individual with disabilities
2. Vocational programmes for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
3. Resources for effective vocational training for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
4. Transitional programmes for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
5. Related Empirical Studies.
6. Summary of Literature

2.2 Relevant Theories

The main theories that underpin the study are the “Special Needs Vocational and Career Education Models”.

Special Needs Vocational and Career Education Models (Brolin, 1978)

The special needs vocational and career education models, based on vocational training and transition for individuals with intellectual disabilities will be relevant for the study. Applying these models in the current study will enhance the full realisation of the expectations of individuals with intellectual disabilities on one hand, and the general educational goals of individuals with disabilities on the other.

These models require that students be provided access to all appropriate vocational education classes with modified occupational content and supplemental services when needed. This requirement resulted in a continuum of vocational options ranging from general Vocational class placement to segregated vocational education programmes. Examples of this model included a school-based career development and transition education model for adolescents with disabilities (Clark, 1979).

During the 1970s and early 1980s, the concept of career education also emerged and became a national priority and pre-transition programme model. Professionals influenced by the career development movement began to adopt a more longitudinal and expansive life-centered approach to individuals with disabilities and their preparation for adult life.

Brolin (1995) defined career education as:

“a lifelong process that infuses a career emphasis in all subjects, grades, including job training, apprenticeship programmes, mentoring, career exploration, and the nonpaid work done as a family member, citizen, and leisure seeker” (p. 53).

With this conceptualization, Hoyt (1987) identified seven major goals of career education, many of which were to become central tenets of the transition movement: (a) to help persons in career awareness, career exploration, and decision-making; (b) to equip

persons with general employability and adaptability skills; (c) to promote and implement private sector and public school system partnerships; (d) to interface education and work so that the student may make better choices; (e) to reform education by infusing a “careers” emphasis in academic classrooms; (f) to make work a meaningful part of the individual’s life; and (g) to protect freedom of choice by reducing prejudice and stereotyping.

Several of the early career education curriculum models successfully used with individuals with disabilities included (a) the life-centered, competency-based model (Brolin, 1978); (b) school-based career development and transition education model (Clark, 1979); (c) ecological inventory (Brown, Branston, Hamre-Nietupski, Pumpian, Certo, & Gruenewald, 1979); (d) experienced-based model (Larson, 1981); and (e) career development model (Egelston-Dodd & DeCaro, 1982). Each of these models presented a viable method for appropriately blending academic and functional life skills. While evolving over a 30 year period, the career education approach continues today to be important for educators to consider as they develop curriculum to meet contemporary needs of individuals with disabilities in regard to productive, competitive work and meaningful and vocational activities.

2.3 Vocational programmes for individuals with intellectual disability

According to Szymanski and Parker (2003) Vocational programmes are subsumed under seven different areas which are agriculture, business and office, distributive, health, home economics, trade and industry and technical occupations. McCrea and Miller (2004) opined that vocational programmes are further simplified to include mushroom farming, batik/ tie dying, basketry, weaving, carpentry, poultry, bead making and calabash work

which constitute an important component of preparing individuals with intellectual disabilities to enter the world of work.

However, vocational programmes should not end as employment begins, developing your career is important at all stages of your working life. Whether you are starting out and need to gain new skills to enter a profession or you are an experienced professional who needs to remain up-to-date with skills in their job, developing your career is vital to being successful in your particular line of work (Reid, Deutsch, Kitchen & Azanavorian, 1997). Activities must be adapted to meet the needs of individuals with intellectual disabilities because the interaction of the developmental nature of individuals with intellectual disabilities and the developmental nature of career education can lead to a variety of impediments in career instruction for individuals with intellectual disabilities (Morris & Levinson, 1995).

As Kanchier (1990) said vocational programmes should be dynamic and life long process because individuals with intellectual disabilities are always changing as they grow. Szymanski et al. (1996) gave a framework for vocational training programme for individuals with intellectual disabilities which is particularly useful for counsellors who need to integrate their own services with the services offered by other members of the Individualized Educational Programme (IEP) team.

Hammill and Bartel (1990) further reported that vocational training programme focuses on helping those with intellectual disabilities to acquire skills and techniques that are used in vocational training to assist such individuals to acquire relevant skills. Kniel (2002) contends that the selection of vocational programmes should be relevant to

individuals with intellectual disabilities, and the activities should be simple and repetitive.

Hayford (2000) carried out an evaluation of vocational programmes in four special schools for the individuals with intellectual disabilities in Ghana. The researcher noted that, the four special schools in the study concentrated on the provision of vocational activities such as batik/tie dye, weaving, bead making and poultry. These vocations appeared too limited in exposing individuals with intellectual disabilities to other vocational options and job market.

In their vocational interest, individuals with intellectual disabilities may lack realistic information about occupation and vocations in which to base their interest. With regard to individuals' preferences, teachers and parents can help identify short-term skill areas that will be developed into long-term vocational outcomes.

Studies into vocational programmes for intellectually disabled students in the United State have identified a number of programme practices which are associated with the successful vocational training of intellectually disabled students (McDonnell, Hardman, McDonnell & Kiefer- O'Donnell, 1995). These programmes include person-centred transition planning and transition assessment, community-referenced curriculum and instruction, an individualised vocational programme, job placement prior to leaving school and the importance of family involvement (Sitlington, Clark & Kolstoe, 2000).

Jones and Howley (2010) posited that an individualized vocational programme should be developed according to the students' individual needs. This is a specially designed programme with inputs of team members (i.e. the disabled child, parents and class teacher) to meet an individual's needs. Involving individuals with intellectual disabilities

in decision making in terms of vocational programme choices will create opportunities for them to have a say in their own education and future.

Besides, Levinson, Peterson and Elson (1994) opined that, school counsellors serving elementary schools can collaborate with teachers to help individuals with intellectual disabilities develop vocation interest and the ability to make choices among vocational activities. For example, instructional activities at all grade levels may be designed to expose students with intellectual disabilities to a wide variety of job-related skills. The identification of preferences can help the individual's define preferences that may translate to preferred occupational environments.

Furthermore, Avoke and Avoke (2004) argue that schools should incorporate vocational education programmes and experiences early in the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities. The authors also affirmed that the paramount importance of daily living skills, work experiences and vocational education is deeply infused within a robust vocational system.

Thressiakutty and Rao (2001) suggest that, there should be on-going support services to help individuals with disabilities to continue on vocational training programmes. Given the importance of support services, the authors suggest the following:

- To arrange for extensive vocational training
- To observe the individuals at their job sites
- To provide additional remediation in academic subjects.
- To teach necessary skills needed to succeed in their career.
- To liaise with the employer to bring in improvement in the performance
- To lead them towards independent living and attend quality of life

- To organize social warning exercise for better acceptability in the work community. (pp.62-64)

Furthermore, one major objective in educating individuals with intellectual disabilities is the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills, and also vocational skills for self dependency. In segregated settings, the curriculum is geared towards functional education and life skills training for individuals with disabilities (Mutua & Dimitrov, 2001). Teachers for individuals with intellectual disabilities in segregated facilities focus on teaching their students how to communicate their needs, employ self-care skills for basic hygiene, maintain appropriate behaviour, employ functional academics, to be safe, and how to employ appropriate social skills (Mwangi, Kerre, Wabuge, & Mugo, 1999).

2.4 Resources for effective vocational training

Sarbah and Gidiglo (2003) stated that appropriate resources, training facilities and vocational instructors should be made available in the training and development of students with intellectual disability. These authors pointed out that for a successful vocational training for the intellectually disabled, there should be enough resources and vocational instructors in the special schools in Ghana.

Obi (2004) opines that parents more than anyone else, provide the needed support to the special needs child. Avoke and Avoke (2004) further stated that the family is the only constant in the child's life and as a result serves as advocate and case managers for the student with intellectual disabilities. These authors also noted that the families help inculcate in their children functional skills that will educate them to cope with adult responsibilities.

Powel (1991) stated that professionals who are concerned about the long-term employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities need to identify a range of supports that will enhance each individual's success in the community and employment. Szymanski (1999) also suggests that school counsellors at the elementary level can work collaboratively with teachers to help increase students' awareness of their abilities and interests that may transfer to future career opportunities.

Teachers of individuals with intellectual disabilities can benefit from exposure to current literature on meeting the needs of these students. This literature emphasizes the need for teachers to plan their materials well, have clear goals and objectives, teach to their objectives, and assess students directly and frequently. Since individuals with intellectual disability experience difficulty in maintaining the skills and knowledge they have acquired, they require frequent opportunities to practice new academic and functional skills. Not only must curriculum focus on skills that these individuals need to use frequently in school, at home, and in the community but teaching functional skills in the natural contexts in which they are performed is necessary. It is important to also note that, curriculum in units and segregated or residential settings for students with intellectual disabilities do not seem to be consistent (Muuya, 2002). Muuya further suggests that rather than the more appropriate curriculum combining literacy and numeracy with functional academics and life skills training discussed earlier, programmes for these children focused more on behavioural control and containment and moral behaviour. Curriculum orientation, although guided by the need for the children to acquire skills in self-reliance among others, are largely dependent on the goals and orientations of religious, private, or other organizations in terms of funding.

Individuals with intellectual disabilities do best in learning environments where visual aids such as charts, pictures, and graphs are used. These visual tools are also useful for helping students to understand what behaviours are expected of them. Using charts to map students' progress is very effective. Charts can also be used as a means of providing positive reinforcement for appropriate, on-task behaviour in conjunction with a token economy. Individuals with intellectual disabilities require immediate feedback in order to make a connection between their answers, behaviours, or questions and the teacher's responses. A delay in providing this immediate feedback may disrupt the formation of a connection between cause and effect in the student's mind, and the learning point may be missed (Reynolds, Zupanick & Dombeck, 2011).

There has been a growing feeling that, teacher education training courses are not effective in turning out efficient teachers, especially in teaching children with diverse needs (Peter, Herman, Hanson & James, 1997; Mutua & Dimitrov, 2001).

Individuals with intellectual disabilities may find it harder to study in school when separated from their family. This is the reason why there are growing needs for teachers who would have the desire and the qualification to teach these individuals to be able to qualify as a teacher for individual with intellectual disabilities. The teacher needs to obtain such qualification or equal teaching experience about the job. Some of the requirement involves a degree of psychotherapy, social science, applied psychology, master's degree in education or alternative licensure programme for special education can also be accepted in this teaching job and allied field of expertise.

Teachers also need to remember that the job requires more than educational qualification, but a combination of clinical methodology and a direct caring responsibility. Their role

also requires so much focus on improvement on the quality of life and transformational changes for the individuals with intellectual disabilities. The teacher's role also is to work and care for individuals with intellectual disabilities primarily teaching them basic literacy and values formation.

Besides, teachers are to identify and modify educational curriculum as needed to meet the individual needs. Teachers handle and teach with various techniques in learning including basic effective communication and social interaction. The teachers are able to show activeness and demonstrate intensive training to set personalised goals and in case for older individuals with intellectual disabilities a more skilled teaching strategy and plan of action.

The teachers have all the knowledge, ability, tolerance and patience to cope with individuals with intellectual disabilities and are highly trained to do a very critical undertaking of handling a different job. They play a very important role to lead the path of a child in a more straight direction. A teacher in this field should have a specific qualification and specialization to make the work more effective (Szymaski & Parker, 2003).

Furthermore, the teacher needs to possess knowledge in educational psychology or other social or behavioural science to enable him to technically understand, the world of the individual with intellectual disabilities. Some schools may require teachers to pass a qualification examination or have some years of experience in the field. Some schools may even require an authentic recertification and re-evaluation from previous teaching experience so as to prove teachers' special qualification, while others may only require a basic teaching experience with the ability to handle such special children (Ministry of

Education, 2005). Since teachers are the ones to evaluate and nature the value of the individual characteristics of such individuals, they must be open to individuals with intellectual disabilities and maintain a high level of tolerance.

For their part, Phelps and Hanley-Maxwel (1997) were of the view that the responsibility of the teachers is focused basically on the transformation and revival of the intellect of the individuals with intellectual disabilities. The teacher's personal tender loving care is important in this type of job. It is more than just a technical learning experience. Teachers have a personal option to learn to love individuals with intellectual disabilities by expressing a genuine concern and interest in teaching them. The teachers use constant training and practical methods of teaching. Their emphasis is more on functional education. Teachers also teach individual with intellectual disabilities basic skills in typing, reading and writing as well as outdoor games for fun and recreation (Wirenski, 1992).

2.5 Transitional programmes for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

Transitional programmes are programmes designed for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Programmes may include functional skills and structural skills for the teenager, technical training for the youth and neighbourhood centred and special training for the elderly, or a combination of any of the above (Ten, 2007). Thressiakutty and Rao (2001) suggested that transition planning currently ranks as one of the top priorities of special education and vocational rehabilitation programmes in the United States and the United Kingdom.

According to Morgan and Morgan (2006), transitional programmes are aimed at enhancing the academic, vocational and technical performance of students with disability.

The programmes give them the opportunity to understand basic academic learning so that they can integrate in their real life. Through this they can also experience socialization and interdependence. Those who may not be able to come to school can be trained at home using correspondent learning where they may require the help of their parents or guardian. Their schedule then will be dependent on their availability and their capacity to learn.

There are also programmes that need special attention that do not focus primarily on intellect but also on behaviour. They associate cure to learning and are best for students during their toddler years so that they can maintain their status till they have grown (Ramesh, 2004).

There are also programmes that may focus on transitional independence especially for young adult and teenagers who have been experiencing puberty and adolescence. In such programmes the individuals are taught to do household chores, responsibility management and interpersonal development in addition to academic training so that they can accomplish certain tasks at home even on their own. Mental experts say that this programme should be given to the young adult rather than children or the elderly because they are the individuals who are physically capable of handling the task (Wang, 2006).

It is very important for the parents to identify what kind of transitional programme they have to enrol their children so that they can focus on their status and basically learn from it (Shearman & Shearan, 2011). Individuals with intellectual disabilities need to learn close to someone or with the supervision of their parents or immediate guardian during the first few weeks of their learning experience and later on if they are familiar with the

studies, then they can begin to let go slowly for the students or patients to work independently (Wang, 2006).

Wang (2006) emphasized that the overall goals of the transitional programme is to help student and family to bring together the best possible outcome of the person who are suffering from intellectual disability so that their transition is smooth and secure. According to Wang, intellectual disabilities are not at all a hindrance for students to learn the behaviour of a normal individual and that they too have the rights to education. Transitional programmes are intended to develop the students with intellectual disabilities to full maturity as possible so that they will not just be normal human beings like everyone else but they would see themselves progressive and organising individuals.

Also, Wang (2003) suggested that transition from high school to adulthood is a major life change for most young adults and their families, and generally it is depicted as an especially stressful time for young people with disabilities and their families. Adequate planning is therefore required to address the challenging impact of this stage of life on families.

In terms of educational transition, at school levels as individualized education programme is designed for each student and student's parents are invited to participate in the programme design and educational placement. Also, individualized educational programmes cover assistance in transitions from preschool to elementary school, from elementary school to junior high school, from junior high school to senior vocational high school and from senior (vocational) high school to college/university (Lin, 2011).

With regard to employment transition, the needs of individuals with intellectual

disabilities are taken into consideration by providing barrier-free vocational training and employment services, namely vocational rehabilitation.

In terms of career transition, Lin noted the welfare demands of individuals with intellectual disabilities in different stages of their careers which require that the related government departments at individuals' levels communicate and coordinate with each other and make individualized career transition plan to provide the individuals with intellectual disabilities with complete and continuous services.

Shearman and Shearan (2011) said that employment is most important because having a job:

- is considered important and enhances social status
- is what the majority of adults do for a large portion of their day
- provides wages or money to participate in other activities
- increases integration – provides contacts and opportunities for other integrated activities
- is productive – being engaged in worthwhile activities increases self esteem;
- promotes individual growth

There are a wide range of activities undertaken in educational settings that have been found to increase the possibility of individuals with intellectual disability's transitioning from school to work. Transition from school has long been a recognised speciality within the broader context of service provision.

As a result, what constitutes best practice has been described comprehensively in the literature for some time (Haugh, 1993; Wehman, 1993). Mirfin-Veitch (2003) has provided an overview of developments in transition programming and those directly involved in providing transition services and developed resources that guide practitioners

(Career Moves, 2005). Based on this work one is able to identify a number of key activities and practices that enhance the likelihood of successful transition from school to work for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

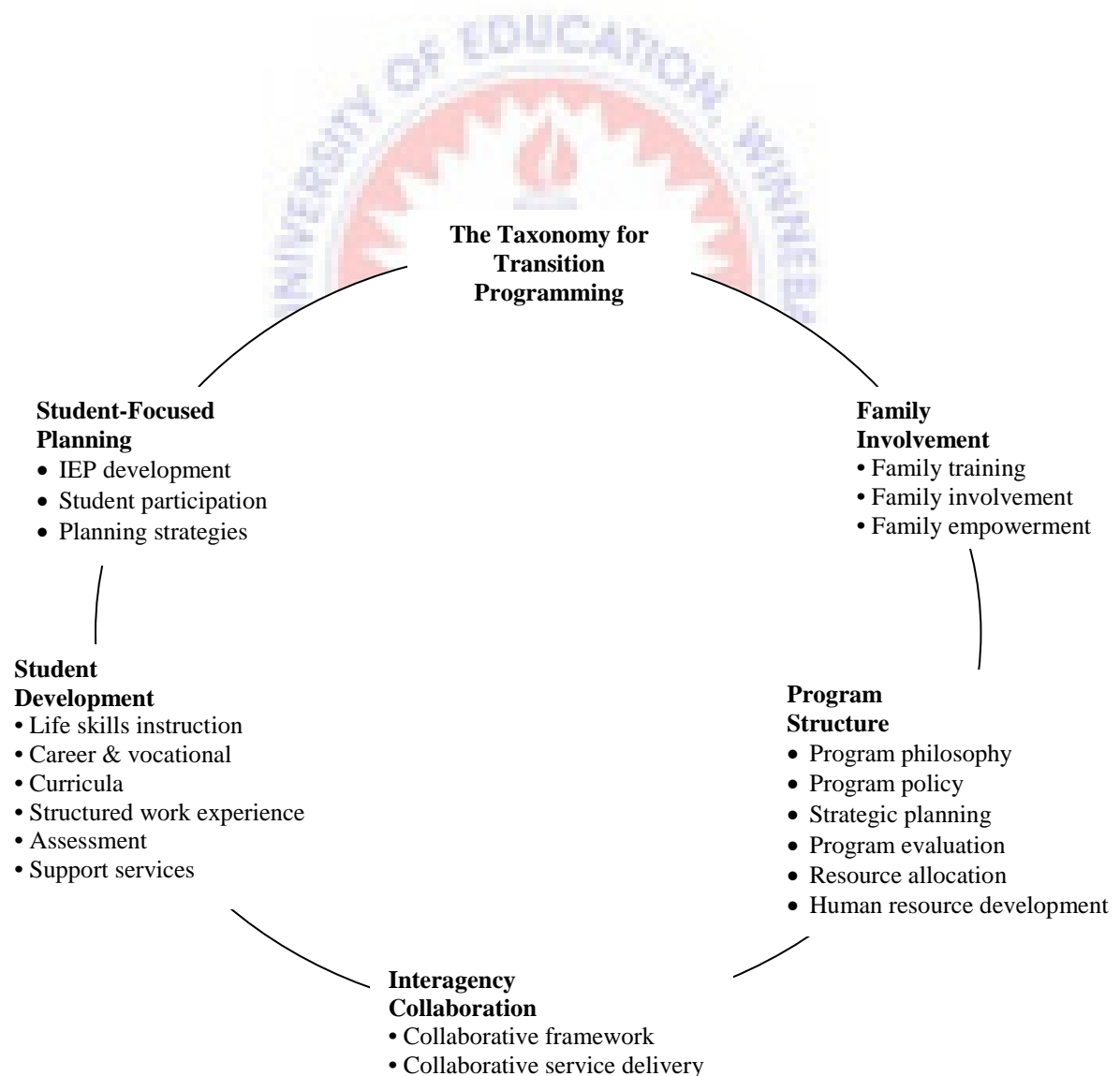


Figure 1: The Taxonomy for Transition Programming (Kohler, 1996; 2000)

The Taxonomy for Transition Programming in Figure 1 presents with practices organized according to five key areas indicative of successful transition-focused programming and an outcome-oriented planning process. These areas are student-focused planning, student development, interagency collaboration, programme structure and family involvement. The Taxonomy was the starting point for the Transition Specialist Competencies generated by the Division on Career Development and Transition (2000) and the distinguished Standards for the Preparation of Transition Specialists published by Council for Exceptional Children (2001).

Transition planning appears to establish a critical platform from which to develop goals and learning experiences that prepare an individual for the world of work. While more active transition planning may be a feature in the last two to three decades, schools still find it difficult and challenging to provide the opportunity for genuine goals and aspirations to develop the possibility of employment for individuals with disabilities in general. It is also important to recognise that the values, attitudes and behaviours that lead people to the world of work evolve throughout childhood and young adulthood, not just in the year before we leave school. Young individuals with intellectual disabilities must also benefit from experiences that evolve over time as opposed to having these compressed into a one or two year transition programmes (Kohler, 2000).

According to Haugh (1993), transition from school can be a daunting time when the normal anxieties around parenting teenagers are complicated by the vulnerabilities and barriers that young people with intellectual disabilities may experience. In addition there is a whole new world of post-school service providers, new funding systems to grapple

with and the possibility that there may be multiple providers involved in different support roles – each wanting to ensure parent involvement. Including parents as active and contributing members of the transition planning team from the beginning is essential. Again, this can be problematic if transition planning is compressed into the last year or two of school. There may be anxieties and issues that need time to work through and options that need exploring.

In addition the range of post-school options, including employment support, is constantly evolving and changing. The pattern of post-school support services that emerges as the point of transition approaches can also lead to significant lifestyle decisions for parents in terms of their support roles.

Huang and Cuvo (1997) suggested that securing and sustaining employment for individuals with intellectual disabilities can be an extraordinarily challenging enterprise. In the absence of full time employment, options that include further education and training, leisure, recreation and voluntary work are essential components of a valued and well supported life in the community, and therefore need also to be a focus of transition planning. The tendency is to respond to these needs by way of congregate programme options rather than exploring more individualized and supported options that are consistent with the vision of an inclusive community.

Individuals with intellectual disabilities are making it clear that they share the aspirations of their age group peers for access to the world of work on the same basis as everyone else. Access to “an ordinary life” also includes participation in the broader life of the community and in ways that people feel valued and included (Kohler, 1996).

Parents are also making it increasingly clear that there is a pronounced scarcity of post-school services that are able to effectively support their children's participation in a range of inclusive work, further education and leisure/recreation options (National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability, 2003). There is still some considerable movement required to reach a point where such options are the norm rather than the exception.

Powell, Pancsofar, Steere, Butterwarth and Rainforth, (1996) stated that people with intellectual disabilities have the same needs with regard to employment as other people.

These needs are as follows:

- Security: most workers prefer situation in which they know that their jobs will continue in future.
- Paid employment: members of society earn wages to provide for their needs and employment.
- Training opportunities: employees often given in-service training to advance skills as well as to ensure opportunities for career advancement.
- A career: individual should have specific careers that lead to various job experiences.
- Benefits through job-provided benefits individual are able to take care of health needs and enjoy periodic paid for their work.
- Fair bosses: all employees seek supervisors who will be fair and treat them with dignity and respect.
- Opportunities for career advancement: many workers seek to increase job responsibilities and duties as they advanced.

- Safe work condition: no employee should jeopardize health safety as a result of work performance. Well-lighted, well ventilated locations as well as safe materials and tools needed by the individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- Friendly co-workers: workers wish to be associated and helpful. Work is enhanced by the interactions of the people who work together. (p.112)

As the special schools for intellectual disabilities in Ghana have no specific exit points for their training programmes, one may wonder how and when transition services are introduced to the individuals. Wehman (1996) suggested that by the time a student is 14-15 years old, substantial information should have been gathered on students' preference, capabilities and skills in each type of job. This data will serve as basis for the selection of specific vocational training options for students. If these processes are adhered to, even those with intellectual disabilities in the special schools, will have relevant skills to lead full or semi productive lives after training. Vlachos (2008) highlighted certain aspects that must be considered when planning for their future and job placement of individuals with intellectual disabilities. These aspects involve Physical, Cognitive, Moral, Affective, Self-concept and Social aspects.

In terms of physical, individuals with intellectual disabilities reach their physical milestones, like sitting, crawling and walking later than other children. This may have a disruptive influence on the child's normal flow of development. A learner's surroundings can be adapted to limit the effect of his/her physical disability, though he/she still needs an inner drive to successfully complete tasks.

Also, cognitive aspect refers to the personal will to consciously and intentionally do something, which is a driving force or motivation in a person's life. To formulate a goal

is a cognitive exercise, but to actively follow the goal is a cognitive or motivational exercise. The cognitive aspect of the individual with intellectual disabilities' life has adversely been affected by their continuous experiences of failure. They later expect failure in whatever they do and tend not to set meaningful goals for the fear of failure. They often do not trust their own abilities and rely on others (external sources) to solve their problems. Motivation plays a role in making decisions about what one would really like to do and what will be acceptable in the community.

Furthermore, moral aspect or moral judgment involves deciding between right and wrong and is linked to the level of cognitive development. Individual with disabilities find it difficult to predict the outcome of their actions and therefore find it difficult to avoid negative outcomes. People's values are the basis for what they find worthy in other people and in themselves. Values undergird codes of conduct, preferences leading to choices, and ideas leading to decision-making. Examples of positive values for all high school students are courage, honesty, cooperation, respect, justice, hope, conservation, health, perseverance, friendliness, trust, honour, integrity, efficiency, initiative, kindness, loyalty and responsibility. As the learners are constantly bombarded in making the right moral choices, they constantly come in contact with other people and choices in relationships are necessary (Gumpel, Tappe & Araki, 2000).

Moreso, Howley (2010) opines that affective development refers to the development of feelings, emotions and mood. As with moral aspect there is a connection between the level of cognitive development and affective development. Feelings in individuals with intellectual disabilities are often simplistic, short in duration, difficult to control and characterised by liability. They may experience crippling unhappiness. Anxiety, hostility,

rejection and feelings of unworthiness and affective problems occur more often in individuals with intellectual disabilities. Parents' reactions to having a child with a disability and their expectations of the child's present and future abilities influence their affective behaviour toward the child. This in turn influences the child's behaviour and the child's development of a self-concept.

In addition, Creswell (2005) states that individuals with intellectual disabilities find it difficult to reason accurately and logically. This distorts their self-description and could eventuate in unhappiness and self-defeating behaviours. They often experience feelings of intellectual inadequacy and incompetence when compared to other learners. Prolonged stigmatisation triggers an expectancy of failure, an attitude of helplessness and an outer directedness. All of this becomes a vicious circle that reinforces a poor self-concept and poor cognitive functioning. Since work has a central role in human life, it is not surprising that vocational development is easily viewed as the implementation of a self-concept.

Besides, intellectual disability causes impaired judgment which will result in inappropriate actions. Social cognition involves complex cognitive processes and skills that often create problems for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Vlachas (2008) noted examples of complex social cognitive skills as follows:

- Putting oneself in somebody else's position (role taking)
- Perceiving and interpreting the characteristics of other persons accurately
- Interpreting other people's motives and feelings correctly
- Understanding social role expectations
- Understanding the roles that govern social relations

- Establishing and maintaining friendships
- Appropriately judging matters on a moral basis
- Listening and understanding what other people are saying, as well as being able to communicate one's own ideas effectively in response to them
- Being sensitive to the finer nuances of social and emotional interaction.

Vlachas (2008) was of the view that appropriate social behaviour may be even more important than academic or job skills in determining whether one is perceived as a competent individual. Intellectually disabled workers who demonstrate competence in social skills are generally perceived more positively than those who lack such skills, regardless of task related skill levels.

2.6 Related Empirical Studies

Results from research studies show that the development of intellectually disabled students is adversely affected by continuous experiences of failure, and therefore they do not set meaningful goals for their future (Zhang & Stecker 2001). In the Ghanaian educational reform efforts, there are debates on how a curriculum for students with special educational needs (SEN) should be structured along with the required instructional content. In the past the focus was on the number of skills that the student performed in the classroom, although this has not allowed them to achieve a quality of life that is comparable to their non-disabled peers and therefore require that the programme outcomes should reflect the demands of living successfully in the community (McDonnell et al., 1995; Zhang & Stecker 2001; Kozma & Stock, 2005).

Similarly, Kohler (2000) states that combining the curriculum content and instruction with job placement that can be on or off the school campus will ease the transition from school to work. This concept gives students the opportunity to get curriculum content input and learn specific job skills (Kohler, 2000).

A study conducted by Kozma and Stock (2005) to identify the weaknesses and strengths of vocational training programmes, job seeking and job adjustment problems in Pakistan for instance, revealed that vocational training was provided in some of the schools as part of regular education programme. These programmes were usually offered in primary school as pre-vocational and as vocational skills at secondary school. However, all the schools do not have trained staff in vocational guidance, vocational assessment and job counselling. The Vocational trainers were not technical persons in some of the schools although they were teaching some kind of technical skills. Therefore the level of expertise in the individuals with intellectual disabilities is not of the level, which could effectively help in seeking the job or retaining a job if got through networking or efforts of the school.

In their study, Kozma and Stock revealed that, vocational schools do not have follow up system once the student is out of school after successful completion of course. The job adjustment problems are also due to the inadequate facilities at work place. Employers do not bother about provision of special facilities like toileting or machine modifications to suit the individuals with intellectual disabilities. This situation affects the efficiency of a special person negatively. Employers are also seen to be reluctant to hire special persons due to the fear that it may affect the output. The study found that, about 45.0% of the

respondents stated that the vocational training given to them did not help at all in getting required jobs.

The study also revealed that 40.0% of the respondents held that the training helped them to some extent and only 15% stated that the training helped them in getting the job. These findings underscore the fact that training individuals with intellectual disabilities to acquire vocational skills in itself does not give the individual a job, unless these individuals are helped through job linkages that are factored into transition programmes.

2.7 Summary of literature

In relation to the present study, literature reviewed highlighted on vocational programmes for individuals with intellectual disabilities and the resources that are available to enhance effective vocational training for such individuals. Literature also dealt with the availability of qualified teachers to teach vocational skills to such individuals. The transition programmes that provide a smooth transition from school to work setting or employment was also discussed based on the special needs vocational and career education model. These models explained skills and programmes required to prepare individuals with intellectual disabilities for their future lives.

The need for vocational training and availability of resources, both human and materials were identified as crucial for effective education of individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Available literature indicates that, there are lots of vocational skills training that create opportunities for individuals with disabilities in general to become self-sufficient in their future lives. This is evident in literature where independent living and employability featured in most of the studies conducted globally. It can also be inferred from reviewed

literature that, the development of a transition-based service provision in special schools is vital, especially for students with intellectual disabilities. Such students need to be taught such that, how and where they are going to live and work after living school is assured.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the various methods used in collecting data for study. These include the research design, population, sample and sampling technique, procedure for data collection, methods, validity and reliability of the instruments and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. The descriptive survey according to Best (1970) cited in Hill, Newmark and Le Grange (2003) is concerned with conditions that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs, points of view or attitudes that are held, processes that are on-going, effects that are being felt or trends that are developing. Again, Macmillan and Schumacher (1997) also submitted that descriptive surveys transform a set of numbers or observations into indices that describes, summarizes, organizes and reduces large numbers of observation. The use of this design was necessary because it afforded the researcher to present the views of respondents and provided no room for bias on the subject of study. The descriptive nature of the study helped to evaluate the appropriateness of vocational programmes and transition on the individuals with intellectual disabilities and the trend of affairs in the process of providing education for this category of children in Ghana.

3.3 Population

The target population for the study was 40 teachers (comprised of 18 male and 22 female teachers) from Dzorwulu Special School, Accra and Three Kings Special School, Bator. This was made up of 20 teachers from Dzorwulu Special School, Accra and 20 teachers from Three Kings Special School, Bator.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

The study involved forty (40) vocational skills teachers drawn from Three Kings and Dzorwulu Special Schools. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the vocational skills teachers, because they were targets for the study. As Shaugnessy and Zechmeiserter (1990) state, purposive approach to sample selection is adopted when the respondents selected have certain characteristics to provide the most, useful information

for which the study is intended. Census selection was used to select all the forty vocational skills teachers because their number was few and so there was no need to select some and leave others. The sample size is presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Distribution of Sample Size According to School and Gender

School	Teacher		Total	Percentage (%)
	M	F		
Three Kings Special School	8	12	20	50.0
Dzorwulu Special School	10	10	20	50.0
Total	18	22	40	100.0

3.5 Research Instrument

Questionnaire was used to collect data on types of vocations individuals with intellectual disabilities learn at Dzorwulu and Three Kings special schools. Teachers' views about the appropriateness of the vocational programmes in preparing individual with intellectual disabilities for employment and the types of transitional arrangements offered to students pursuing vocational programmes in special schools were also investigated. The choice of questionnaire in this study was based on its strength in allowing anonymity and privacy of respondents to be guaranteed, since no names were written on them.

The questions were cast in two parts. The first part solicited background information on the teachers, while the second part consisted of both closed-ended and open-ended questions on vocational programmes and transitional arrangements in Three Kings and Dzorwulu Special Schools.

Questionnaire

Twenty (20) item questionnaires (see Appendix C) were developed to investigate the problem. The questionnaire was constructed to reflect the four research questions developed for the study. For each of the research questions, four sub-questions were constructed to touch on specific issues which bothered on (a) types of vocations individuals with intellectual disabilities study, (b) appropriateness of the vocational programmes in preparing individual with intellectual disabilities for employment, (c) available resources for effective vocational training for individuals with intellectual disabilities, and the types of transitional arrangements offered to students pursuing vocational programmes in the schools to address the problem.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

To ensure validity and reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was presented to the researcher's supervisor for vetting. The necessary corrections and modifications were effected before administering them to the respondents. Also, the researcher pre-tested the questionnaire using four teachers pursuing Master of Education degree programme at the University of Education, Winneba. Pre-testing of the instrument was done to determine the consistency of the questionnaire items and to address distortions and ambiguities before administering them to the participants.

Validity is one of the basic principles of research and it is the ability to produce findings that are in agreement with the theoretical values, in other words to produce accurate results and to measure what it is supposed to measure (Sarantakos, 1998). A valid measure produces true results that reflect the true situation and condition of the environment it is supposed to study.

3.7 Procedures for Data Collection

Before the study began, permission was sought from the school heads, who subsequently informed the teachers about the study in order to solicit their cooperation and assistance. The researcher explained the purpose of the study, and assured the participants of the necessary confidentiality on the information to be gathered. Scheduled meetings were communicated to the participants' days ahead of time.

Ethical Considerations

There were some ethical considerations that were made to protect the rights of participants. These included a letter of introduction from the Department of Special Education of the University of Education, Winneba indicating the researcher's intent to conduct a study in the selected school (see Appendix A). This was done to seek their cooperation and assistance during the study. The respondents were briefed about the study and their consent sought prior to participation in the study. An appreciation letter was also sent to the school to thank the respondents for their co-operation and full participation (see Appendix B).

3.8 Data Analysis

Data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The advantage of using descriptive statistics was that, it allowed the researcher to use one or two numbers to represent all the individual scores in the sample (Greef, 2002). The questionnaire sheets were carefully scored and transferred for analysis. Numerical descriptions of data were done to provide the frequency distributions and percentages. This provided some direction for answering the research questions.



CHAPTER FOUR

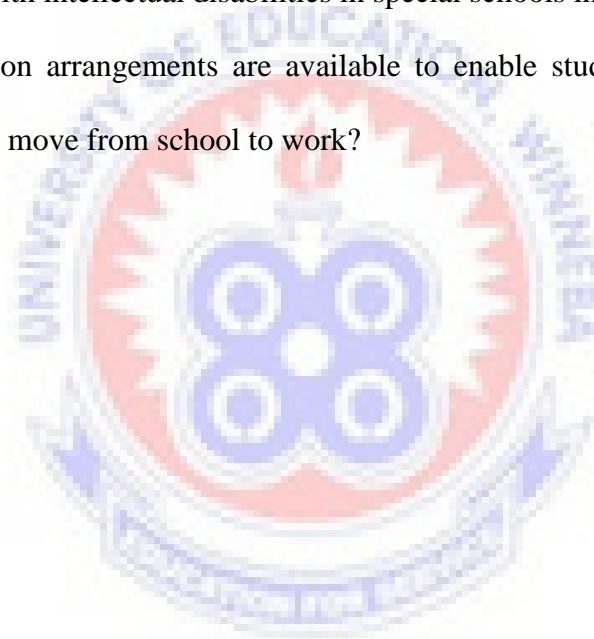
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of results from the survey conducted in two special schools for individuals with intellectual disabilities selected for the study.

The analysis and discussions are done concurrently under the four research questions raised in the study:

1. What vocational courses do individuals with intellectual disabilities study at Three Kings and Dzorwulu Special Schools?
2. What are teachers' views about the appropriateness of the vocational programmes in preparing students with intellectual disabilities for employment
3. What resources are available for effective training in vocational skills for individuals with intellectual disabilities in special schools in vocational skills?
4. What transition arrangements are available to enable students with intellectual disabilities to move from school to work?



4.2 Data Analysis and Discussions

Research question 1: What vocational courses do individuals with intellectual disabilities study at Three Kings and Dzorwulu Special Schools?

Table 2: Types of Vocational Courses Offered in the Special Schools

School	Courses
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Dzorwulu Special School	Batik/tie and dye Poultry Door mat (weaving) Bead making
Three Kings Special School	Batik/tie and dye Poultry Wood work/Carpentry Basketry Gardening Envelop making Hair dressing Dressmaking

Source: Field Data, 2011.

Table 3 provides details of vocational courses that are studied in the two special schools. Dzorwulu Special School as at the time of the study was offering skills in only four vocations. These vocations included batik/tie dye, poultry, door mat weaving, and bead making. On the other hand, Three Kings Special School was offering a total of eight vocational courses, in batik/tie dye and poultry were taught. In addition, skills in woodwork/carpentry, basketry, gardening, dressmaking, envelop making, and hair dressing were offered to students. Thus, Three Kings offered more courses than Dzorwulu Special School. The courses offered were relevant to the individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Research Question 2: What are teachers' views about the appropriateness of the vocational programmes in preparing individuals with intellectual disabilities for employment?

This question sought to investigate the vocational courses students offered most in the two schools. The results are presented in Table 4 below:

Table 3: Views of teachers on appropriateness of the vocational programmes

Vocation	Freq.	%
Basketry	8	20.0
Poultry	38	95.0
Hair dressing	4	10.0
Bead making	14	35.0
Dressmaking	4	10.0
Batik/tie and dye	40	100.0
Door mat(weaving)	10	25.0
Wood work/Carpentry	6	15.0
Envelop making	20	50.0
Gardening	20	50.0

Source: Field Data, 2011.

Table 3 above illustrate the teachers' views about the appropriateness of the vocational programmes in preparing individuals with intellectual disabilities for employment. The results show that out of twenty (40) teachers whose views were collected on the programmes, majority (100.0%) agreed on the appropriateness of batik/tie and dye followed by poultry (95.0%), envelope making and gardening (50.0%) each, bead making (35.0%), door mat weaving (25.0%), basketry (20.0%), wood work (15.0%) and dressmaking and hairdressing (10.0%) respectively.

Research Question 3: What resources are available for effective training of individuals with intellectual disabilities in vocational skills?

Table 4: Teachers' responses to the Availability of Resources

Items	Yes (%)	No (%)
Classrooms are available for vocational skills training	18 (45.0)	22 (55.0)

Workshops are available for practical work	22 (55.0)	18 (45.0)
All teachers are adequately trained to teach vocational. skills	36 (90.0)	4 (10.0)
There are adequate tools and materials for teaching/learning of vocational Skills	12 (30.0)	28 (70.0)

Source: Field Data, 2011.

The results with regard to the availability of training resources (see Table 4) revealed that, 45% of the respondents indicated that vocational courses offered in the schools are taught in classrooms, while majority (55.0%) said the students are trained at the training workshops available in the schools. From the results, lack of materials and other resources such as working tools seemed to be a major issue facing the teaching of vocational skills in these schools. A majority (70.0%) of the respondents from both schools said that, tools and materials for teaching and learning of vocational courses were not adequately provided. This situation is problematic, since it would hinder the teaching and learning of vocational courses in the schools.

Research Question 4: What transitional arrangements are available to enable students with intellectual disabilities to move from school to work?

Table 5: Teachers' Responses on Transition Arrangements for Students

	Yes	%	No	%	Total (N=40)	%
1 Sufficient opportunity for practical sessions in the vocational training	34	85.0	6	15.0	40	100.0
2 Students gain sufficient skills before graduation	36	90.0	4	10.0	40	100.0

3	Students receive orientation about their expected jobs	2	5.0	38	95.0	40	100.0
4	Students are monitored in their new employment	8	20.0	32	80.0	40	100.0
5	Transitional team modifies a students' transitional plan when necessary	32	80.0	8	20.0	40	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2011.

Table 5 revealed that a majority (85.0%) of the participants said there was sufficient opportunity for practical sessions in the vocational training programmes of the schools. This indicates that students were adequately equipped with vocational skills that make them ready for employment. Indeed, 90.0% of the respondents said students gained sufficient work-related skills before graduation. However, a majority (95.0%) of the participants stated that students did not receive orientation about their expected jobs before leaving school. 80.0% of the respondents also added that, students were not monitored in their new employment. The result also shows that, the transitional teams modify students' transitional plans when necessary.

4.2 Discussions of Findings

Types of vocations individuals with intellectual disabilities learn at Dzorwulu and The Three Kings special schools

Table 2 indicates that Dzorwulu Special School offered four vocations courses in a classroom. Also, The Three Kings Special School offered a total of eight vocational courses both in the workshop and classrooms. This is an indication that, Three Kings Special School study more vocational programme than Dzorwulu Special School. This

notwithstanding, the vocational programmes studied in the two schools were relevant to students' vocational and transitional needs. Apart from The Three Kings Special School that offer vocational programmes in a segregated environment, Dzorwulu offered their programmes in the classrooms instead. Wood (2001) argued that, programmes offered in segregated environments even though provide similar opportunities as those learned in the classroom would not limit the range of vocations that trainees can learn. In his view, Wehmeyer (1998) argues that, variability of vocational programmes provides students options to choose vocations of their interest.

Teachers's views about the appropriateness of the vocational programmes in preparing individual with intellectual disabilities for employment

From the analysis, trainees with intellectual disabilities do not have opportunity to learn different trades neither do they have the opportunity to select vocations of their interest since the programmes are few and all trainees learn the same programmes. In the opinion of Wood (2001) not until individuals with intellectual disabilities are made to train in inclusive environment, few of them will complete training and secure employment in competitive environment. Wood further illustrates how large number of vocational programmes helped students in US schools to identify skills they need to be able to meet their employment needs.

Resources available for effective training in vocational skills for individuals with intellectual disabilities in special schools

The results from table 4, seems to suggest that, the effectiveness and suitability of the training of individuals with disabilities is not likely since most of them have been placed on programmes which are not suitable because of certain characteristics or they do not

have interest in the programmes. Also, it appears that few of the teachers are not trained in vocational programmes, inadequate of materials and other resources such as working tools seemed to be militating against the teaching of vocational skills in these schools.

Abraham (2002) as cited in Avoke (2005) stated that the lack of resource material is a major problem facing vocational training. The lack of resources is not limited to books only, but involves equipment for the vocational training, which have to be purchased by the government since the schools are unable to provide them.

Also, Avoke (2005) citing Talabi (1979) in commenting on trends in vocational training in Nigeria, for instance, acknowledges similar problems confronting teachers of vocational programme. Avoke noted that, there were no rooms allocated for vocational training programmes in most schools, making it difficult to teach vocational courses effectively. Even though the results indicated that 90% of the teachers were trained, this was not a guarantee that vocational training in special schools in Ghana was going to succeed with lack of other resources.

Types of transition arrangement offered to students pursuing vocational programmes in special schools

Table 5 indicated that there seemed to be sufficient opportunity for practical sessions in the vocational training programmes of the schools and students are adequately equipped with vocational skills that make them ready for employment. Therefore it suggested that students gain sufficient work-related skills before graduation. However, majority of individuals with intellectual disabilities are not employed in the public sector after graduation. This could imply that they were engaged in self-employment. This results is

similar to those of Wehmeyer (1998) and Hill, Newmark and Le Grange (2003) that, many of the intellectually disabled students who graduated from school are either self-employed or are in supported employment. These authors further indicate that, except in some developed countries such as United States and the United Kingdom, individuals with intellectual disabilities are not into any competitive employment.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary, conclusion and recommendations. It also includes suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the vocational programmes offered in two schools in order to establish whether the programmes enable students with intellectual disabilities to acquire relevant skills for independent living and employment.

The study investigated:

- a. The types of vocations individuals with intellectual disabilities study,
- b. Teachers's views about the appropriateness of the vocational programmes in preparing individual with intellectual disabilities for employment
- c. Available resources for effective vocational training for individuals with intellectual disabilities, and
- d. The types of transition arrangement offered to students pursuing vocational programmes in the schools.

The study involved Dzorwulu and Three Kings Special Schools in Ghana. In all, the twenty (40) respondents were selected purposively to participate in the study. They were made up of twenty (20) teachers from each of the selected schools. Questionnaire was used to collect data on Types of vocations individuals with intellectual disabilities learn at Dzoorwulu and The Three Kings Special Schools, Teachers's views about the appropriateness of the vocational programmes in preparing individuals with intellectual disabilities for employment, resources available for effective training in vocational skills for individuals with intellectual disabilities in special schools and types of transition arrangement offered to students pursuing vocational programmes in special schools. Only one set of questionnaire was developed for both special education teachers. Data collected were analysed descriptively, using frequencies and simple percentages. The main findings of the study were that:

1. Students with intellectual disabilities in the two (2) special schools are offered vocational training course in ten (10) main areas that included gardening, poultry, batik/tie dye, basketry, chair backs, sewing, carpentry, broom making, woodwork, and door mats.
2. Most of the vocational courses are taught in classrooms, except in Three Kings Special School that has only one workshop for batik/tie and dye.
3. A majority (85%) of the participants said there was sufficient opportunity for practical sessions in the vocational training programmes of the schools and 90% gain sufficient work-related skills before graduation. However, a majority (95%) of the participants are not employed in the public sector after graduation. Eighty percent (80%) added that students who had completed the schools were engaged in self-employment.

In a related development, the findings revealed that the students with intellectual disabilities acquired one form of skill or another in the vocations that they were exposed to.

5.3 Conclusions

What has been gathered from the research is that, individuals with intellectual disabilities receive vocational training programmes. These students also acquire skills in the vocation that they were exposed to. Moreover, most of the special schools seem to be providing life time skills for the individuals with intellectual disabilities as they stay in the school from their childhood to adulthood.

5.4 Recommendations

The recommendations offered are that, training facilities such as sheltered workshops should be made available in the special schools. Also, training equipment, materials and logistic should be regularly supplied to the two special schools to enhance the training skills of their students. In addition, more teachers with technical and vocational background should be encouraged to enrol in special education courses in the university to enable them to teach in the special schools after training. It is considered that when these recommendations are implemented, parents and their individuals with intellectual disabilities will see positive results.

5.5 Suggestion for Future Research

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher suggests that further study should be carried out to explore ways of enhancing and promoting appropriate vocational and transitional programmes in special schools in Ghana.



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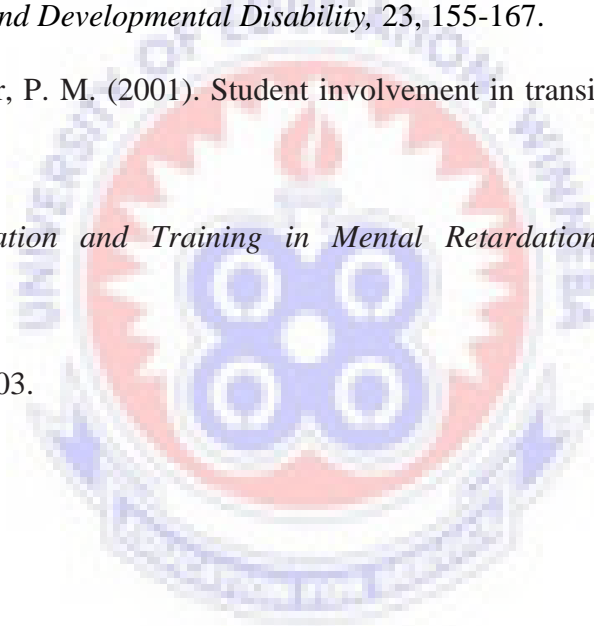
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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY LETTER



**DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
(UEW)**

Our Ref:

March 1, 2011

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Miss Doreen Obu, a Master's Student of the University of Education, Department of Special Education, Winneba is undertaking research on the topic "An evaluation of vocational programs for Special Schools: A study in Dzorwulu and The Three Kings Special Schools in Ghana".

She would need your assistance to access data from your school. I would therefore, be grateful if you could provide her with the necessary assistance.

Your cooperation in this regard is highly appreciated.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,


**HEAD
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
SAMUEL AYFORD (PHD)
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT**

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF APPRECIATION TO SCHOOLS

**University of Education, Winneba
Department of Special Education
P. O. Box 25. Winneba.
Central Region**

May 12, 2011.

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

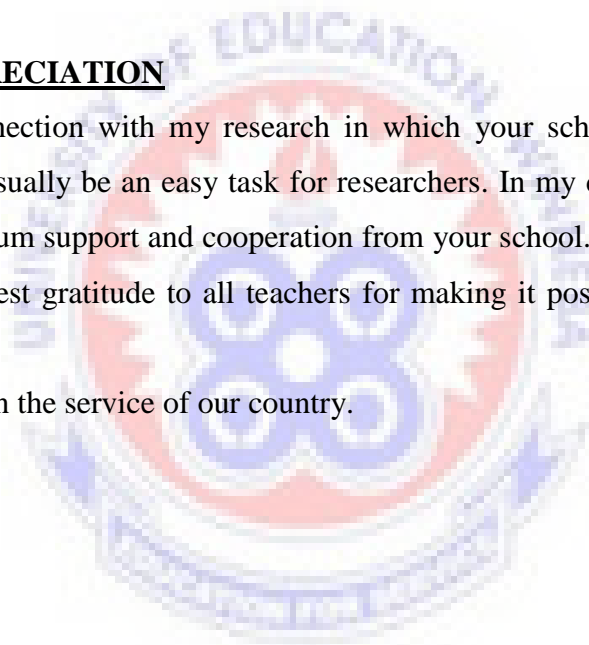
I write back in connection with my research in which your school participated. Data collection may not usually be an easy task for researchers. In my case, it was successful because I got maximum support and cooperation from your school. I would therefore like to convey my sincerest gratitude to all teachers for making it possible for me to obtain data for my study.

May God bless you in the service of our country.

Yours,

.....

Obu, Doreen Araba



APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS FOR TEACHERS

Please fill out the following questionnaire as accurately and dispassionately as possible. Your responses would be accorded the need confidentiality is protected. The goal of this data is to gather data on vocational programmes for persons with intellectual disability in special schools in Ghana.

Name _____ of _____ the _____ school
.....

1. Gender of respondent Male Female

2. Professional status:

- a. Special education teacher
- b. Home science teacher
- c. Agricultural science teacher
- d. Craft instructor
- e. Other(s) Specify

3. Age: 26 - 30 31 - 35
 36 - 40 41 - 45

4. At what stage do students with intellectual disabilities begin to learn vocational courses?

5. Are vocational programmes of your school the same as programmes offered in accredited vocational schools? Yes No

6. If No, describe the difference.

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

7. Are students with intellectual disabilities given instructions in carrier awareness activities? Yes No

8 How long do students with intellectual disabilities spend in pursuing any of the courses?

9 List the vocational courses taught at your school

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.....



10 What resources are available to vocational education teachers?

11 Are special teachers assigned to teach vocational course?

Yes No.

14 What is your student post school placement situation?

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.....

15 What are your student employment statuses?

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.....

16 Are the students given individual transition plans to prepare them to graduate from school? Yes / No

17 If yes, indicate the transition plans that are available to students.

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18 Are follow-ups made to monitor students after graduation? If yes, how are they done?

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19 On the average, how long do students spend in vocational programmes?

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20 Give two suggestions for the improvement of vocational training students in your school.

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