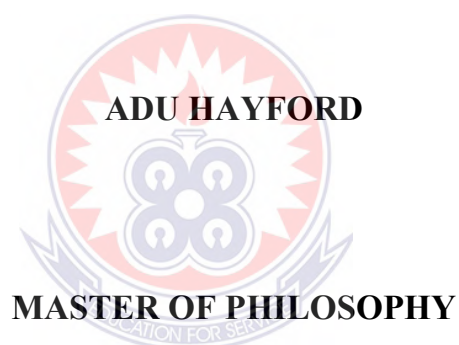


UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**CHALLENGES FACING HEADTEACHERS OF EARLY GRADE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN AWUTU-SENYA WEST DISTRICT.**



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SCHOOLS IN AWUTU-SENYA WEST DISTRICT.**

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**A thesis Department of Educational Administration and Management
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 Philosophy
(Educational Administration and Management)
in the University of Education ,Winneba.**

JANUARY, 2022

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

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

Signature:

Date:



Supervisor's Declaration

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

DR. HINNEH KUSI (Principal Supervisor)

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to almighty God for bringing me this far and also to my able lecturers Dr. Hinneh Kusi and Dr. Odei Tettey for their Aslso



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My greatest appreciation goes to God Almighty for being faithful and merciful to me. In the preparation of this dissertation, valuable information was obtained from journals, articles, books and on the internet. I am highly indebted to the authors of these works. I am highly indebted to my supervisor, Dr. Hinnah Kusi his invaluable supervisory roles, tireless efforts in guiding and directing me, friendship and mentorship. My sincere gratitude also goes to Dr Kwame Odei-Tettey, a lecturer of the Department of Educational Administration and management of the University of Education, Winneba for his immerse guidance and advice throughout the course of study.

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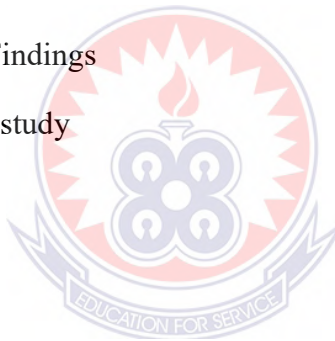
Finally, I appreciate the peace and care that my children; Rosina Adu, Bright Nana Adu, Clara Adu and Benita Adu showed me during this programme of study. I say God richly bless you all.

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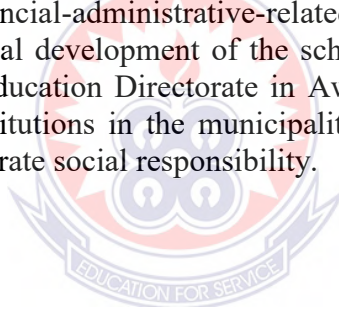
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ABSTRACT

Literature indicates that most Early Grade Centres in Ghana are managed by people who have not undergone relevant training. The purpose of this study was to examine the challenges faced by heads of public early grade centres in Awutu Senya West District. The mixed method approach underpinned by the pragmatic paradigm was employed for this study. The sequential explanatory design was used as the framework for data collection and analysis. The target population for the study was 120 headteachers and assistants of Early Grade Centres of which 87 responded to the questionnaire. The census sampling frame was used to involve all the 87 respondents whereas maximal variation technique was employed to select 12 heads and assistants for the qualitative phases of the study. Quantitative data was collected using the questionnaire, and statistical analysis was done using the SPSS v.24. The interview guide was developed from the emerging issues in the quantitative analysis. The Atlas ti v.9 was used to transcribe the qualitative data before the data was integrated to give clarification to the quantitative analysis. It emerged that inadequate teaching staff, lack of motivation, lack of school resources and facilities, teacher retention, work overload and large class size were the administrative-related challenges confronting Early Grade Centres headteachers in Awutu Senya West District. It also emerged that, inadequate funding by the government, budgetary constraints, and delay in funds (capitation grant) constituted the financial-related challenges of headteachers. The study concluded that financial-administrative-related challenges poses a threat to the infrastructural and material development of the school. It was recommended among others that, the Ghana Education Directorate in Awutu Senya West District, should liaise with corporate institutions in the municipality to provide financial aid to the school as part of its corporate social responsibility.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

An Early Grade school headteacher is a legitimate and policy implementer of the Ghana Education Service. The vision statement of the Ghana Education Service is to provide relevant education to all Ghanaians at all levels to enable them acquire skills that will assist them to develop their potentials, to be productive to facilitate poverty eradication and to promote socio-economic growth and national development. The early grade headteacher is responsible for the daily activities carried out in the school to make these skills acquirable. He or she as a manager determines the success or failure of the school. To achieve the goals of the school, the headteacher has to perform certain duties known as management tasks (Sakyi, 2015). Headteachers in their quest to perform their duty for the achievement of school goals are confronted with numerous challenges especially at the Early Grade level. Over the year, the early grade school has been seen as a dumping ground of children to enable parents and guardians go about their normal activities (Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015) and has led to the neglect of most parents in playing their role in supporting the child's education at this level. Supporting a child's education at the early grade level is very important to the development of the child.

According to Sakyi (2015), education at this level offers the of exposure and quality knowledge which empowers educates with valid knowledge so that they (school children) have critical thinking skills and faculties enhanced to make informed, better and quality decisions which will add value to the quality of their own lives, and the lives of others, and in the end, help solve socio-techno-politico-economic (PEST), and

national problems in the long-term. Thus, early grade education is the foundation upon which higher level of education is built hence it has been included in the Basic Education under the new education reform in Ghana (Sekyere, 2016).

The Sustainable Millennium Development Goal (SMDG) target for universal primary level enrolment and the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2010-2020 stipulated 100 per cent net enrolment for early grade schools. To achieve 100 per cent access to education, the nation would need to provide the requisite manpower and other relevant resources. The quality of early grade education determines the number of pupils moving into the basic stage and even to higher levels of education. Their learning outcomes measured through the Basic Education Certificate Examination (B.E.C.E.) whose success and failures can be traced to the early level (GNA September 25, 2012).

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) is also committed to ensuring that all children regardless of gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background or circumstances realize their right to a quality education. UNICEF, the world body which works directly with children defines education as a single initiative that has the capacity to foster development, awaken talents, empower people and protect their rights (UNICEF, 2000). It further states that the best way a country's people's welfare can be promoted and also lay a foundation for a democratic society is by investing in education. Thus, government has a role to play by ensuring that policies are enforced, materials and other resources are provided for the smooth running of the early grade schools. The headteachers are also to be innovative and skilful in the management of the early grade level of the basic school so that the

academic standard of the early grade school will improve to ensure a firm educational foundation for the child.

The headteacher is influential in the school setting and his leadership roles are necessary components of the process of school improvement. An effective school leadership by headteachers have significantly improve the performance of all learners at the school (Branch, Hanushek & Rivkin, 2013). However, Harber and Davies (2002) postulate that, in most developing countries including Ghana, headteachers of early grade schools are confronted with many problems managing the school. Bush and Oduro (2006) adds that even though efforts are being made to support these school heads, these attempts have not been enough to make the headteachers succeed on the job. This study therefore examines the challenges confronting headteachers in the management of early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District of Ghana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Early grade stage is fundamental in the education system of every country (Sakyi, 2015). This is because, all the educational levels or stages depend on early grade schools. Therefore when managed properly, it has positive impacts, whereas when not properly managed, it leads to negative impact on its beneficiaries (Wang & Fawzi, 2020). This translate that, the success or failure of every educational system depends on how they are managed by the heads of the school (Dangara, 2016). However, the personal experience of the researcher who is a headteacher revealed that most headteachers in Awutu Senya West District have been given only general training, and not training for the management of Early Grade settings. With this inadequate training, there is the tendency for headteachers to face challenges at managing at that level (early grade school).

The neglect of the early grade schools coupled with the lack of effective leadership has been and continue to be a challenge. It appears that Countless challenges being encountered by Early Grade school headteachers has been a major factor to the low level of seriousness giving to these schools. Although some efforts have been made by various governments in Ghana to improve the quality of education in terms of access, content, structure and developing the managerial skills of headteachers in the basic schools especially the early grade level, it seems there are still impediments to be cleared (Natia & Al-hassan, 2015).

Awutu Senya West District harbours many early grade schools as compared to many of such schools in the adjoining districts. However, 80% of these early grade schools are located in the remotest area (Awutu-Senya West Education Directorate, 2020). Observation made by the researcher in some early grade schools within the Awutu Senya West District appears that headteachers managing these schools face many challenges. It appears that no empirical studies have been conducted to explore these challenges. A number of studies have been conducted into the general challenges facing heads of basic schools in Ghana. For example Vivian Amanawaa (2019), also Rebecca Nyaboke Peter (2019). However, Kusi (2008) argued that the challenges faced by heads depend on the level of the school or education system they manage.

This study is being conducted to examine the challenges confronting headteachers of early grade schools against this background that in Awutu Senya West District and to identify strategies for overcoming these challenges.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the administrative-related challenges, financial-related challenges, parent-related challenges as well as the strategies that

could be employed to overcome the challenges confronting headteachers of public Early Grade schools in Awutu Senya West District.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to:

- i. Examine the administrative-related challenges that the headteachers encounter in early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District.
- ii. Investigate the financial-related challenges the headteachers face in early grade schools.
- iii. Examine the parent-related challenges that confront the headteachers of the early grade schools.
- iv. Identify strategies that could be employed to help the headteachers overcome the challenges confronting them in managing the early grade schools.

1.5 Research Questions

The following questions underpinned the study;

- i. What are the administrative-related challenges that the headteachers in early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District encounter?
- ii. What are the financial-related challenges confronting the headteachers in early grade schools?
- iii. What are the parent-related challenges faced by the headteachers of early grade schools?
- iv. What are the strategies that can be employed to help headteachers overcome challenges in the early grade school in Awutu Senya West District?

1.6 Significance of the Study

There are limited studies in developing countries due to the little attention given to school improvement and this has led to little knowledge about this concept. The findings of this study will contribute to knowledge and literature.

The findings of this study will inform policy makers within Awutu Senya West District on the need to come up with stringent measures to enable headteachers of early grade schools to overcome the challenges confronting them. The significance of the study is presented in terms of its contribution to methodology and practice.

1.6.1 Methodological significance

The mixed method research approach was the methodological lenses that underpinned this study, which made it possible to examine the administrative-related challenges, financial-related challenges, parent-related challenges as well as the strategies that could be employed to overcome the challenges confronting headteachers of public Early Grade schools in Awutu Senya West District. The researcher, used questionnaire and interview guide for data collection which establishes personal interactions with the head teachers and their assistants.

The use of questionnaire for the quantitative phase helped the researcher address a large number of issues and questions of concern in a relatively efficient way, with the possibility of a high response rate. Also, made it possible for the researcher, to provide questionnaires to large numbers of head teachers and assistant headteachers of public early grade schools in Awutu Senya West simultaneously. The use of interview guide for the qualitative phase of the work, helped the researcher explain, better understand, and explore research subjects' opinions, behaviour, experiences, and phenomenon.

1.6.2 Practical significance

The significance of the findings of this study is in three folds. Firstly, the findings from the study will be useful to head teachers and assistant headteachers towards effective management of early grade school. Secondly, the findings from the study will be useful to Ministry of Education, Teacher Education Division for policy direction as well as the community.

Finally, it might also provide some insight that could trigger other researchers to extend the study into a wider scope to make similar studies at other level.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to only headteachers in the early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District. Also, there might be several challenges confronting early grade headteachers within Awutu Senya West District, but this study will focus on only administrative-related challenges, financial-related challenges and parent-related challenges.

Furthermore, the study was delimited to only headteachers and assistant headteachers in the public early grade schools. This implies that, headteachers and assistant headteachers in private early grade schools were not considered for this study.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation, limitations and definition of terms and organization of the study. The second chapter covers review of related literature on induction of lecturers and sub-sections dealing with the various relevant topics

pertaining to the study. The third chapter deals with the methodology used and its justifications, the fourth chapter deals with the results and discussion of findings. The fifth chapter deals with the summary, conclusions drawn from the study, recommendations and suggestions for further research.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on the topic under study. The study drew related literature relating from across continents in the context of institutions in developed and developing countries through to African countries and finally in the context of Ghana and the particular institution of study as specified in the first chapter of this work.

Literature was reviewed on the following concepts on induction programmes;

- i. The concept of early childhood education
- ii. The objectives of early childhood education
- iii. The concept of leadership
- iv. The administrative-related challenges confronting headteachers at the early grade level
- v. The financial-related challenges confronting headteachers at the early grade level
- vi. The parent-related challenges confronting headteachers at the early grade level
- vii. Strategies to employ to overcome the challenges

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The bioecological theory of human development by Bronfenbrenner (2001a), explains the drivers of human development as the interactions that occur between an individual (their biological being) and the interconnected systems surrounding them (their ecology). There are four inter-related components in the Bioecological Theory of Human Development. Together these four components constitute the ‘process–

person–context–time model (PPCT) for conceptualising the integrated developmental system and for designing research to study the course of human development’ (Lerner, 2005).

The processes encompass the dynamic bidirectional interactions between the person and other people and between them and their ecology. Proximal processes are the primary mechanism through which human potential is actualised. To be successful in stimulating effective continuous development, proximal processes need to be reciprocal, progressively complex, and occur regularly over an extended time period. These interactions are the most powerful forces determining human development and learning outcomes. The person is endowed with genetic, physical, psychological and behavioural characteristics necessary for development and learning. The context of human development incorporates the interacting systems and social characteristics (family, school, neighbourhood, or peers) surrounding the person. Together these components are the ecology of a learner, which consists of all the processes, relationships and external influences that impact on learning and human development (Spencer, 2006).

As proximal processes are strengthened and as the environment improves developmental outcomes are enhanced as seen in the person’s phenotype. The bioecological theory proposes that by enhancing human interactions and environments, it is possible to increase the extent of potential realised into positive developmental outcomes for example enhanced learning (Bronfenbrenner, 2001b). This review of bioecological theory has highlighted the importance of relationships (person–person and individual–context) and how these relations influence the individual’s quest for development and learning at the early grade level.

2.2 The concept of leadership

Leadership has been a complex phenomenon for several decades and continues to be one of the most important aspects within the organisational context. The term has been explained by various scholars in different ways. In the opinion of Bass (2004), leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organisation in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. He further reiterates that leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership attributes, such as beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge and skills.

McSwain (2010) describes leadership as a capacity, which implies that, the capacity of a leader is to listen and observe, and to use their expertise as a starting point to encourage dialogue between all levels of decision-making, to establish processes and transparency in decision-making, and to articulate their own values and visions clearly but not to impose on them. Yukl (2004) also explains leadership as the process of influence on the subordinate, in which the subordinate is inspired to achieve the target, the group maintains cooperation, and the established mission is accomplished, with support from external groups obtained.

Mullins (2003) also points out that leadership means the use of a leading strategy to offer inspiring motives and to enhance the staff's potential for growth. Vroom and Jago (2004) also described leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of people to achieve a common goal. McGregor (2009) also put leadership differently and he explains that the leader's attention is on what he or she can put into people rather than what he or she can get out of them, so as to build the kind of relationship that promotes and increase productivity in the organisation. Likert (2009) also reiterated that leadership is a process in which an individual sets direction for

other people and carries them along in that direction with competence and productivity.

In the opinion of the researcher, leadership is a dynamic force or process by which an individual influences others towards achieving a shared goal with cooperation that brings positive change in a group, organisation or individual relations. The definition emphasizes the person acting on others rather than the act and that leadership is not necessarily confined to one person. This implies that figureheads are not necessarily leaders and that leaders need to be able to exercise a range of behaviour to maintain the role effectively.

Further, the definitions of leadership recognize some important characteristics as leadership is seen not to take place in isolation. It recognizes the presence of one person being the leader and the others being followers which implies that it takes place in the process of two or more people interacting and the leader seeks to influence the behaviour of other people. The source of the leadership influence may be as a result of a person possessing a managerial rank in an organisation or arises outside of the organisation.

The approaches to the concept of leadership by different people perceive leadership as being shared (Likert, 2009). They view leadership as the performance of acts that help the group or organisation achieve its preferred outcome. These acts may be specific, such as moving the group toward its goals improving the quality of interactions among group members, building group cohesiveness, or making resources available to the group (Hughes, Ginnet & Curphy, 2010). From this view, one can see that leadership is the resource that an individual or a group uses to enable an organisation to do what it needs, should and wants to do. In order to become a more effective

leader, one must analyse his or her own leadership style and determine the scope of his or her leadership zone.

2.3 The Concept of School Leadership

Schools need leaders who envision to improve the quality and the outcome of the learning process, and are also effective in managing tasks in progress (Călin & Teodorescu, 2016; Agbo, 2017; Rajović & Bulatović, 2017). Transforming a manager into a leader, is uniformly positive and the effects of applying his studies on some schools showed that leadership practices have a considerable influence on the cooperation leader-teachers, but also between the aspects of leadership and the change in the attitude of teachers towards modernizing the school and their behavior related to professional development (Bush, 2003).

A leader can solve an ethical problem as follows: leaders must act and be willing to act based on a definite set of ethical principles. One of the ethical principles is the anticipation of the consequences of each choice and thus try to identify its effects and how they influence the organization. The leader can re-evaluate ethical issues and examine the problem from different perspectives, being fully informed in terms of justice, morality, critics. Schools need leaders with vision to improve the learning environment of the school system, as part of the functional school-based management (SBM). SBM involves a set framework school regarding pupils, teacher development, and the allocation of financial and material resources. An effective management system has an impact on the motivation and commitment of teachers to produce successful students, by facilitating a school management that is both appropriate to the context and to the needs of the school, to the development and implementation of plans to improve the school, to the establishment of fair and effective evaluation

systems for teachers, to structure classrooms and schools according to school needs, to the building of partnerships with the community, and to ensuring that there are staff to support school functions of other departments (Smolağ & Ślusarczyk, 2017). An effective management leads to the creating of learning situations, so that the students learn to be more than (inter)active, to engage motivated, responsibly, reflexively, individually, and / or through collaboration (Ştefan, 2014).

Also, a clear vision is essential for determining the type and direction of change, but is equally important to ensure effective assessment of innovations and effective execution of other tasks at school. School success requires both leadership and management. Leadership and management are not the same, but both are important. Organizations with a super saturation of management or with a shortage of management eventually lose their spirit and purpose. Organizations with strong and charismatic leaders whose management is bad, may have a measure of success at first, but will fail soon. The challenge in a modern organization is to have a manager with an objective perspective and the vision and commitment created by intelligent leadership. Organizational effectiveness depends on the quality of leadership (Jarvis, 2016; De'Borah, 2016; Siminica, Motoi & Dumitru, 2017; Forte, 2017).

School managers can contribute positively to the effectiveness of school when they are ready and able to use their extensive knowledge of leadership to solve complex problems related to school, and build confidence through working relationships with school staff, parents, students and local community. Managers may have different and overlapping styles, including: management training, transformation and distribution, with each style having an influence on student outcomes but also on how teachers respond to their style of management. However, it is important for school managers to

lead in a way that is appropriate to school culture and context, so they need to be offered training opportunities and support for their management, and that their performance is assessed by inspectors, and representatives of various forums to provide oversight on the quality of school management (Janmaimool, 2017; Frunza, 2017). School managers who put strong emphasis on leadership training, are focusing on planning issues, evaluation, coordination and improvement of teaching to achieve positive results of learning. School managers should assess the performance of students and teachers and to lead them in a way that is responsive to cultural and educational strengths and adequate to the needs of students and teachers. School is, as we know, a complex organization and when we come to examine the work commitments in such an organization, we understand that reference is made to teacher commitment to the organization. Commitment to school includes two dimensions: Efficiency and consideration and is defined as the intensity of the teacher involvement in school events (effective dimension) and its assessment of the school, which is the compensation for his stay there (size consideration).

The teacher's degree of involvement depends mainly on the manager, who works as a leader with a style, and who must implement creative ideas so that every teacher must feel that the institution where he is teaching is an essential part of his life. When a teacher feels personally responsible for student success, he will dedicate to his work. A happy teacher will make his students happy. The perception on leadership has changed over several years. Educational Leadership is a long-term journey which requires patience and tolerance from those responsible. The most significant long-term contribution of leadership is to protect and help people, institutions and organizations to develop (Popescu, 2002; Kot & Teodorescu, 2015). The emotions of the manager as a leader regarding his role and the role of teachers will greatly

influence their activity. Its role in a modern school is characterized by considerable orientation to task because of the multitude and variety of needs and demands of society as a multicultural society. A manager must, among other things, manage, plan, monitor, measure and evaluate and, in parallel, support students and their teachers in their educational social and organizational tasks. Normally, engaging in multitasking affects the perception of the manager on its role and its mode of administrating the staff. His managerial style will directly influence the level of satisfaction among teachers, which in turn will affect his role to various degrees (Ganira, Paul & Muriithi, 2016). Therefore, it is no less important for school managers to support each other socially, morally and professionally. When the atmosphere in schools is often measured, and is influenced by managerial style and involvement in decision-making, the work of teachers and their perceptions about the system and when management style is based on openness, trust, personal example and compensation staff, they enjoy more satisfaction. For a manager who is responsible for the direction, guidance and decision making, creativity is an important factor in generating a positive organizational climate.

2.4 Headteachers Role in Managing Early Grade School

Predominantly, the role of the headteacher in the early grade school is in four broad categories as human resource management, professional development, curriculum implementation and parental involvement, management and learning achievement (Ganira, Paul, & Muriithi, 2016). These roles are explained in detail below.

2.4.1 Human resource, management and learning achievement

Teacher motivation especially remuneration, and changing the way teachers are paid including raising pay levels is the most effective way of responding to school

improvement challenges. In support of this view, (Springer, Matthew & John, 2012) opined that incentivized teacher will work harder and produce better results. However, studies that estimate relation between learning achievement and teacher remuneration have produced little consistent evidence that students perform better when teachers have high salaries, (National Research Council and National Academy of Education, 2010). Besides, if teachers do not increase learning achievement then motivation may have negative impact on achievement. Despite contradictory research findings that link remuneration to learner achievement, there has been a growing enthusiasm among educational reforms and policy makers around the world to link learning achievement and teacher motivation (Bettinger, 2010). For instance in 2010, U.S department of education, states applying for funds for teacher incentive are evaluated on effectiveness by linking teacher evaluation to student growth, and making decisions about student achievement (Archibald, Coggshall, Croft & Goe, 2011). In addition studies conducted in 25 countries in Europe concluded that teacher quality is the most important factor in an educational organization, and the second important factor that influence student achievement (Bruce, Esmonde, Ross, Dookie & Beatty, 2010). Conversely, data from field experiments in Kenya and India yield effects sizes of approximately 0.02 standard deviations in Mathematics and reading when teachers earned 2 percentage and 3 percentage of their yearly salaries respectively (Glewwe, Nauman & Kremer, 2010). Further still, analysis on academic achievement in Mathematics in Baringo County (Mbugua, 2012), found out that performance in Mathematics is below average and attributed this to inadequate incentives.

2.4.2 Professional development, management and learning achievement

Professional development is a continuing and rigorous approach to improving teacher's and manager's effectiveness in raising learner achievement in early grade school. For managers and teachers to be effective in school leadership, they should constantly expand knowledge and skills to implement best educational practices. In this regard, (Githae et al., 2015), opined that since professional development is a key indicator to teacher's potential towards solving problems, preschool teachers require financing for capacity building through refresher courses that improve skills for curriculum implementation. Hence effective professional development should influence team building, quality instruction, leadership and mentoring skills, curriculum development and efficacy. In support of this observation, (Duflo, Dupas & Kremer, 2011) found out that children assigned to teachers with effective professional development have better grades, high test scores, better self-esteem, and show higher aspiration and motivation towards school since curriculum interpretation is mediated by teacher's knowledge and practice in the classroom. However, Yoon, Duncan, Scarloss and Shapley (2007), disclosed that few teachers receive intensive, sustained and content focused professional development. Similarly, if a teacher fails to apply new ideas from professional development to class instruction then learner achievement is likely to be thwarted. In addition, Voss, Kunter and Baumert (2011), argued that professional development enhances teacher knowledge and skills, efficiency in class instruction which in turn translates into improved results and gains in learner achievement. In this regard, professional development should be intensive, content focused, coherent, well defined and strongly implemented. If gains from professional development are effectively utilized then preschool are likely to experience improved school performance,

quality instruction and implementation, and new initiatives for learning achievement.

2.4.3 Curriculum implementation, management and learning achievement

Curriculum implementation entails putting into practice officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses and subjects. Consequently, teachers with a sense of efficacy tend to show high levels of planning and organization, are open to new ideas and exhibit enthusiasm for teaching (Tschanen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). Conversely, if a teacher fails to implement curriculum effectively then instruction suffers which in turn impacts negatively on learning achievement. In Ghana, for effective curriculum delivery to be realized Quality Assurance team is expected to visit schools regularly, organise seminars and in-service course for teachers and provide advisory service on how best to improve instruction. In addition Akyeampong, Lussier, Pryor and Westbrook (2013), emphasized that headteachers should manage the process of teaching and learning within the school in accordance with curriculum documents and policies. Given that adequate facilities such as classrooms, libraries, halls and playing fields are prerequisite for successful curriculum implementation, Hopkins, and Higham, (2007), put forward that Preschools need adequate classrooms to alleviate overcrowding since success of curriculum implementation is dependent on provision of necessary resources and facilities to ensure enthusiasm of teachers and children

2.4.4 Parental involvement, management, and learning achievement

Effective parental involvement occurs when an appropriate partnership exists between schools and families. Children with parents who are concerned with

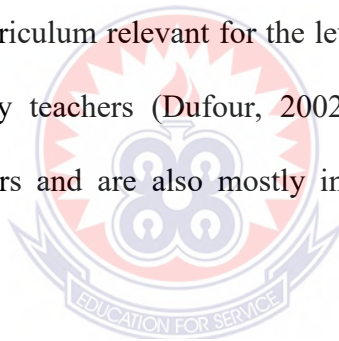
school tend to have less behavioural problems; experiences enhanced academic performance and are likely to complete schooling than those whose parents are not involved. In a study on effects of parental involvement on achievement for a sample of 3-7 year olds in Washington DC, Hill and Tyson (2009), revealed that parental involvement is a major factor for success. The study used standardized assessment tests to measure achievement. As a result children's positive attitude about schooling improved, self-esteem, self-concept as well as self-discipline were enhanced. To this effect, involvement in the school and parental monitoring confirmed positive effects on moderating inconsistency and achievement levels. In another study on parental choice and learner achievement in primary schools in Kenya (Oyier et al., 2015), confirmed that one technique in which parents are involved in children's education is through choosing schools that are environmentally safe since safety embodies educational priority in decision making. Consequently a safe and secure environment facilitates and fosters quality teaching and learning in educational institutions.

In this regard, Vaden-Kierna and McManus (2005), emphasized that teachers of children with highly involved parents tend to give greater attention to the children and are more likely to identify at earlier stages problems that might hinder learning. Therefore, if children are to maximise potential from school then parental participation is vital in providing training skills financial support and advice for learner achievement. In addition, effective involvement allows parents to monitor school and class activities and coordinates efforts with teachers to encourage acceptable behaviour and ensure that the child completes school work. For this reason, parental participation includes: Participation in school event, taking part in school management and governance, visiting the school to discuss issues and

concerns, and contacting the school to learn about rules, procedures, curriculum and assessment.

2.5 The Roles of the Headteacher

The headteacher of a school is known by many titles such as “administrator,” “manager” and “instructional leader.” However, the role of the administrator or manager differs from that of an instructional leader in terms of the roles he/she plays. Headteachers who consider themselves as administrators and who carry out administrative tasks most of the time are not similar to headteachers who pride themselves on being instructional leaders and who have engaged in setting the objectives to be achieved, identifying and allocating resources for the educational process, developing a curriculum relevant for the level of education and checking the lesson plans prepared by teachers (Dufour, 2002). Instructional leaders are also known as learning leaders and are also mostly involved in teaching and learning (Dufour, 2002).



The role of the headteacher in Ghanaian schools has changed constantly over time. It is good to note that the role of the school headteacher has received increasing attention during the twentieth century (MoE, 2010). With the substantial number of schools and students in urban areas, headteachers are assigned in many districts to help, direct or lead other teachers in the schools. As the MoE (2010) points out, the headteacher has power in the school because he/she is the one who organises the curriculum. Furthermore he/she is the chief disciplinarian, and supervises operations in the school. As a result of increasing urbanisation in Ghana, the development of the headteacher’s position continued up to and beyond the end of the twentieth century.

In the mid-twentieth century, the role of the headteacher continued its transformation from that of a teacher to an administrator with professional requirements. For much of the mid-twentieth century, the role played by the school headteacher was that of a boss who was expected to sustain and put the Wordea (district) regulations into practice and to manage his/her workforce, the financial plan and handle other work issues (Tschanen -Moran & McMaster, 2009). According to Abreha (2014) schools started to be held more accountable for the performance of their learners after the duties and responsibilities of headteachers were changed during the latter part of the twentieth century. Headteachers became more responsible for teaching and learning in their schools. Particularly, the duty of school headteachers to examine instruction increased along with their responsibility to help teachers enhance their teaching. With the new responsibilities the headteachers assumed, they discovered the need to more effectively evaluate instruction and assist teachers as they worked to improve their instruction practice. As Ethiopian education moved into a new period of responsibility at the end of the century, this role necessitated the inclusion of leadership. A dynamic leader is needed to provide quality leadership in any type of organisation or even family (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009). Tschanen -Moran and McMaster (2009) extends the understanding of this role of the headteacher by asserting that nowadays headteachers need to give guidance on learning. Tschanen -Moran and McMaster (2009) provides the following requirements for satisfying this role: being informed of academic content and pedagogical information, performing different activities with teachers to strengthen their skills, collecting, analysing and using data, meeting all stakeholders to enhance the performance of students, possessing the leadership ability to play the role.

Based on the changing role of the headteacher, one could say that if headteachers want to be instructional leaders, they need to free themselves from bureaucratic tasks and focus on the improvement of the teaching and learning process (Zepeda, 2014). According to Brewer (2001), instructional improvement is an important goal, which involves both teachers and students in its achievement. The important effect of leadership style in the instructional and other leadership roles of headteachers should be evident. As alluded to above, headteachers should use most of their time to guide and monitor the teaching and learning process.

2.6 Headteachers and Leadership Styles

School leadership plays a key role in improving school's outcomes by influencing the motivation and capacities of teachers as well as the school climate and environment (Bush, 2005). The headteacher must employ inclusive kind of leadership where they will involve other people as a team. This team gets a deliberate opportunity to contribute to the vision, culture and climate of the school and thus the headteacher has a duty to create the opportunities to make this happen and teachers partly determine the leadership styles of the headteacher (Mutula, 2006). As a leader, the headteacher has the power to influence job performance among the teachers under them.

In recent times the topic of leadership has been the object of extensive study. Every organization and department is structured in groups of subordinates acting under the control and guidance of leaders (Tsourvakas, Zotos & Dekoulou, 2007). Effective leadership must filter through in the organization, not exist in one or two superstars at the top (Bateman & Snell, 2002). Leadership styles have a powerful influence on individual and group behaviour (Abreha, 2014).

Furthermore, Yousef (2000) showed that leadership behaviour was positively related to job performance and therefore managers needed to adopt appropriate leadership behaviour in order to improve it. Leadership style affects a range of factors such as job performance, performance, turnover intention, and stress (Chen & Silverthorne, 2005) and so contribute to organizational success (Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). Yousef (2000) argued that theories developed and tested in Western organizations are still valid for non-Western countries. Hence, the significant impact of leadership style on job performance does not differ between west and east and can be considered an important factor in the success or failure of any organization.

It has been observed that leadership is a personal quality and willingness of people to follow a person as leader. It exists only with followers. It is meaningless without adherents. Leadership involves readiness to accept complete responsibility in all situations. Leadership styles may change under different circumstances. Leaders stimulate the followers to strive willingly for attainment of organizational objectives.

According to Sahni (2004), a leader must have the ability to sway the behaviour, attitude, and belief of his/ her subordinates. The success of a leader depends on the acceptance of his leadership by the followers (Khanka, 2007). A leader gives orders and instructions by formulating objectives for his or her group; he or she takes important decisions, listens to subordinates, and responds to their needs. A leader is careful to inspire and motivate all members of his group and represent them to the outside world.

Leadership can be taught and learned (Bateman & Snell, 2002). According to Abreha (2014) leadership seems to be marshaling of skills possessed by a majority but used by minority. It is something that can be learned by anyone, taught to everyone and

denied to no one. Isaac, Zerbe and Pitt (2001) and also Pearce and Conger (2003) corroborates this view when they stated that any member of the organization may become a leader, it is not the property of the executives. The leaders in successful situations work and share their wisdom with others to stimulate and create conditions which support efforts of their subordinates. The supervisors with an ideal leadership style significantly affect employees' job satisfaction with respect to self-esteem, opportunities, and expectations with job, self-respect, fair dealing, and participation (Abreha, 2014).

It is obvious that leadership is the appropriate use of power. There are two common types of power; position and personal power. The capacity to affect the behaviour of people is called power (Bartol, Tein, Matthews & Martin, 2003). Sometimes power comes from person's position in the organization, while other sources of power are based on personal characteristics. So leader's power exists in the forms of position and personal (Daft, 2005).

Leadership styles or traits are the characteristic way in which a leader uses power, makes decision, and interacts with others. Leadership style is an inbuilt, relatively enduring attribute of our personality which provides us motivation and determines our general orientation when exercising leadership (Kunwar, 2001). The leadership style of a leader is the combination of behaviours as task and relationship. It is important to note that leadership behaviour refers to particular acts which one could perform or not perform if one has knowledge and skills.

Good leadership is about action and not position. The two must never be confused. If someone wants to become a good leader, he must stress on actions rather than talking. People are interested in one's actions rather skills. The theories about leadership have

direct implication for what the style leader uses in managing employees (Kunwar, 2001). The term style is almost comparable to the manner where the leader influences subordinates (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2004). The ways in which leaders influence their subordinates are called styles of leadership.

2.7 Concept of Early Childhood Education

The definition of the term early childhood education depends on the angle one picks it from. In terms of the child's life, early childhood education is considered as the period from birth to eight years of age (Miles & Browne, 2004). Grotewell and Burton (2008) also shared this definition as they elaborated it accordingly as the time between the zero and eight years of age. However, by school terms, early childhood education incorporates the group settings for infants through elementary school grade three (Miles & Browne, 2004). In other words, early childhood education is a special branch of education serving with children from infancy to elementary grade level of three (Gonzalez-Mena, 2008). Early Childhood Education in early years is the growth of children for critical their physical and physiological development, the stimulation of intelligence, personality formation and the instillation of positive social behaviour in children (Report of the President's Committee on Review of Education Reforms in Ghana, 2002). As definitions of these authorities imply, it is believe that early childhood education brings or exposes children (birth to eight) into the world. The significance of the early childhood education increased tremendously all over the world within the last twenty years. This situation is complementary with research results based on long term effects of early education to later life (Gonzalez-Mena, 2008)

Early childhood is defined as the period from birth to eight years. It is a time of remarkable brain development where foundations are laid for subsequent learning (UNESCO, 2011). It also refers to any organized educational provision outside of the home for children in the age range of one to seven years. Other frequently used terms include pre-school, early years, kindergarten, playgroup, nursery, pre-grade one, preparatory year, 'zero year' etc. (International Bureau of Education, 2006). According to the Regional Bureau for Education in Africa (BREDA), early childhood education refers to a holistic and integrated approach to health, nutrition, protection, and education needs and services (Regional Bureau for Education in Africa, 2010).

The Working Group on Early Childhood Development which brings all the key stakeholders including international partners, governments, NGOs, experts and academics officially term early childhood education as Early Childhood Development (ECD).. 18 In Australia, Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services for children below school age are usually referred to as either child care, children's services or early childhood services. ECEC therefore includes the range of formal care and education services for children under school age and in the early years of school. According to the World Bank (2001), early child development includes services designed for the physical and intellectual growth of children in their early years (ages 0-6).

These services incorporate day care, pre-school, home visits by trained professionals, health and nutrition services, and parental education. Bowman (2000) states that Early childhood education does not refer to a single entity; rather, the term covers a variety of programmes for young children between birth and age 8. These programmes take place in children's own homes and in public schools, private pre-schools, and child-

care homes and centres. Each of these settings may have quite different characteristics (adult/child ratios, group sizes, age ranges, cultural practices, and adult training and teaching styles) that in turn affect what and how children learn. UNESCO (2008) indicates that the majority of children in early childhood education are between the ages of three and six years. In Ghana, pre-school education refers to the type of education given to children from ages 0 to five years, after which they enroll in the formal primary school (Report of the President's Committee on Review of Education Reforms in Ghana, 2002).

2.8 Quality of Early Childhood Education

The term quality is a multifaceted phenomenon and has to do with the degree of excellence or standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind bearing distinctive attributes or characteristics (Equip, 2003). Thus, quality education in early childhood programmes must ensure effectiveness and efficiency in their execution. The National Association for the Education of Young Children describes quality Early Childhood Education as one with a programme providing a safe nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of young children while responding to the family needs. Such a programme depends greatly on the Excellency of the interactions between the child and the teacher. On the other hand, UNICEF (2000) defined quality education as a programme that involves learners, content, process, environment as well as outcomes. It can also be defined as the education that is meaningful, relevant and responsive to the needs of individuals and the society as a whole (EFA) Global Monitoring Report 2005.

The study of quality in ECE has become increasingly relevant because research has continued to demonstrate consistent associations between various aspects of classroom quality and improved social and academic outcomes for young children (Belsky, 2007). Although quality continues to be a major focus of research in ECE, defining this construct continues to challenge the field, both methodologies in research and practice in quality enhancement initiatives aimed at ensuring optimal experiences for children in early childhood education programmes (Mashburn, 2008). Definitions of quality in child care vary in accordance with the perspectives of stakeholders (Huntsman, 2008; Ishimine, Tayler, & Bennet, 2010).

Research has predominantly adopted a developmental perspective, where high quality care is defined as that which promotes optimal child outcomes in all domains of development, while low quality care is associated with negative outcomes for children. Quality, in Love et al. (2002) view, is a concept typically used to describe features of programme environments and children's experiences in these environments that are presumed to be beneficial to the children's well-being based on research and practice. This definition attests to the developmental perspective of quality raised by Huntsman (2008). He notes that the definitions posed by researchers reflect two aspects or dimensions, namely, the structural and the process (dynamics) of the programme or classroom.

Structural quality refers to the overarching structures needed to ensure quality in early childhood programmes. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2012), notes that structural quality is a government responsibility which can be enforced via legislation or regulations. Typically, a

selection of structural standards forms the substance of national licensing requirements.

A number of researchers have indicated that structural indicators of quality are especially useful since they can be quantified and measured, allowing researchers to estimate the relative quality of particular programmes. They can also be regulated through licensing or used to set standards in accreditation systems (Colbert, 2002; Huntsman, 2008). Examples of indicators of structural quality posits by Espinosa (2002) include;

1. **Staff to child ratio:** this refers to the ratio of the number of children per caregiver. A number of studies have found that the ratio significantly affects children's behaviour and child-adult interaction (Equip, 2003). According to Casper and Theilheimer (2010), there is no definitive answer when it comes to the question of the ideal number of children to a staff. However, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) suggests a ratio of 3:1 for infants, 6:1 for toddlers, 8:1 for three year olds, 10:1 for four and five year olds, and 15 to 18:1 for children in the primary class (Kirk, 2006).
2. **Group size:** this refers to a specific number of children, distinct from the larger population of children, who are together regularly and interact with each other, and with one or more specific staff member, in an assigned space (Colbert, 2004). Researchers have identified group size as an iron triangle, (Heward, 2003). The authors concluded that "if there is a single critical component to quality, it rests on the relationship between the child and the teacher/caregiver and in the ability of the adult to be responsive to the child".

3. **Caregiver education and/or training:** This aspect of structural quality develops a teacher/caregiver's skill in working with children. A caregiver with the child development credential or an early childhood education degree or certification provides better quality care than a provider with a degree in an unrelated field (Mugo, 2009). The trained childcare staff quietly and privately guide the children. They do not keep telling children what they should not do. They teach children how to behave well. For example, if a child runs with scissors, the teacher shows the child how to sit and use the scissors on paper. The teacher thus, permits the child to use the scissors while seated. For children who cannot remain seated despite all efforts, the teacher guides such children to another activity in which such energy is directed into more appropriate use. Trained staffs never shake, hit, jerk, or roughly handle a child, use yelling, name calling or sarcasm with a child. They neither punish nor threaten, especially in association with food, rest, or toileting. Trained caregivers do not ignore physical or verbal attacks of one child to another, nor punish the whole group for the misbehaviour of one or a few children (Mugo, 2009).

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) found that, the level of caregiver formal education is a stronger predictor for children of preschool age than for younger children (Joseph & Wintson, 2014), while specialized training is more strongly associated with quality in the case of infants and toddlers, caregivers with a higher level of formal education had more specialized child related training, held less authoritarian child-rearing beliefs, and were in settings rated as more safe, clean and stimulating (Mugo, 2009).

4. **The physical environment:** The quality of the learning environment has a significant impact on learning outcomes for children. A safe and welcoming physical environment plays an important role in enhancing children's learning and development. The characteristics of the physical environment include the location, accessibility, safety, flexibility, scale and visibility (OECD, 2012). The environment of service include: indoor and outdoor play areas, the equipment available at the service, and the resources that are provided for the children. Both inside and outside environments should be attractive and stimulating, inviting curiosity and exploration. The environment, resources and equipment should meet the specific needs of the infants, toddlers and young children. High quality services offer children more than just the opportunity to play in open spaces or with a range of equipment, they offer a variety of opportunities for learning and discovery through play. These opportunities may include planned areas set up for dramatic play, block building and construction; quiet spaces for reading, art and creativity; or room set aside for children to experiment with music and movement. Whilst not all early childhood services have vast amounts of room or natural areas for play, high quality services will also provide opportunities for children to learn from nature and the world around them. This may include water or sand play, the use of natural found objects instead of plastic toys, exploration of sustainable activities such as gardening, or the opportunity to play and explore in the outdoors. By providing a fun and welcoming physical environment, high quality services support children's growth and promote the development of confidence and a sense of belonging.

In an analysis of outcome measures in 65 studies published between 1979 and 2005, Zaslow, et al. (2006) found that only a minimal number of studies (5%) paid attention to physical well-being of children. With respect to the physical environment Wilson (2005) found a significant association between positive caregiving behaviours and characteristics of the physical environment. They suggested that the importance of the physical environment should not be underestimated, implying that it had been. Maxwell (2007) also found that the quality of the physical environment is related to measures of self- perceived competence in children, especially three year olds. However, research appears to provide little or no guidance regarding the appropriateness of current regulations regarding space requirements.

A second dimension of quality is the process quality. Indicators of process quality focus on the more dynamic aspects of early childhood education, including human interactions occurring in the classrooms such as teacher-child and peer-to-peer interactions (Pianta, Howes & Burchinal, 2007). Process elements of quality influence the everyday nature of ECE settings and directly influence the quality of the education programme experienced by each child. The warmth and quality of the pedagogical relationship between educators and children, the quality of interaction between children themselves, and the quality of relationships within the educators. Process elements are not easy to measure and require a qualitative assessment to establish the quality of the early learning environment. Several studies have reported correlations between variables of process and structural quality (Burchinal, Cryer, Clifford & Howes, 2002). Structural quality and process quality provide unique and essential information to understanding early childhood classrooms (Layzer & Goodson, 2006).

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2012), identified that the quality of ECE is driven by a number of interrelated indicators, particularly:

The quality of interactions and relationships between children and ECE staff;

The programmes or curricula that support children's learning and development;

- Connections with family and community
- Leadership and management
- The qualifications and training of staff and staff-to-child ratio
- The physical environment
- Health and safety requirements

It posits that the indicators set out provide an excellent starting point for examining service quality. The first three indicators are generally considered 'process components' of quality. The final four indicators are generally considered as 'structural components' of quality, and create the conditions necessary to achieve a high-quality learning and care environment. Layzer and Goodson (2006) observed that quality is a subjective and dynamic judgment that entails negotiation between different stakeholders' perspectives, which change over time, and that rather than being prescriptive, quality standards should be established within each context to respond to the real needs of parents and children. They observed that judgments about quality are closely linked to the goals and expectations for the programme in particular and children in general and proposed that a starting point for the process of negotiation should be an attempt to answer the questions: Who are stakeholders in the 'quality' of a programme? Who are the perceived beneficiaries from 'quality'? What are taken to be indicators of 'quality'? They identified stakeholders to include

programme managers, teachers, parents, community leaders, employers, child development experts, politicians, funding agencies, research investigators and children themselves. This study, therefore looked at how two of the stakeholders- parents and teachers perceived quality in ECE.

Theories and research in child development have supported the concept of developmental appropriateness. Mwangi (2016) posit that developmental appropriateness draws attention to the distinctive features of children's emotional, social and cognitive functioning associated with their age and the developmental stage and argue that since these are a product of a particular child rearing contexts, these contexts must be taken into consideration. They proposed the introduction of a complimentary concept, which they termed 'contextual appropriateness'. They suggested that this could be combined with developmental appropriateness to provide what they termed Practice Appropriate to the Context of Early Development (PACED). This position suggests that in defining quality, the context in which the child finds him/herself should be considered. Nevertheless, the above definitions provide some framework for assessing programme quality, based on the structure, content and the processes outlined.

Katz (1993) proposed four perspectives on quality care: Top-Down (a professional perspective); Inside-Out (staff's perceptions of child care quality); Bottom-Up (children's perceptions of child care quality), and Outside-In (parents' perceptions of child care quality). His research explored the Top-Down, Inside-Out, and Outside-In perspectives to evaluate the provision of childcare across a small sample of Taiwanese centres and staff to identify issues impacting on the quality of child care from the perspective of key stakeholders in preschools. His findings revealed that all parents

are concerned about quality, and often consider quality issues in choosing a preschool for their children. In addition, teachers in preschools played an essential role in delivering high quality childcare education

Globally and regionally research has shown that quality education is a critical component of child development and a means of self-employment, independence and social integration. This also applies to children with learning disabilities. Providing quality education to all children is not just a moral obligation but an economic imperative. UNICEF (2001) noted that if learners with learning disabilities are given quality education those enrolled in schools are likely to pursue and complete their primary education, achieve expected learning outcomes and successively join high school. Under general school settings, young children with learning disabilities are sometimes subjected to conditions that indeed hinder the possibility of having their individual needs met.

A study in the United States of America by Kirk (2006) revealed that the regular school curriculum is not adapted by teachers to suit learners with learning disabilities due to teacher's lack of necessary skills. In addition, many countries particularly the developing ones are facing an acute shortage of qualified teachers. Moreover, serving teachers are paid poorly (and sometimes irregularly) and because of the low qualifications needed to enrol into the profession, it suffers from low social and professional status. A research done in Kenya by UNESCO (2008) shows that "Special education suffers from inadequate funding, lack of clear policy framework, low progress in assessing and placing children with disabilities, few qualified teachers to handle children with special needs, lack of teaching and learning resources among others" (p.28). The provision of Early Childhood Education for all learners is

regulated by scattered registration without a clear policy. A study by Riech (2006) found out that Early Childhood Education has not been given attention at the policy level to enable it provide for all children particularly those with disabilities in terms of the school readiness. This is because there are no clear policy guidelines for curriculum development and implementation.

Quality education provided by trained and supported teachers is the right of all children, youth and adults including those with disabilities. UNICEF (2001) was emphatic about the necessity of providing education for all children, youth and adults that is responsive to their needs and relevant to their lives. This paved the way for the concept of quality expressed in terms of needs based criteria. Quality learning is not only essential for meeting pupils needs but is also fundamental in fostering the conditions for global peace and sustainable development. The skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that learning and teaching promote must reflect and respond to the needs and expectations of all individuals, countries, the global population and the world of work today. This will be achieved not only through teaching basic skills like reading and mathematics, but by encouraging critical thinking and fostering the desire and capacity for lifelong learning that adapts and shifts in local national and global dynamics. Teachers are key to improving learning particularly of children with learning disabilities at the formative stages. According to Heward (2003), a teacher with professional training in special needs education should be able to identify specific curriculum areas to adapt. They have a powerful impact on the quality of students learning and their personal attributes could to some extent enhance their teacher outlook and work output as Mugo (2009) notes. However, teacher's demographics were not study variables in the current research but only explored their

personal attributes as a means to get to know the kind of respondents who participated in the study.

Elements that contribute to quality education include the organisation of physical space, appropriate and adequate supply of materials, teachers qualifications, instruction strategies, collaboration among team members and families as well as individualisation and adaptations within the learning set up. Therefore the study sought to establish if vital elements in school such as teachers' academic and professional qualifications, infrastructure, learning/teaching materials, curriculum used and supervision/monitoring were contributing factors in quality Early Childhood Education for children with learning disabilities

2.9 Classification of Early Childhood Education

The primary purpose of traditional pre-schools and nursery schools is to provide early education experiences to 3- and 4-year-olds. These programmes are often part-day and part-week, although with increasing numbers of parents working they are serving children for longer hours and providing wraparound (full-day) care (Magnuson, Meyers, Ruhm & Waldfogel, 2004). Early childhood education has been categorized at various levels usually using parameters such as the age and developmental growth of the child. In Ghana, Pre-school education falls under various levels namely crèche which is for children aged 0 to 2 years, Day Care (2 to 3 years), Nursery for 3 to 4 years and Kindergarten for children aged between 4 and 5 years (Report of the President's Committee on Review of Education Reforms in Ghana, 2002). According to Melhuish (2005), Daycare refers to childcare by someone other than the parent and most research is concerned with the years 0–5. To Bell and Stevenson (2006), Day-care programmes and half-day pre-schools have different philosophical and

programmatic roots, and different factors have been stressed in research on these programmes.

Daycare research, emanating from social welfare (principally medicine and social work) tends to be concerned with factors affecting the welfare of poor and vulnerable children and families. Nursery school or pre-school education, rooted in developmental psychology, is more often focused on social or emotional and cognitive development. Aside formalized early childhood facilities, there are other informal child care programmes that children may receive prior to school entry. These include care provided by family child care providers, babysitters, or relatives. Informal child care is widely used for children under age three but it is still common for 3 and 4-year-olds as well (Magnuson et al., 2004). In most countries, schools may be classified under sources of funding and ownership, thus public owned and funded schools, private but public funded schools (often religious schools) and private owned and funded schools (Dronkers & Robert, 2003) are all available.

2.10 Objective of Early Childhood Education

Enhancing the quality of young children's lives is now a national and international priority, expressed through research and policy initiatives, programme development and advocacy (Woodhead, 2006). Papatheodorou (2008) quotes Nobel laureate James Heckman as saying early education gives individuals a head start and an advantage to both enjoy high earnings and to get into the pathway of lifelong learning. Papatheodorou (2008) reports that the OECD, UNICEF and UNESCO indicate that these findings and arguments have now become the cornerstone of international policies and commitments for the provision and expansion of early years care and education. Early child development yields high returns in physical, mental, and

economic well-being during the life of the child and adult (World Bank, 2001). According to UNESCO (2002), research studies of early childhood education support the importance of licensing and regulating services of providers, their qualifications and the commitment of providers in taking care of children and also learning about children's development and care. As noted by Magnuson et al. (2004), recent comprehensive reviews of experimental evaluations of high-quality early childhood education programmes provided to children from at-risk groups conclude that these programmes improve children's short-term cognitive and language development and long-term academic achievement and reduce special education placement and grade retention.

In an Carolina Abecedarian project with exceptionally low child-to-staff ratio and a curriculum focused on developing the language of children that by age 21 those in the Abecedarian programme were more likely to have gone on to college than those in the comparison group (Campbell, Ramey, Pungello, Sparling & MillerJohnson, 2002 as cited in Magnuson et al., 2004). UNICEF (2007) as cited in UNESCO (2008) state that Pre-school can be particularly helpful for children from families and communities that have traditionally been excluded from education, and for those who only speak a minority language or whose home circumstances make it hard for them to benefit from early stimulation. In the mid-1990s, the Government of Uruguay initiated a policy to achieve universal pre-primary education which was meant to increase the number of years of schooling without raising school leaving age and to ease children's insertion into and transition through the primary school system through the provision of basic foundations before the start of the primary cycle and socializing them (and their parents) to school from an early age. The government's policy in the long term was to reduce the incentive for early drop out and make the transition

through the primary cycle speedier (Berlinski et al., 2007). In this instance, pre-school was used as an educational, social, economic and cultural intervention to make development both human and economic coherent. Pre-schools established under the Ghana Education Service were to prepare children for primary school (International Bureau of Education, 2006). Pre-school prepares children with the requisite skills and competencies necessary for formal education. It provides parents with productive time for their work while their children are being cared for. Pre-school also provides children with a headstart advantage to formal schooling.

2.11 Access and attendance to Early Childhood Education and Care

The Early years of children are critical as it forms the bedrock for subsequent learning. This has made it imperative for investment in quality ECEC especially for the most disadvantaged in ensuring that children go to school at the right age, achieve better learning outcomes, stay longer in school and develop their full potential (Global Partnership for Education, 2012). In Romania, according to UNESCO (2008), some elements of provision such as the provision of a free meal, books and learning materials and support with school transport makes positive contribution to enrolment and promotes access to early childhood education. In many cases, early childhood education is free of charge, particularly for the pre first grade preparatory or 'zero-year'. UNESCO further states that this is by no means general because in cases where fees are obligatory, arrangements are made to facilitate access for families on low income (social disadvantage) and or with disability.

2.12 Monitoring and supervision of early grade school

Globally, early childhood education has had interest groups monitoring and providing supervisory direction to pre-school institutions (Public and Private). These interest

groups range from governmental agencies and international donors and partners. These agencies provide technical and monetary support and also monitor to check the achievement of their objectives. Monitoring groups and interest such as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), UNESCO, UNICEF and local agencies such as the Ministry of Education and the Department of Social Welfare are among some of the institutions engaged in the supervision and monitoring of several aspects of pre-school education.

2.13 The Importance of Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education, within the last few decades, considered different fields (Roopnarine & Johnson, 2005) such as developmental psychology, cultural psychology, childhood studies, cultural anthropology, history, and philosophy. This is because recent studies showed that babies and young children are born with the capacity to understand the world around them (Nutbrown, 2006). More so, children's brains are ready to learn when they come to the world. During this process; both the environment and genes take an important role which in turn, builds the brain (Levitt, 2008). Considering what had been said so far by authorities in respect to childhood education, it can be asserted that children are being perceived as competent learners rather than empty slates. This has, therefore, brought changes in the way of perceiving children or early childhood education. The readiness of children to learn even when they are just born triggered the necessity of early childhood education both for the individual child and for the society as a whole.

Longitudinal studies have shown that early childhood education is the period when children's develop more rapidly and expand their intellectual faculties as they grow. Therefore, education in this crucial period creates significance for the development of children. In a study conducted by Bell and Stevenson (2006), it was found that getting

an early childhood education provided an increase in the IQ level of children in the short term and in the long term, it increased the child's school achievement. Early childhood education also becomes more beneficial especially, for the children coming from the low socio-economic background. Ogbonnaya (2015) identified benefits of being exposed to early education for children coming from low-income families as cognitive growth and school readiness. Besides children from the low socioeconomic background, good quality of early childhood education provides early reading and math skills to children from high and middle socioeconomic status. Early education cultivates children in terms of socialization rather than purely academic enhancement such as math and reading. Webb (2003) elaborated that children learn cooperation through education in child care centres and such skills help them to obey rules and stay safe in the society. Regarding socialization, parents also share the same perspective. In the study of Aina (2012), it was revealed that one of the biggest reasons for parents sending children to early childhood education centre is to get them socialized. In fact, in a longitudinal study, Amissah, Opong-Frimpong and Sam-Tagoe (2009) explained that children who received early childhood education became emotionally and socially more competent adults compared to the ones who did not receive early education.

In addition to the above exposition on early childhood education, we also have the conviction that proper early childhood education will help children enjoy academic benefits; early education provides children a better future in the long term such as preparing them for school and increase in high school graduation rates. It is however imperative for the Government of Ghana to start to pay particular attention to the early childhood education since it has been proved that good quality of early education has long lasting effects on the children's later life and very productive for

the society. To affirm this idea, Oppenheim and MacGregor (2002) established that children who receive early education are less likely to involve in crime and more likely to complete their high school education and get a college education. Other studies such as Chicago Longitudinal study and the Cost, Quality and Child outcome study indicated that getting high-quality early childhood education makes children become successful students and citizens in their later lives (Reynolds & Ou, 2004). On the other hand, according to the World Bank Report (2001), between 0-6 years of age, each 1 dollar invested on children was returned to a fold of 7.6 dollars in the future as a result of the productivity gained through early childhood education. Parallel to this study, Sipitiet (2017) indicated that the rate of the return of the investment in people in early childhood period is higher compared to investment in other periods of human life. In addition, research results support that through early childhood education, children are exposed to good quality experience, which allows the connections in their brains to develop and this is of immense importance to the society. Such results opened the way to start education of brains as early as possible. In one of the studies conducted by Knudson (2004), it was elaborated that developmental flexibility of brain wiring or its ability to change due to influences of experience were affected by both genes and early environmental factors. So, the necessity occurs for educators, policy makers, and others in the society helping children to construct their initial brain architecture by providing education for them in their early ages. Findings of the longitudinal and cross sectional studies (Openheim & MacGregor, 2002; Reynolds & Ou, 2004) related the benefits of early childhood education provided logical reasons to emphasize on early education for a better society. Besides, in the last twenty years, sociocultural changes such as getting into

the information age and changes in the world order through globalization triggered early childhood education to be a concern of many societies.

2.14 Early Childhood Education Policy in Ghana

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) is the timely provision of a range of services that promote the survival, growth, development and protection of the young child (Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, (MOWAC), 2005). Traditionally, Ghanaians have always demonstrated devoted attention to child up-bringing. Children constitute the future leadership and workforce of Ghana. Ghanaian children, therefore require serious commitment from state institutions to ensure their proper growth and development into adulthood. This is manifested in the various Constitutional provisions, Parliamentary Acts and Legislative Instruments by the Government of Ghana. Before 2001, the focus of ECCD had been on the cognitive development of the child. This was seen in the establishment of Creches, Day Care Centres, Nurseries and Kindergartens by the Government and private operators to take care of children whilst their parents go out to work. The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare had joint responsibilities for these early childhood facilities because of the welfare/care and educational needs of children. Furthermore, the mandate of the Ghana National Commission on Children (GNCC) made the commission responsible for the welfare of all children in Ghana. The responsibility for policy making in respect to children had shifted from the GNCC to the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) with the establishment of MOWAC in 2001. MOWAC is now the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection.

The new approach to ECCD is to formulate comprehensive policies and programmes for children from birth to age eight, their parents and caregivers. This is with the aim of protecting the child's rights to develop his or her full cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential. This relatively new approach promotes and protects the rights of the young child to survival, growth and development (MOWAC, 2005). Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) policy became operational in 2007.

The purpose of the policy is to provide a framework for the guidance of the Government and all stakeholders specifically Sector Ministries, District Assemblies and its structures, communities, families, civil society, including Non-Governmental Organizations and the Donor Community in their effort to support the survival, protection and development of the children of Ghana in their early years. The Children's Act 1998 (Act 560) enjoins the District Assemblies and other Decentralized Departments to facilitate the establishment of day care centres and other ECCD institutions in Ghana. The main goal of the policy is the survival, growth, development and protection of all Ghanaian children. The government shall therefore take measures to expand access and improve the quality of ECCD programmes in that direction to 100 percent of children aged 0-8 by the year 2015. Quality, equity in delivery, cost sharing, holistic approach, community and parent participation will be the guiding principles (MOWAC, 2005). Under the ECCD Policy, the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs shall have the sole responsibility for ensuring the successful implementation of this policy and its programmes through monitoring and evaluation responsibilities which are:

- Develop a Communications and Advocacy Strategy to create a nationwide awareness on the Policy and ECCD issues

1. Establish a Unit within its offices which shall serve as the Secretariat for National ECCD Coordinating Committee
2. Recommend, in consultation with the relevant Ministries and other stakeholders, minimum standards for the operation of ECCD centres
3. Establish and operationalize a national programme for research, monitoring and evaluation of ECCD issues
4. Ensure that the provisions of the policy are adhered to and decisions of the National Co-ordinating Committee are carried out
5. Mobilize resources for purposes such as research, advocacy, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of ECCD programmes
6. Encourage the formation of a National ECCD Consultative Group of NGOs working with children within the relevant age group
7. Submit annually to relevant Statutory bodies a comprehensive report on the status of implementation of the policy.

Also, under the ECCD policy, the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service (MOE/GES) have the following responsibilities:

1. Take a lead role to regulate the establishment and registration of preschools (Kindergarten)
2. Take a lead role in providing technical input in early intellectual stimulation and development issues in ECCD programmes, both centre-based and non-centre based. These would include, but not be limited to, the development of curriculum, setting of educational standards and monitoring of the same
3. Make a provision for ECCD programmes within its budget

4. Expand and maximize the use of existing ECCD training facilities and establish new ones, existing training institutions could, in the meantime, offer their facilities for use in conducting courses for caregivers during vacation
5. Offer qualitative training to ECCD attendants and caregivers and support all Nursery Training Centres both financially and materially
6. Ensure a smooth transition from preschool programmes to formal schooling.

2.15 Administrative-Related Challenges that Headteachers encounter in Early Grade Schools

A number of administrative-related challenges confronts basic school headteachers in their management especially at the early grade level level. Below are some of the challenges:

To begin with, human resources is one of the administrative-related challenges headteachers in early grade school encounter. Human resource management involves all the activities undertaken to attract, develop, and maintain an effective workforce within an institution (Daft & Marcic, 2004). Teachers are the human resources of every school. Their role in the teaching and learning process is very crucial. Teachers can influence children either positively or negatively. Headteachers must therefore ensure that qualified teachers are allocated to teach at the early grade level to ensure that their skills are enhanced and widened through regular training. The task of the early grade teacher is enormous. He or she is everything for the child while at school, taking the place of the child's parent. Children rightly demand for love, attention, assistance, guidance and comfort from him/her. Therefore the early grade teacher must be aware to understand the needs and behaviour of children in order to care for them properly.

Mupa and Chinooneka (2015), explained that headteachers should be able to help early grade teachers through training to develop a variety of activities and methods to enable children of different ages and backgrounds to acquire proper knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitudes. They will also provide the best learning situation to ensure the all-round development of the child. Also, lack of training for personnel or human resources, adversely affects the effective management of educational institutions and the maintenance of quality and high standards of education and training. Sekyere (2016), stated a number of human resources challenges headteachers encounter. Lateness to school, absenteeism, lack of commitment and uncooperative attitudes affect the process of teaching and learning negatively and does not lead to productivity. Headteachers have a very huge responsibility to ensure that the right calibre of teachers are assigned to teach at the early grade level, trained with current methodologies and strategies, motivated and supervised to achieve stated goals. The foundation of education is the early grade school and it must therefore be made solid.

Another administrative-related challenge has to do with motivation. One secret for success in any organization is motivated and enthusiastic workers. Motivation is a challenge for managers because motivation arise from within workers and typically differs for each person (Daft & Marcic, 2004). Baku (2002), defines motivation as getting people to do willingly and well those things which have to be done. In other words it is seen as the force that triggers a goal oriented behaviour. Daft and Marcic (2004), are of the view that motivation is the force either within or external to a person that arouses enthusiasm and persistence to pursue a certain course of action. Sekyere (2016), explains that teacher motivation seeks to induce or make the teacher happy to remain at post and work harder to improve the academic performance of

pupils thus raising the standard of education in the country. Motivation therefore is the reason or reasons for one to work harder.

The following are some areas of teacher motivation that headteachers have challenges, access to accommodation of appreciable standard at station, access to other basic necessities of life like food at reasonable prices, good drinking water and health care facilities, especially in the rural areas, decent classroom facilities, adequate supply of teaching and learning materials to work with, friendly school physical environment with sanitary and recreational facilities, healthy headteacher, teacher and pupil working relationship, cooperating parents and community, recognition of teachers' positive contribution in the community

Kuffo (2009) spoke at length about the conditions of service which serve as motivation for teachers. He explained condition of service as the benefits a teacher derives from the service. These include regular monthly salary, allowance, promotions, leaves (study, sick, casual, and maternity) and retiring and death benefits. All these are to serve as motivation to teachers. However, the procedure or process that teachers go through before getting them is very frustrating. Both the headteachers and teachers spend a lot before accessing these benefits and doesn't motivate them to give their best.

There is also workload challenges associated with the Pupil-Teacher Ratio. Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) refers to the number of pupils enrolled in a school divided by the number of teachers in the school. A low Pupil – Teacher Ratio enhance effective teaching and learning whereas a high Pupil – Teacher Ratio negatively affect quality teaching and learning. PTR can also be seen as class size that is the number of pupils in a class per the periods that a teacher handles. A study conducted by the Ghana New

Agency indicated that the early grade Pupil – Teacher Ratio in the West Mamprusi District in Ghana was 101:1 (GNA January, 2013). It is worthy to note that, high Pupil–Teacher ratio does not promote effective teaching and learning due because class control becomes a problem, the teacher is unable to reach every pupil to know and remedy his or her problem. Remedial teaching becomes impossible and pupils’ participation is always restricted to a small number of active pupils. Headteachers have a huge responsibility to ensure that the workload of the early grade teachers are such that each child will be attended to during teaching and learning process.

Increasing the workload of teachers involves increasing class sizes and/or the average number of classes assigned to each teacher and lengthening teachers’ working hours in return for salary increase. A variant of this policy is the “double-shift” system whereby schools run classes for one contingent of pupils in the mornings and another in the afternoons. This implies a lower level of investment in equipment and fewer teachers, and has the added merit of coping with the lack of infrastructure and teaching-learning materials. Such overloading approaches have often been adopted by developing countries; needless to say, they can eventually drive qualified teachers into other professions, particularly as general working conditions and real salary rates continue to deteriorate (Maritz, 2005). A study by Harris and Lambert (2003) furnishes corroborative evidence. The study found that in United States high schools, above-average class sizes correlated with teacher resignation rates.

There is also the lack of school resources and facilities. Sakyi (2015), identifies lack of school buildings and dilapidated school buildings whose roofs are blown off during heavy rainfall as major challenges that hinders effective teaching and learning in the school. Some pupils learn under trees and the disadvantages associated with it are

enormous to the extent that it hinders effective teaching and learning. Resources in the broader sense can be taken as anything in the school or its environment that may be used to help teaching and learning. Lack of classroom materials is one of the problems that our public school encounter. Due to these problems, some teachers are compelled to spend their own money in buying material that will sustain the productivity of the classroom (Mharjhay, 2002). Lack of classroom materials has a big impact in the process of teaching and learning. Through this problem teaching and learning process will not become productive and conducive. Classrooms lack basic materials that the teacher need such as textbooks, syllabus, teachers handbook, pupils workbooks and furniture.

Ntumi (2016), also holds the view that when teaching aids are used in the classroom, it helps pupils to understand well the concept that is been treated. They also help the teacher to illustrate what he/she teaches with little or no difficulty. Teaching aid may be audio, visual or audio visual. The early grade classroom also have centres/corners such as nature, make-belief, creative, Ghana, home, sand, shopping, reading/book and construction that aid the teaching and learning process. The classroom must also be properly set up with talking walls, mobiles, fliers, and other illustrations that children can manipulate, play with and learn during the process of playing. Early grade curriculum, teachers handbooks and pupils workbooks are either not enough or available at all in most of the early grade schools. These are very important items needed for effective teaching and learning at this level. Physical facilities such as washrooms, dining halls, library, and accommodation for staff are to be provided as well. This is a major challenge confronting headteachers at the early grade schools. Provisions of these resources are costly and most of the school depend on the capitation grant alone as their source of funding. The capitation grants allocated to the

schools are also woefully inadequate to cater for all the needs in the school. Headteachers must therefore be innovative and figure out other acceptable innovations that can be adopted, to generate funds internally to support teaching and learning.

There is also the challenge of teacher retention. According to USAIDS (2009), majority of teachers leave the classroom to seek employment elsewhere due to poor teacher motivation. Other teachers also leave the classrooms due to various reasons leading to vacant or inadequate teachers to handle the early grade pupils. According to the GNA the West Mamprusi District recently revealed shocking phenomena that more than 113 classrooms in the district were without teachers. 83 among them were early grade classrooms that were without teachers. (GNA, January 7th, 2013). The questions that is been asked is how can teaching and learning take place without teachers? How can the basic level of education be fed with children from the early grade level when they have not been well prepared due to the absence of teachers? In recent times both teachers and headteachers especially are confronted with how to access the early grade pupils. This has resulted with a lot of misunderstanding between teachers and headteachers, teachers and their colleagues in the upper classes, teachers and parents. These contributes to the administrative challenges confronting the headteacher in managing early grade schools.

2.16 Financial-Related Challenges that Headteachers Encounter in Early Grade Schools

First and foremost, inadequate government funding is one of the financial-related challenges facing headteachers in managing early grade schools. This is because the government is one of the major sponsors of education in most countries of the world.

Funding of public early grade schools is one of the major functions of the government (Hall, 2013). This is done through the preparation of annual budget for meeting the needs of the various sectors of the economy including education. Similarly, supplementary budget is usually prepared by government to take care of financial inadequacies in the education sector. The various levels of government; local and state are partakers in the funding of the education sector (Hall, 2013). The government therefore plays a significant role of funding education through annual budgetary allocation. Consideration should therefore be given to the educational sector through continuous increase in the allocation to education sector, this is because the inadequate supply of this pose a great challenge to the smooth running of the schools.

Headteachers play a major role in the management of all school financial activities, which involve the disbursement of money. The money is obtained through various sources such as fees. According to Brescoll (2016), financial management determines the way the school is managed and whether or not the school will meet its objectives. Brescoll indicates that, the headteacher is responsible for budgeting, accounting and auditing functions of financial management. With the introduction of free primary education, schools get some funding from the government while parents are required to meet various other costs such as school P.T.A and Examination fees (Brescoll, 2016). It is not clear whether this arrangement is friendly to early grade schools.

Headteachers in early grade schools are faced with the challenge of formula funding which impacts on the financial resources available to the headteachers to run the school. Formula funding allocates a budget to each individual school based on that school's pupil numbers and characteristics. The formula for each school is determined

on the basis of national funding regulations with scope for local implementation (Davis & Ampiah, 2011). The local authority (district or municipal level), in consultation with educational directorate, makes decisions on local implementation. Headteachers play a significant role in local consultation on school funding. Individual schools are consulted on proposed changes to the local funding formula and scheme for financing schools, with the headteacher often leading the school's response. Headteachers also constitute a significant proportion of members of each local authority's Schools Forum (Radu et al., 2017). Schools Forums play a consultative and decision-making role in relation to school funding.

As the system has developed under local management, more and more resources have been delegated to schools and they now control the overwhelming majority of their funding. This has inevitably resulted in a higher level of responsibility for headteachers, whose role in managing school finances is essential to the efficient operation of the funding system (Davis & Ampiah, 2011). Once a school's individual allocation is determined, the school has control over how its funding is used. Headteachers play a key role in such school-based decision-making. Governing bodies can delegate authority to headteachers in relation to how the school's budget is spent, including decisions on staffing resources. But in case where a school has a small number of students it means that they will receive little amount from the government which may not be enough for them to manage the school.

The serious funding problems mean that headteachers in many schools especially early grade schools in Ghana have to manage budgets that are insufficient to cover the costs faced by the school. This has caused cutbacks in schools and increased workload for teachers and in some cases redundancies. Instead of managing funding shortages,

headteachers should be able to play a key role in a new funding system based on the needs of schools. Measures such as needs-led funding system for schools that would objectively assess the resources needed to deliver high quality education (Grant, 2008).

In addition to funding to meet the statutory requirements placed upon them and to take account of their individual needs, schools need extra funding to enable effective teaching and learning. This means improvements in teachers' conditions of service: smaller class sizes and reduction in workload, for example. Headteachers themselves would benefit from reduced workload pressures. Under such a system headteachers would play a key role, along with other teachers, to identify the needs of their schools based on national priorities to help deliver a first class education service. It is clear that a funding system that meets schools' needs is in the interests of heads as well as other teachers (Davis & Ampiah, 2011).

Furthermore, headteachers in early grade schools are faced with delay of funds. The school mainly depend on the government to finance its activities, but in a situation where the government delays to release funds to the schools the headteachers find themselves in a hard situation in running the school (Ntumi, 2016). This forces them to sending students at home to bring funds. The delay in disbursement of funds such as Capitation Grant was a challenge in school management as most transactions settlement time would not be met. A study by Pajibo and Tamanja (2017) on the "Influence and Challenges of the Capitation Grant on Education Delivery in Basic Schools in Ghana" participants revealed that the delay of capitation grant hinders effective running of schools and it puts us in a very awkward position as managers.

They all suggested that clear policies for disbursement be put in place and delay of disbursement be avoided at all cost.

Mncube and Makhasane (2013) found Lesotho faced challenges regarding the implementation of the fee collection policy, despite a manual for headteachers of schools on financial planning and organisation. There are still challenges regarding the collection and recording of school fees, budgeting as well as a lack of administrative support. Motsamai et al. (2011) agree that delay in the payment of school fees impacts negatively on the general operation of the school, including on the services provided. During the budgeting process, power relations surface with principals playing a dominant role in decision-making regarding both departmental and main school budget. Principals are not provided with sufficient capacity-building on financial matters, which cripples them in performing the budgetary tasks (Mncube & Makhasane, 2013).

Atieno and Simatwa (2012) report that in Kenya there is a delay in disbursement of funds to schools as a challenge in school management, as well as the stipulated duties to be performed with the funds stagnate and fee defaulting by parents. Budgeting and incompetence by the newly appointed principals is also regarded as a major challenge to managing school finances. Kanguri, Njati and Thiaine (2014) found that while some schools draw up a tight budget others do it in rather careless functions, some teachers being lazy and relying on the budgets of past years and the minimal involvement of education stakeholders in the budgetary process. School financial reports are poorly prepared, which may attributed to a lack of knowledge, apathy, and lack of school financial management expertise personnel.

Unfortunately, this challenge is inevitable as government has to equally invest in other sectors of the economy such as health and agriculture. This move competes with the amount of money that has to be invested in the educational sector. The in the long run translates into limited funds being invested into the educational sector. Even where much finance is invested into the educational sector, the implementation of the Free Senior High School policy, means that more money is being pushed into the running of the senior high schools and less of this amount is invested into early grade schools.

2.17 Parent-Related Challenges that Headteachers encounter in Early Grade

Schools

The home and family is a critical setting and context in children's education and development. The home and family lays the base on which all future and further education and learning grows. Parents and families consequently exert a significant influence on the direction and shape that education and care of children take. This rather obvious fact has long been acknowledged by educators such as Pestalozzi who observed that the teaching of their parents will always be of utmost essence for children (Ogbonnaya, 2015). Parents influence outcomes in their children directly, in addition to passing on values and creating motivation for schooling in them. These values and motivation may in turn impact on outcomes in the child. Parental involvement incorporates the various ways in which parents participate in their children's education-related activities both in school and at home. This involvement can take on or more different forms, which include volunteering to help with a specific task in or out of class, participating in discussions about school or the child, helping the child with homework, or assisting school management in making decision on school matters. The goals for children's education and development are attained

better when significant adults in a child's life, in this case teachers and parents, adopt a consistent and commonly agreed upon approach on how they deal with the child. Cooperation also makes a child's separation from home and entry into the new setting smoother. This cooperation and partnership has been found to have positive outcomes in the child, and also to be beneficial to the parents.

A review of studies carried out by Creswell (2012) indicates that parental involvement seems to produce benefits in children and these benefits last beyond preschool and are carried through to high school. However, parental involvement techniques are most often employed by early childhood and primary school teachers, according to studies (Crosser, 2005). Parental involvement activities usually focus on encouraging parents to read to children at home and help in the classroom. Higher levels of parental involvement takes place when children are young, and the involvement decreases as children move up the classes (Sipitiet, 2017). This is actually a good situation given the centrality and importance of early childhood experiences, and the observed benefits of parental involvement.

Fathers and mothers also appear to be involved in somewhat different ways. In homes with both parents, mothers appear to be more involved than fathers. One study, reviewed by Crosser (2005), indicated that in two-parent homes, 27% of fathers are highly involved compared to 56% of the mothers (National Centre for Education Statistics (NCES, 1997). When mothers were involved children had higher achievement. But in addition if fathers were also highly involved, children had higher achievement yet (Ogbonnaya, 2015). In general, it is found that fathers are less involved than mothers (Fagan & Palm, 2004). The picture emerging suggests that there is overwhelming agreement that involving parents in children's education can

have definite positive impact on their achievement at preschool. Research has consistently indicated that strong and long-term support to children from parents and other adults at home, as well as from adults at school, increases their success in school.

Involving parents in children's learning activities at home is one parental involvement type that many educators believe is important in the child's learning. Sipitiet (2017) suggests that parents of children in the early grades can play six key roles: teacher at home, volunteer, paid employee, audience, decision maker, and adult learner. These roles have the potential to influence not just the parents' behaviour and their children's schoolwork, but also the quality of schools and communities.

Epstein (1998) reviewed by Crosser (2005) identified six levels of parental involvement. These levels include activity both in and out of the classroom. These are: One, parenting level; at this level the school helps families to understand child development and appropriate parenting to promote the child's development. Schools learn from families as well, with the duty to understand the family culture, ways of interacting and values. Two, communicating level; at this level Epstein indicates that two-way communication is preferred to one-way communication in which the school simply tells or notifies parents. Two-way communication may include such methods as phone calls, meetings and email. Three, volunteering level; this brings parents into direct contact with schools and pupils in a variety of passive and active roles. Parents may volunteer to monitor or even direct an activity, or simply act as audience for an impromptu puppet skit or listen to a child read.

Four, learning at home level; at this level, parents work with their children on curriculum-related tasks at home. This could see parents assist with or supervise

completion of homework. Parents may be provided with literacy bags or suggested activities for learning at home. Parents may also be encouraged to read to their children or complete activities such as math puzzles. Five, decision-making level; here we have leadership as a member of an advisory council, parent/teacher organization, or school committee. For example, parents may sit on textbook selection committees or take active roles in helping to develop a parent handbook. Six, collaborating with the community level; this revolves around coordinating services for families within the community. A parent might, for instance, liaise with the health department nurses to offer immunizations at school site, notify parents with eligible children and promote the programme.

One of the parent-related challenge also has to do with parental and community involvement in the early grade education. The role of parents in their wards early grade education is very important. Children and parents are part of the community. A large class size community which is well informed about the needs and importance of healthy growth and development of children will contribute a lot to the welfare of the early grade education within its area. Daft and Marcic (2004), are of the view that parents care deeply for their children and want them to survive and grow healthily, physically, emotionally and mentally. For any early grade school programme to succeed in stimulating and sustaining healthy growth and development of young children, the parent's role and involvement as partners in education is necessary. Parents should participate in the classroom and outdoor activities.

Parents and members of the community should be involved in the management and administration of the school especially at the early grade level. Bodies such as the Parent and Teachers Associations play a very important role in the running of the

school. Parents and members of the community should contribute ideas, teaching and learning materials and serve as resource persons during teaching and learning process. They can also organize and raise funds, contribute materials and participate physically in the construction of early grade structures. Research has demonstrated that when parents and community participate or get involved in their early grade children's school programme, in positive ways, children achieve higher grades in the higher class. They experience better attendance at school, complete homework, demonstrate positive behaviour in school (Godwyll, Larson, & Ahwireng, 2013).

Furthermore, parental involvement in Parent Teacher Association meeting. Parent Teacher Association as an association of all parents and guardians of the children in the school as well as teachers. The purpose of having a Parent Teacher Association are to encourage co-operation between parents and teachers so that both parties can best promote the interest of the child. Also it provides the avenue to meet regularly on issues which promote the welfare of the pupils, teachers and the community and provides the opportunity for teachers to explain to parents what their work entail. Parents are kept informed of the progress of their children and if necessary can be advised on how best to care for their children.

Furthermore, PTA helps in assisting teachers to maintain discipline especially when it affects other parents. Some parents resist disciplinary measures taken against their children and make life difficult for the teachers. Parents also feel that the school belongs to them and thus visit it frequently to acquaint themselves with the activities and programs in the school. Some parents even serve as resource persons to teach some subjects on the curriculum –cultural activities (drumming, dance, traditional music) which some teachers cannot handle competently.

Atta, Agyenim-Boateng and Baafi-Frimpong (2000) is also of the view that, Parent Teacher Association is important because of the following reasons:

- i. It serves as a link between the home and the school. Parents and teachers come to exist as co-operative instead of separate and independent bodies.
- ii. It provides the fora for teachers and parents to discuss and achieve the objective of education.
- iii. It promotes friendly relations between parents and teachers.
- iv. It helps to solve problems facing pupils.
- v. Helps maintain discipline among pupils.

It is obvious from the above points that when parents who are stakeholders in education do not get involved in Parent-Teacher Association and its activities, it will lead to non-achievement of educational goals. Beaty (2010) shares the view that when parents and the community get involved in the early grade school programme, it has the longest lasting positive effect on the children.

Headteachers will appreciate it greatly if parents and the community can assist with the producing teaching and learning materials, participating in classroom and outdoor activities, participating in meetings, providing the basic needs of their children, contributing ideas and resources for the curriculum, checking on their wards performance by regularly interacting with teachers and responding to the calls of teachers promptly.

Also, socio-economic status and educational background. Traditionally, family status variables such as socio-economic status and parent's level of education have been regarded as predictors of children's academic achievements, socio economic status and parent's level of education is part of a larger constellation of psychological and

sociological variables influencing children's school outcomes (Joan & Smrekar, 2009). Chingos and West (2010) are of the view that the level of education and occupational positions of parents are important determinants pupils' achievement. Some pupils from lowly educated parents do not perform well at school because they lack motivation and parental support that even if teachers are qualified still those pupils fail. Delvin, Kift and Nelson (2012) also add that ineffectiveness on the part of pupils are higher from families of low socio-economic status no matter which particular factors are used to measure socio-economic status.

According to Joan and Smrekar (2009), children whose parents have higher socio-economic status and higher levels of education may have an enhanced regard for learning, more positive ability beliefs, a stronger work orientation, and they may use more effective learning strategies than children of parents with lower socio economic status and lower levels of education. There is evidence that parents' education will affect students' academic achievements in schools. According to Grissmer (2003), parents' level of education is the most important factor affecting students' academic achievement. Taiwo (2013), submits that parents' educational background influence the academic achievement of students. This according to him, is because the parents would be in a good position to be second teachers to the child; and even guide and counsel the child on the best way to perform well in education and provide the necessary materials needed by the child. Bowles and Levin (2005), in their studies showed that school quality and social background was highly correlated. It was found out that students growing up in poverty face numerous barriers or challenges in doing well academically.

Family factors also accounts for parent-related challenges. Family factors also play a role in a teacher's ability to teach pupils and for the pupils to also learn well. Basic school headteachers and class teachers agree that what is going on at home especially between parents will impart a pupil's propensity to learn. Family factors such as divorce, single parents, poverty, violence, conflicts between parents, poor parental practices, negative parent - child relationship and many other issues are all challenges related to parents. These have negative effects on the pupil's general wellbeing which also affect their academic work.

Parent's wrong perception of early education is another challenge. Some parents whose wards are at the early grade level of the basic school still have the perception that no serious activities are carried out there in terms of teaching and learning. They are of the view that early grade children come to school only to play, eat and sleep. Such parents attaches no seriousness to their wards education. They do not attend to calls made by their children's teachers, they pick up the children at odd times and does not provide items requested by teachers to aid teaching and learning. Other parents also travel with their early grade wards for weeks, and months without informing their teachers. This clearly tells how parents value early grade education especially in the public schools in the rural areas.

Sherrington (2006) points out that: "Involving parents is not just informing them about their children, progress in school or the education system; it is about increasing understanding of the potential that might otherwise remain hidden. The parents need to understand why the school has a given program, requires certain equipment and also carries out certain activities. Teachers can bridge the gap between the school and the community by giving learners tasks that take them back home to perform before

they bring back a report from the parents. Harris and Lambert (2003) point out that in spite of the fact that some parents do not like to be bothered by the authorities with their children's behaviour Challenges, nevertheless it has been found to be very useful in many cases where pupils have become sources of unusual challenges for someone who is skilled in such matters to confer with one or both parents and to see if together they can discover what is the root cause of deviance and what best remedy can be. In a nutshell, Epstein (1995), sums up the issue of parents and community involvement in the early grade programme by saying that every parent has a duty to be actively involved in some way in his or her children's educational programme that provides major service to their children.

It is generally accepted that there may not exist one universal model of involving parents that would satisfy all the needs that the different stakeholders may have. Research findings, however, indicate some level of involvement at whatever degree is preferable to a situation of zero or no involvement at all. For example, dropping out of school has been associated with parents who are less involved, seldom attending events or helping with homework and, instead, punishing poor grades (Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004). A national survey of public schools by NCES (1998) in the United States found that opportunities for participation in decision-making were reported less often, and parent involvement tended to decrease in schools with high poverty and high minority enrolment. Creating opportunities to enhance parental involvement is therefore a way of raising quality of early grade education.

2.18 Strategies to help Headteachers overcome the Challenges in the Early Grade School

The following are some of the strategies headteachers have adopted to overcome the challenges. Amissah, Oppong-Frimpong and Sam-Tagoe (2009), assert that provision of enough teaching and learning materials in the classroom teachers may help boost children's intellectual development. This is because student learning takes place primarily in the course of interactions with people (such as teachers and peers) and instructional materials that include textbooks, workbooks, instructional software, web-based content, homework, projects, quizzes, and tests (Grover & Matthew, 2012). For this reason, the involvement of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) in the teaching-learning process continues to prove relevant. From the lowest through to the highest levels of the educational ladder, the impact of teaching and learning materials continues to prove significantly vibrant. To a large extent, the teaching and learning process depends on the variety of materials made available in the learning environment.

According to Amissah, Oppong-Frimpong and Sam-Tagoe (2009), the educational implications of Skinner's theory of human development means that a conducive classroom atmosphere with relevant and ample materials enables students to have healthy and active interactions. They indicate that materials to be learned should be arranged in systematic and sequential steps from known to unknown, easy to difficult, and simple to complex. To improve the availability of teaching and learning materials, one approach is to develop the requisite skills and capacity among teacher trainees (Opoku-Asare, 2004). In preparing prospective teachers, it is vital to focus more on the preparation and skilful use of various teaching and learning materials available in

the classroom so that their pupils will benefit from the use of teaching and learning materials in learning.

Teaching and learning materials have been described in many ways by different authors, educators, and curriculum planners. Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) are alternatively known as instructional media, instructional resources, teaching aids or learning aids in various contexts in several educational materials or documents. Teaching and learning materials is used to summarize instructional and learning aids. Instructional aides are what the teacher uses in presenting a lesson while learning aids are used by the pupils. This is a very fine distinction and it often happens that in one period the same teaching aid can be used both as an instructional and a learning aid (for example chalkboard). Media are various components in the learners' environment which support the learners to learn. A learning material is any object in the learning environment that complements or facilitates understanding.

Teaching and learning materials are all forms of information carriers which can be used to record, store, preserve, transmit, or retrieve information for purposes of teaching and learning. They are materials used by practising and trainee teachers to present, illustrate, and elucidate teaching posits (Onasanya, 2004). Teaching and learning materials also refer to all aids that are used by the lecturer and student. In other cases, the term refers to only printed media but for the purpose of this work, teaching and learning materials can be referred to as all available devices and the materials used in the teaching and learning process. Teaching and learning materials are a physical means which are used to send messages to the students and stimulate them to learn (Leithwood et al., 2004). Leithwood et al., explains that instructional media encompasses all the materials and physical means an instructor and teacher

might use to implement instruction and facilitate learners' achievement of instructional objectives. This may include traditional materials such as chalkboards, hand-outs, charts, slides, overheads, real objects, flash card and videotape or film, as well newer materials and methods such as computers, DVDs, CD-ROMs, the Internet, and interactive video conferencing. Teaching and learning materials comprise visual materials and audio-visual materials (Leithwood et al., 2004). Visual materials are those that are used by teachers to make visual impressions on the learner whereas audio-visual materials as anything that can be seen and heard which together with the teacher's vocal explanation improve comprehension among learners.

Every person learns by receiving information through the sense organs such as the ears, eyes, nose, tongue and skin (Anini, 2011). Teaching and learning materials are needed to create an appropriate environment for effective learning. While much teaching has traditionally relied on the pupils' hearing and seeing, the modern trend emphasizes the use of all the senses – hearing, seeing, and smelling, tasting and touching Anini (2011) indicates, any teaching and learning materials used in the classroom should provide the pupils with the opportunity to learn through all or some of the five senses.

However, it is important that the teacher is conversant with the materials, equipment or resources which are taken to the classroom or those that have been procured. This knowledge will ensure that teacher knows what resource(s) are needed for specific lessons, and that they are readily available. When teaching, the teacher must also make sure to select a variety of resources which appeal to other senses than that of hearing. Again, in selecting resources, the teacher must make sure that they fulfil a function which is relevant and when used, those resources must emphasize particular

points raised in the lesson more effectively than can be emphasized without those resources (Tamakloe, Amadahe & Atta, 2005).

According to Ghana Education Service Handbook on TLMs, improvisation is the use of material, which is readily available in the environment in place of the original materials, which are not available or are expensive, delicate or sophisticated to bring about the same learning effect. Improvisation means using whatever is available because one does not have what is really needed (Oxford, 2000). Improvisation is one option for ensuring effective teaching and learning. Improvisation therefore refers to a substitute for the readymade or imported materials (Ibeneme, 2009).

Aina (2012), believes teachers must utilize the use of discarded resources around them to improvised teaching aids for physics for example. In Africa it is difficult to obtain conventional teaching and learning materials because unavailability of funds has made the cost of the materials unaffordable. It is therefore imperative for teachers to look for other means of providing the needed teaching and learning materials to cope with the demands of teaching and learning. When teachers are creative they can improvise their own teaching and learning materials in order to teach effectively. As Jones and George (2009) note, everybody can be involved in the production of these alternatives the teachers, learners, parents and all interested parties in education. The involvement of teachers and learners in improvising materials gives students and teachers the opportunity to concretize their creativity, resourcefulness and imaginative skills (Mwangi, 2016).

In summary, every headteacher has the mandate to properly manage people and other resources available in the school to ensure attainment of stated objectives. However, in the discharge of their duty as administrators, headteachers are confronted with

challenges that are related with pupils, teachers, parents, materials and management. The purpose of identifying and studying the challenges the headteachers face is simple to make known the various forms of challenges that exist in the management of a school especially at the early grade level. Headteachers therefore ought to apply all the principles and guidance associated with the management of institutions to ensure that the numerous challenges they encounter in their work are minimized in order to be successful. In recent times, headteachers have responsibility to be held responsible if pupils perform poorly in their examination. They must therefore ensure that all stakeholders are brought on board, supervised and motivated to play their role effectively so that the objective of the school will be achieved. The reviewed literature clearly shows that human resources is very vital in the management of every school. Objectives can be achieved through the efforts, skills and knowledge of the human resources in the school.

2.19 Summary of Chapter

In summary, literature relating to induction programmes were reviewed and this led to some key inclusions being made to the existing literature. This was done in an attempt to shape what the studies identify as challenges and guides the study. Literature was reviewed on all the concepts listed in the introduction and this forms a good foundation for the study. The subsequent chapter discusses the methodology employed for the study, how it was used and justifications for each choice made.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides information on the philosophical assumption of the study, details of the study design, methods used to conduct the research. In particular, it describes the research design, the study population, sampling procedure and the sample size. It further deals with information on the development of the research instrument, pilot study, data collection procedure, and data analysis.

3.1 Research Paradigm

The philosophical assumption underpinning the study is pragmatic paradigm. Pragmatism as a research paradigm finds its philosophical foundation in the historical contributions of the philosophy of pragmatism (Maxcy, 2003). As a research paradigm, pragmatism is based on the proposition that researchers should use the philosophical and/or methodological approach that works best for the particular research problem that is being investigated (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). It is often associated with mixed-methods or multiple-methods (Biesta, 2010; Creswell & Clark, 2011), where the focus is on the consequences of research and on the research questions rather than on the methods. It may employ both formal and informal rhetoric (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

A major underpinning of pragmatist epistemology is that knowledge is always based on experience. One's perceptions of the world are influenced by his or her social experiences. Each person's knowledge is unique as it is created by her/his unique experiences. Nevertheless, much of this knowledge is socially shared as it is created from socially shared experiences, which is the objective of this study. Therefore, all

knowledge is social knowledge (Morgan, 2014). Pragmatist epistemology does not view knowledge as reality (Feilzer, 2010). Rather, it is constructed with a purpose to better manage one's existence and to take part in the world (Goldkuhl, 2012).

Pragmatist believes in what works best in any given situation. Morgan (2007), and Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) opine that pragmatist places importance on the research problem and adapt pluralistic approaches to derive knowledge about the problem. Creswell (2013) believes that pragmatism is not committed to any one system of philosophy and reality. The researcher can move from post positivism for the quantitative phase and shift to constructivism for the qualitative phase when engaged in a research. Finally, pragmatism is a paradigm that bridges the gap between the scientific method and structuralist orientation of older approaches and the naturalistic methods and freewheeling orientation of newer approaches (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011).

The choice of this paradigm will enable the findings of this study be analysed to know which component of the knowledge can be transferred or applied to similar circumstances in another setting. This therefore improves the generalizability of the findings related to the challenges confronting headteachers managing early grade schools in Awutu Senya West district to similar circumstances happening in other districts.

3.2 Research Approach

The study employed the mixed method approach. The mixed-method approach combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches to find solution to a phenomenon. Therefore, to ensure an in-depth understanding of the challenges facing headteachers of early grade public schools in Awutu-Senya West district, the mixed-

method approach was employed. The mixed-method approach enabled the researcher to use a combination of the quantitative and qualitative approaches to collect and analyse data. This approach employed helped to offset the limitations associated with the quantitative and qualitative data to ensure completeness through clarifications and elaborations in the response to the research question posed (Almalki, 2016).

Wisdom and Creswell (2013) adds that the mixed method approach permits a more complete and synergistic utilization of data than to separate quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The authors further revealed that the use of this approach helps to collect rich, comprehensive data, provides methodological flexibility, reflects participant's point of view, compares quantitative and qualitative data and fosters scholarly interaction.

However, Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011) argue that the use of the mixed method often pose a challenge to some researchers as to which of the designs under this approach best suits the study being conducted, reduces the complexity of evaluations as well as cope with the demands associated with the utilisation of this approach. In all, a clear understanding of the paradigm (pragmatic paradigm) underpinning the mixed method approach in a way provides an insight to the researcher in the choice of design that can help best in unravelling the truth in knowledge. The use of the mixed method approach helped to gather data from the headteachers and their assistants, and also provided the participants the opportunity to air their personal opinions about the data gathered to provide an in-depth knowledge concerning the challenges they face in managing early grade schools.

3.3 Research Design

Research design is the framework of research methods and techniques chosen by a researcher (Amalki, 2016). The design allows researchers to hone in on research methods that are suitable for the subject matter and set up their studies up for success. A research design serves two main functions, according to Kumar (2005), which are the identification or development of procedure required to undertake a study and, also emphasises importance of the quality of procedure in ensuring their validity, objectivity, and accuracy.

With this study laying priority on quantitative components which allowed for more emphasis on the quantitative data over the qualitative data, it influenced the researcher's choice of research design to be the sequential explanatory design. The sequential explanatory design was employed because it permitted the researcher to first gather quantitative data from the headteachers and assistant headteachers, analysed the results and then based on the results from the analysis, the researcher gathered qualitative data. Amalki (2016) affirms this by stating that "the quantitative data informs the qualitative data selection process which enables the researcher to specifically pinpoint the data that is relevant to specific research questions" (p.293). Therefore, the researcher chose this design to explain into details the results generated. The limitation with the usage of the sequential explanatory design was that unequal sample size were chosen for each phase of the data collection process and this might not present a true clarification from the view point of the entire population.

3.4 The Study Area

Awutu Senya West District was chosen as the study area primarily because of how the schools have been built across the length and breadth of the district. Additionally, the district has so many towns, villages and even cottages within its catchment areas where the early grades schools are located. This enable the researcher have form and reliable outcome because of blended experience from these demographic areas.

Awutu Senya west is a district in central region sharing boundaries with Awutu Senya east, Gomoa east Agona east district and west Akim municipal in the eastern region. A population of one hundred and sixty- one thousand, four hundred and sixty (161,460)-2021 population and housing census (2020). The district capital is Awutu Bereku.

3.5 Population of the Study

Kusi (2012) defines population as a group of individuals that a researcher generalize his/her findings to. The population of the study was early grade public school headteachers and assistant headteachers working in the Awutu-Senya District. The headteachers were 86 males and 34 females in the study area. The total population size is 120 headteachers, comprising of 60 headteachers and 60 assistant headteachers in Awutu-Senya District.

3.6 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

A sample is a subset of the population of interest. It is the small amount of the population that gives out more representative information about the population it was taken from. Despite this assertion, the researcher chose to study the entire population of 120 headteachers and assistant headteachers of Awutu Senya West district due to its manageability at the quantitative phase of this study. The census sampling

technique was employed to involve the respondents. Census is the enumeration of the entire population (Bryman, 2012). This allows for the study of every participant or unit in the population. Since the target population is manageable and fit for the quantitative phase of this study, the entire population was used.

The maximal variation sampling technique was employed to gather qualitative data from participants. Out of the 87 participants who responded to the questionnaire, 12 were selected through the maximal variation sampling technique. The maximal variation sampling technique assisted selecting participants from extreme angles in order to access multiple perspectives. This sampling technique led to the selection of headteachers and assistant headteachers based on their academic qualification. This affirms the claim by Kusi (2012) that maximal variation sampling technique allows the researcher to categorise participants according to their different academic, professional qualification and gender, for data collection. These categories of respondents were interviewed to give further clarification on issues that emerged from the analysis of the quantitative data.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Survey and interview were the methods employed for this study to reinforce the mixed-method approach. The survey method was used to collect quantitative data whereas the interview was used to gather the qualitative data needed for the study.

3.7.1 Quantitative instrument

According to Denscombe (2010), it is appropriate to use the questionnaire when the researcher intends to gather large volume of data from participants within a short period of time. It also helps to keep participants anonymous since the use of the instrument does not require them to reveal their identity and offers the possibility of

generating large amount of data. On the other side, the use of the instrument makes it difficult to ensure greater depth for the research. The structured questionnaire was designed based on the research questions and literature reviewed on the key concepts in the research questions. The questionnaire was made up of five (5) sections. The first section of the questionnaire gathers data of the demographic background of the respondents whereas the four subsequent sections gathers data on the research questions guiding the study. In addition, the second to the fifth sections of the questionnaire contain a five-point Likert scale type with Strongly Disagree (SD) - 1, Disagree (D) - 2, Uncertain (U) - 3, Agree (A) – 4, and Strongly Agree (SA) - 5 as options to choose from.

3.7.2 Interview

A semi-structured interview guide was used in collecting qualitative data. This instrument was developed based on the issues that emerged from the analysis and discussion of the initial quantitative data. Denscombe (2010) postulates that conducting interview helps to reflect emotions and experiences, and explore issues with greater focus. A semi-structured interview guide gives the researcher room to seek for explanations and clarifications and the participants, the freedom to express themselves in their own perspective and choice of words (Bryman, 2016). In affirmation on the strength of the interview guide, Denscombe (2010) postulates that conducting interview provides the possibility to direct the process of data collection and offers the possibility to gather specific information required. That notwithstanding, it requires a lot of time to arrange, conduct interview and transcribe the data before the relevant information can be sieved and used for its intended purpose. It was therefore prudent to employ this method to probe further for detailed

clarification on emerging issues from the quantitative data initially collected and discussed.

3.8 Validity of Quantitative Instrument

Validity in research expresses the degree to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Bryman, 2016). Both face and content validity were established in the study. Face validity was established by colleague students in the Educational Administration and Management department to determine whether the items were in line with the research questions. Content validity was established through examination and critiquing of the instruments by the researcher's supervisor. The critiques made were effected to reshape the instrument to be able to measure what it was intended to measure.

3.9 Reliability of Quantitative Instrument

Reliability is the likelihood of obtaining the same or similar results when the instrument measure the same variable more than once, or when more than one person measures the same variable. In ensuring reliability, the researcher presented the instrument to the lecturers in the department to check if there is consistency between the items in the instrument and research questions. The contents of the instrument was divided into sections to make it convenient for participants to respond to the questionnaire. The SPSS version 24 was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. A reliability analysis test was run on the SPSS v.24 to determine Cronbach's alpha co-efficient of which 0.85 was obtained, which implied that the instrument was good for research purpose. According to Moshen and Reg (2011) a Cronbach alpha of 0.8 and above means the instrument is reliable to be used for the study.

3.10 Dependability of Qualitative Instrument

In testing for the validity of a qualitative instrument, the interview guide was given to colleague students in Educational Administration and Management department to check whether it lends itself to any biases. The researcher's supervisors also did have a look at the instrument, and helped shaped the interview guide.

3.11 Pre-testing of instruments

Pre-testing of instruments helps in identifying the shortcomings in the instrument and also informs the researcher in determining how long the instruments can be completed by respondents. The instrument was pre-tested with 20 headteachers and 20 assistant headteachers in Effutu Municipality. The results, comments, and suggestions were used by the researcher to improve the contents of the instruments for data collection before the actual data was collected. Some items were also deleted from the instrument as they did not really fit into the study.

3.12 Data Collection Procedure

An introductory letter was obtained from the Department of Educational Administration and Management. Copies of the introductory letter were sent to the Awutu-Senya West District Education Directorate and the various schools the study was intended to be carried out. Participants consent were obtained before they participated in the study. The researcher then met the headteachers and assistant headteachers at a meeting and made an appeal to them for their assistance which they gladly accepted. Subsequent reminders were made to the headteachers through school visitations and phone calls.

According to Kusi (2012), informed consent is an agreement of the relevant individuals and organizations on the basis of appropriate information. It involves giving information about the study, how it will be carried out, the nature of their participation, the time requirement, the kind of data to be collected and how it will be used and reported. Kusi (2012) is of the view that when informed consent of participants is obtained, it will enable them make a decision to participate in the study depending on the quality of information they receive about it.

The participants were given consent form to sign before they participated in the study. Creswell (2008) as cited in Kusi (2012, p.90) advises researchers to provide targeted participants with an informed consent form to sign before they participate in the study. Confidentiality was ensured by keeping information safe from third parties. They were also assured the findings of the study was strictly for academic purpose only.

Questionnaires were given to the sample population in the selected schools by the researcher. A copy of the permission letter from the Awutu-Senya District Director of education was also given to the respondents. The researcher reiterated the purpose of the study to the headteachers and the assistant headteachers. The items on the questionnaires were also explained to the respondents before presenting them. In all, it took the researcher two weeks to administer the questionnaire.

The researcher upon the analysis of the quantitative data, conducted the interview based on the emerging issues. Here, the researcher interviewed the headteachers and assistant headteachers individually in their respective offices. Thus, the interview took the form of a face-to-face contacts with the respondents. The interview phase also took two weeks to be completed.

3.13 Data Analysis

The analysis of the data of this research was in two phases namely: quantitative and qualitative phases. The analysis of the quantitative phase was done by coding each questionnaire with numerals to facilitate easy identification. Responses from the various items were codified with numerals into the IBM SPSS Statistics version 24. The data from the questionnaire was then inputted into the IBM SPSS for statistical analysis. Simple percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviation were generated from the use of the SPSS software in accordance with the various research questions raised and their corresponding responses, and computed for the quantitative data analysis and discussion.

The qualitative data was generated based on the questions raised from the analysis of the quantitative data in line with the research objectives. A qualitative software analysis tool, Atlas ti v.9 was used to transcribe the oral data recorded during the interview phase. The key themes were then generated using the software for analysis and discussion. The analysis and discussion of the qualitative data was integrated into its corresponding quantitative analysis to give further clarification to the quantitative results.

3.14 Ethical Considerations

Ethics in educational research are those issues that are related to how the educational researchers conduct themselves or their practices and the consequences of these on the people who participate in their research (Kusi, 2012). He went on further to point out that, the way ethical issues are addressed in a research project can affect the trustworthiness or validity of its outcomes.

Creswell (2005) as cited in Kusi (2012, p.87) argued that it is important, for a researcher after deciding on the setting for the study, to obtain permission to access that place for the research. In order to avoid unethical issues during my research work, the researcher sought for permission from District Director of Education (gate-keepers) and also presented an introductory letter from the Department of Educational Management and Administration of the University of Education, Winneba before administering my questionnaires to the headteachers and their assistants.

Informed consent involves disclosing every aspect of the research to the intended participants. Participants were therefore informed that they were under no obligation to partake in this study under compulsion but out of their self-will. Participants were also made aware that, if they felt insecure or unsafe in the course of the study, they were free to opt-out. Despite this, the researcher encouraged them to partake in the research by making the purpose of the study known to them.

Anonymity requires that there should be no instance where a piece of information can be traced to a particular participant. The participants of the study were therefore codified during the interview session where HT 1-6 was assigned to Headteachers, whereas AHT 7-12 was assigned to Assistant Headteachers. Participants were also assured that every item responded to in the course of the study will be kept away from their identity.

Another ethical issue considered was confidentiality. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), although the identity of the participants is known by the researcher, their identification or connection is not made known to anyone. The information provided by participants was therefore used only for the purpose of the research after which the instruments administered to participants were sealed and kept

under lock accessible by only the researcher. Also, the interview sessions took place at the comfort of the participants.

3.15 Summary

This chapter discussed the research method employed for this study and how data was collected. It further outlined how the data was analysed as well as how it would be presented. Issues of ethical concern that underpin the study have also been addressed. The next chapter deals with the presentation of the results in a descriptive table comprising of frequencies, simple percentages, mean and standard deviation. The results from the data were discussed to reveal the findings based on the themes, in accordance with the research questions set.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter of the research focuses on the results from data collected from headteachers in Awutu-Senya West District. The study sought to examine the administrative-related challenges, financial-related challenges, parent-related challenges as well as the strategies to overcome the challenges confronting headteachers in the early grade school in Awutu Senya West District. In all, there was a 72.5% response return rate for the one hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires administered.

This chapter is grouped into five (5) sections with the first section on the demographic characteristics of respondents, the second section delves into the administrative-related challenges that headteachers encounter in early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District. The third and fourth sections examined the financial-related challenges headteachers encounter in early grade schools and the parent-related challenges that headteachers encounter in early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District respectively. The fifth section of this research explores that can be employed to help headteachers overcome challenges in the early grade school in Awutu Senya West District.

The descriptive table below presents data on the demographic data of the respondents in frequencies and percentages.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	56	64.4
Female	31	35.6
Age		
30 years and below	4	4.6
31-40 years	28	32.2
41-50 years	30	34.5
51-60 years	10	12.0
Academic Qualification		
Diploma	11	12.6
First Degree	43	49.4
Masters' Degree	33	37.9
Working experience		
1-5 years	6	6.9
6-10 years	21	24.1
11-15 years	16	18.4
16-20 years	44	50.6
Job position		
Headteacher	44	50.6
Assistant headteacher	43	49.4

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Table 1 presents the demographic data of respondents of the study. The demographic data of the respondents was under the themes gender, age, highest academic qualification, working experience and job position.

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents for the study. From Table 1, the males were 56 representing 64.4% whereas the female participants were 31 representing 35.6% of the population. This shows a male dominated population for the study.

With regards to the age of participants, the age bracket 41-50 years recorded the highest participants with 30(34.5%) participants. The age bracket 31-40 years recorded the second highest number of respondents with 28(32.2%). This was followed by the age bracket 51-60 years with 10 (12.0%) participants and the age bracket of 30 years and below recording the least with 4(4.6%). In terms of academic qualification, the highest number of participants 43(49.4%) were bachelor degree holders, followed closely by 33(37.9%) for master's degree holders and 11(12.6%) for diploma holders.

On working experience, the highest number of participants 44(50.6%) have worked for 16-20 years. This was followed by 21(24.1%) having worked between 6-10 years. The third batch of participants 16(18.4%) have also worked for 11-15 years. The least was 6(6.9%) participants having worked for 1-5 years.

The last item in Table 1 was on the job position of the Participants. It can be seen from the table that, the headteacher position had 44(50.6%) participant whereas those in assistant headteacher position were 43(49.4%). This shows a more even population in terms of job position.

4.1 Thematic Analysis

This aspect of the analysis and discussion of the tables presented, and the findings were done in themes. Thus, thematic analysis was employed to thematically analyse the results of the data generated quantitatively and being supported by qualitative data. The following themes were thus identified to be key for the analysis of the study.

1. Administrative-related challenges that headteachers encounter in early grade schools
2. Financial-related challenges that headteachers encounter in early grade schools
3. Parent-related challenges that headteachers encounter in early grade schools
4. Strategies that can be employed to help headteachers overcome challenges in the early grade school.

4.1.1 Research question one

What are the administrative-related challenges that the headteachers in early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District encounter?

The descriptive statistics table below presents the responses of participants in mean and standard deviation on the administrative-related challenges that headteachers encounter in early grade schools.

Table 2: Administrative-related challenges in managing early grade schools

Administrative-related challenges	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lack of motivation	4.49	.834
Inadequate teaching staff	4.29	1.022
Lack of school resources and facilities	4.23	1.020
Work overload	4.18	1.062
Large class size	4.02	1.171
Teacher retention	3.92	1.003

Source: Field survey (2021)

Under this section, the study sought to examine the administrative-related challenges in managing early grade schools. The scale used ranged from 1 – 5 thus, strongly disagree to strongly agree. 1-1.80 represents strongly disagree, 1.81-2.60 represents disagree, 2.61-3.40 represents neutral, 3.41-4.20 represents agree, 4.21-5.00 represents strongly agree.

In Table 2, participants strongly agree to the following statements; lack of motivation (M=4.49, SD=0.834), inadequate teaching staff (M=4.29, SD=1.022), and lack of school resources and facilities (M=4.23, SD=1.020). Furthermore, participants agree to the following statement; work overload (M=4.18, SD=1.062), large class size (M=4.02, SD=1.171) and teacher retention (M=3.92, SD=1.003). The responses from participants implies that, the above administrative-related challenges pertains to their schools and their operations in managing these early grade schools.

The first item in Table 2, which is lack of motivation was strongly agree to by participants as an administrative-related challenge. Motivation of the human resource (especially teachers) is key in managing early grade schools. Thus, the role of the teacher in the teaching and learning process is very crucial. In this case, motivation of the teacher is very key. It is worthy to note that, one of the key motivation for the early grade teacher has to be on workshops and training on the emergency and changing academic curriculum to make the classroom interactive to the learner, as well as strengthen their academic foundation. In relation to lack of motivation in this direction, one headteacher had this to say;

Not being able to motivate my staff has been one of my administrative challenges, especially with the emergency of the new curriculum. Some of my teachers has been complaining of not receiving much training on it, and therefore they wish I am able to organise some for them so that they can be happy and equipped to deliver in the classroom (Interview transcript, HT-4).

From the response given by the respondent, it suggests that, the introduction of the new educational curriculum has received little training on the part of the teachers in the early grade schools. The headteachers based on their interaction with the teachers at the early grade level has revealed that, this has led to most of the teachers feeling less motivated or not motivated. Mupa and Chinooneka (2015) explained that early grade teachers should be trained to develop a variety of activities and methods to enable children of different ages and backgrounds to acquire proper knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitudes.

Another aspect of the motivation that respondents felt lacking had to do with condition of service such as access to accommodation of appreciable standard at station, access to other basic necessities of life like food at reasonable prices, good drinking water and health care facilities, and adequate supply of teaching and learning materials to work with. These form of extrinsic motivation when lacking, pose a great challenge to the headteacher in the performance of his or her administrative duties. In throwing more light to this challenge, AHT 7 had this to say;

One of our challenge which has contributed to the lack of motivation, is the unavailability of accommodation form most of the teachers. This is very problematic because the school is situated in a rural area and therefore most of the teachers have to come to school from afar on daily basis (Interview transcript).

Daft and Marcic (2004), are of the view that motivation is the force either within or external to a person that arouses enthusiasm and persistence to pursue a certain course of action. Sekyere (2016), explains that teacher motivation seeks to induce or make the teacher happy to remain at post and work harder to improve the academic performance of pupils thus raising the standard of education in the country.

Therefore, for a teacher to come to school from afar, majority of them may get tired and this may impede on their performance in the classroom. This serves as demotivation to the teachers which affects the work performance of the headteacher in the long. It is important to add that, most of the headteachers themselves do not have accommodation and thus, have to trek long distance to where the schools they head. So as they are demotivated by lack of good working conditions, their subordinates (teachers) are also demotivated.

The second item in Table 2, had to do with inadequate teaching staff (M=4.29, SD=1.022). Teachers are one of the key human resource in every educational institution. Therefore the inability to have them in adequate supply, in a way greatly serve as a challenge to the headteachers administratively. When asked, why the inadequate teaching staff, AHT-8, had this to say;

Most of the teachers who are posted here, seek for reposting because of location of the school and poor state of the classrooms. As you can see, some of the classrooms are under trees and also there is not network coverage here, and this makes life here very bad (Interview Transcript).

As mentioned by Daft and Marcic (2004) teachers play a crucial role in the teaching and learning process which can have either a positive impact on students. Therefore, their inadequate supply poses a challenge to the administrative functioning of the headteacher. This is because, the inadequate supply of teaching staff due to the refusal of some teachers to accept postings to schools with classroom under trees, translates that, most of these classrooms will be filled with students without teachers. In the worst scenario, a teacher has to combine different classes of different academic levels and teach them simultaneously. The teachers in turn, feel overburdened and resort to the headteacher for administrative assistance to get this problem solved. However, it

mostly ends up with the headteachers having nothing to do get the situation improved than also coming down to the classrooms and teaching some of the class by themselves.

Also, Table 2, revealed the lack of school resources and facilities to be another administrative challenge encountered by headteachers. Even though, it is the duty of government through the Ministry of Education and Ghana Education Service to ensure the provision of school resources and facilities, it behoves on the headteacher to champion the cause for these resources and facilities to be provided. Throwing more light on this challenge, HT-5 had this to say;

Even me as a headteacher, I do not have any computer or printer in my office to help with my administrative work. So I always have to go to a nearby town, to get my official documents typed and printed. Meanwhile most of these documents ought to be confidential (Interview Transcript).

From the response given, it gives the indication that, office equipment such as computers, printers, and stationery are part of the school resources and facilities that is lacking. With these resources lacking, it even makes it difficult for headteachers to put things together to access support from external sources. This is because, the headteacher in some cases has to use his or her own financial resources to put things together to solicit for resources from external agencies. The puts a negative toll on the headteacher's finances making it difficult to access help.

Also, another key resources that is lacking in most of the early grades schools has to do with text books and the requisite teaching learning materials. Ntumi (2016), also holds the view that when teaching aids are used in the classroom, it helps pupils to understand well the concept that is been treated. They also help the teacher to illustrate what he/she teaches with little or no difficulty. However, the absence of this

has become a challenge especially in the wake up of the recent curriculum reform in Ghana and the failure to provide the necessary materials to help in the teaching and learning process. This poses an administrative challenge to the headteacher as he or she is obliged to go the extra mile in getting “non-existent” teaching and learning materials to in the teaching and learning process.

Another key item in Table 2 is large class size ($M=4.02$, $SD=1.171$). UNESCO (2008) puts it that increased large classes means teachers handle many students and therefore students hardly get the attention they deserve hence many are not learning much and this militates against quality education. It goes on to say that teacher-student interactions become minimal and teachers can only move with the brighter students leaving out the slow learners. Without personalized attention the weak learners cannot perform well. Teachers can no longer mark exercise books on time because there are many students. At the same time teachers give fewer assignments than before and this impacts negatively on quality of education. Subjects like mathematics and languages for instance require constant practice and feedback without which it is impossible to gauge the pupil's progress. Due to increased workload teachers resort to fewer assignments and fewer questions to avoid huge marking load. Some teachers ask students to exchange books and mark for each other in class. This affects teachers' ability to identify student's weaknesses and assist them. Teachers also reduce the number of questions in the assignments.

4.1.2 Research question two

What are the financial-related challenges confronting the headteachers in early grade schools?

The descriptive statistics table below presents the responses of participants in mean and standard deviation on the financial-related challenges that headteachers encounter in early grade schools.

Table 3: Financial-related challenges encountered by headteachers in managing early grade schools

Financial-related challenges	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Delay in funds (capitation grant)	87	4.83	.463
Inadequate funding by the government	87	4.63	.531
Lack of financial support from external agencies (NGOs)	87	4.41	.724
Budgetary constraints	87	4.18	.691
Inadequate knowledge on financial management	87	4.16	.498

Source: Field survey (2021)

Under this section, the study sought to examine the financial-related challenges encountered by headteachers in managing early grade schools. The scale used ranged from 1 – 5 thus, strongly disagree to strongly agree. 1-1.80 represents strongly disagree, 1.81-2.60 represents disagree, 2.61-3.40 represents neutral, 3.41-4.20 represents agree, 4.21-5.00 represents strongly agree.

In Table 3, participants strongly agree that, delay in funds (capitation grant) (M=4.83, SD=.463), inadequate funding by the government (M=4.63, SD=.531), and lack of financial support from external agencies (NGOs) (M=4.41, SD=.724). Also, participants agree that budgetary constraints (M=4.18, SD=.691) is also a financial-related challenge encountered by headteachers in managing early grade schools,

inadequate knowledge on financial management ($M=4.16$, $SD=.498$) as a financial-related challenge.

The first item in Table 3 is delay in funds (capitation grant) ($M=4.83$, $SD=.463$). The capitation grant allocated to the schools are also woefully inadequate to cater for all the needs in the school. Headteachers must therefore be innovative and figure out other acceptable innovations that can be adopted, to generate funds internally to support teaching and learning. In supporting the data as revealed in Table 3, a headteacher respondent had this to say;

The capitation grant money doesn't come. Even when it comes, it does not come on time, and also the some higher quarters in the educational ladder will take what they call their percentage from the funds (Interview transcript, HT-4).

From the response given, it suggests that, the capitation grants delay before hitting the accounts of the schools. However, more worrying is the fact that, the delayed and inadequacy of the amount given to the schools, is further slashed by individuals in higher authorities in the teaching service all in the name of their share. Consequently, the remaining amount has to be used for sports and cultural activities and the remaining for the provision of teaching and learning materials, minor repairs in the schools, and examination. Unfortunately, the inadequate nature of the capitation grant when it arrives means that, all these purposes cannot be achieved. Even if efforts are being made, it will be of low quality. Pajibo and Tamanja (2017) reveals that the delay of capitation grant hinders effective running of schools and therefore puts the headteachers in a very awkward position as school heads or managers. This therefore poses a financial-related challenge to the headteachers as they have no option than to wait for the unknown time the money will be in their coffers.

Inadequate funding by the government is also another financial-related challenge faced by headteachers in managing early grade schools ($M=4.63$, $SD=.531$). Even though, funding of public early grade schools is one of the major functions of the government (Hall, 2013), government seem to be allocating less financial resource into this level of academic arena. This is particularly because, government has channeled majority of its financial resources into the educational sector into the funding of the Free Senior High School policy. It is important to note that, the early grade serve serves as the foundation for the academic ladder, therefore the inadequate financial resources at that level means less quality training given to the kids. This will also transcend to low level of academic performance in the near future as the inadequate funding contributed to inadequate training of the early grade students.

Furthermore, lack of financial support from external agencies (NGOs) was also deemed to be a financial-related challenge ($M=4.41$, $SD=.724$). With inadequate funding by the government ($M=4.63$, $SD=.531$), the role of the external agencies in financially supporting the early grade schools is very crucial. It is therefore vital at this stage, to have early grade schools especially those in rural areas to gain financial support from external agencies like stakeholders in the community as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs). NGOs play vital role in supporting the school not only by providing textbooks, reading materials and other relevant teaching learning materials (TLMs), but also provide financial support for the running of schools.

Having NGOs coming to your aid is very vital. Unfortunately, at where we find ourselves as a school, it is very difficult to get into contact with any NGO unlike our sister schools in the urban centres (Interview transcript, AHT 10).

From the response, early grade schools situated in rural areas, they do have little contacts with most of these NGOs to come to their aid. There are times too, even when these NGOs come to their aid, they provide them with teaching and learning resources other than the financial aid they will need in running the school.

Also, be able to access financial support from these NGOs is problematic since most of these NGOs in Ghana also rely on donor support to be finance their primary project. This translates that, until these NGOs becoming financially stable, they are in no position to provide early grade school the financial support or muscle they need to be stable.

From the analysis in Table 3, it is evident that headteachers encounter financial-related challenges in managing early grade schools. However, Brescoll (2016) is of the opinion that, it is important for headteachers to possess knowledge about financial management as it influences the extent to which a school can go in achieving its goal(s) and objectives. Therefore inadequate knowledge on financial management possessed by headteachers is a constraint to their handling on financial matters in the school. According to Brescoll, the headteacher is responsible for budgetary allocations in the school, and therefore the inadequacy of funds to the school leads to the inability of the headteacher to finance every aspects of the budget made. This inadequacy in funding is as a result of the limited financial resource available to the government who at the same time has to make financial allocations to the other sectors of the economy.

4.1.3 Research question three

What are the parent-related challenges faced by the headteachers of early grade schools?

The descriptive statistics table below presents the responses of participants in mean and standard deviation on the parent-related challenges that headteachers encounter in early grade schools.

Table 4: Parent-related challenges encountered by headteachers in early grade schools

Statement	M	SD
Failure of parents to visit the school to check on their ward's performance	4.75	.439
Parents' poor responds to teacher's call and misinterpretation of information heard	4.70	.564
Failure to attend PTA meetings	4.70	.564
Parents failure to provide children with their basic needs	4.37	.667
Lack of parental involvement in their children's education	4.30	.608
Failure of parents and community members to assist with the provision of teaching and learning materials	4.02	.800

Source: Field survey (2021)

Under this section, the study sought to examine the parent-related challenges in managing early grade schools. The scale used ranged from 1 – 5 thus, strongly disagree to strongly agree. 1-1.80 represents strongly disagree, 1.81-2.60 represents disagree, 2.61-3.40 represents neutral, 3.41-4.20 represents agree, 4.21-5.00 represents strongly agree.

In Table 4, participants had differing opinions about some of the parent-related challenges. From Table 4, participants strongly agree that, the failure of parents to visit the school to check on their ward's performance (M=4.75, SD=.439), parent's

poor responds to teacher's call and misinterpretation of information heard ($M=4.70$, $SD=.564$), failure to attend PTA meetings ($M=4.70$, $SD=.564$), Parents failure to provide children with their basic needs ($M=4.37$, $SD=.667$), and lack of parental involvement in their children's education ($M=4.30$, $SD=.608$) were the parent-related challenges they encountered in managing early grade schools are all parent-related challenges headteachers encounter in managing early grade schools.

Also, participants agree that failure of parents and community members to assist with the provision of teaching and learning materials further contributed to the parent-related challenges ($M=4.02$, $SD=.800$).

Table 4 gathered data on parent-related challenges faced by headteachers in managing kindergarten level of basic school. The table revealed that parent's failure to visit the school to check wards performance ($M=4.75$, $SD=.439$) posed a challenge to the headteacher. This response indicates that, parents do no visit the school to check on the performance of their wards. In throwing more lights to the issue, HT-3 said that;

Most of the parents just come and leave their wards at the entrance of the school. They in most cases do not even see their ward's teacher or the headteacher to find out how their wards are faring or performing in school. The school has become more or a less of "an arena where parents just dump their wards" and pick them later Interview transcript).

From the response, it is indicative that, most parents are not concerned about how their wards fare in the early grade school. It is seen more or less as a place where parents leave their kids to pass out time as they attend to other business. According to Daft and Marcic (2004), parental involvement in their wards education is a great incentive for their wards to thrive academically. Some past studies also recommend parent ought to participate in both classroom and outdoor activities their wards partake in. on the other hand, failure of parents to visit school to check on wards

performance is a disservice to the child. As the child witness his peer's parents coming around to check on their academic performance and how they are coping in school, a child whose parent's do not visit feels dejected and most at times loose interest in both indoor and outdoor activities.

Failure of parent's visiting to check wards performance also costs the child since the parent will as well not put in much effort in child's studies at home since they feel the child is okay when what he or she is being taught in school. Parents need to be concerned about the academic performance of their wards by establishing contacts with their ward's teachers even if they cannot frequent visit the school. Parents and members of the community should also be involved in the management and administration of the school especially at the early grade level.

Another item of concern is parent's poor responds to teacher's call and misinterpretation of information heard ($M=4.70$, $SD=.564$). These responses suggest that majority of the respondents believed that parents poorly respond to teacher's call and misinterpret the information they heard. The poor attitude of parents in responding to teacher's call can be attributed to their wrong perception of early grade education. Most parents have the perception that, there is no serious activities going on at the early grade level especially with regards to teaching and learning and thus see no reason to respond to a teacher's call.

At worse, most information written for kids to be given to their parents are mostly misinterpreted by the parents and or dump somewhere. Parents at other times to refuse to provide items requested by teachers to aid in the teaching of their wards. Sadly, most parents are of the wrong view that early grade kids only eat and sleep and are not engaged in any academic exercise. Furthermore, some parents can absent their

kids from school without giving any prior notice to their ward's teachers. These wrong perceptions held my parents in a way discredits the efforts of early grades teachers and to some extent serve as a disrespect to their profession. Parents therefore ought to attach seriousness to their wards education by attending to calls and seeking for clarification on issues they might have heard. This is because, the academic life of early kids are improved when parents who attached seriousness and promptly respond to calls from their ward's teachers. Epstein (1995), sums up by arguing that every parent has a duty to be actively involved in some way in his or her children's educational programme that provides major service to their children.

Furthermore, failure of some parents to attend PTA meetings ($M=4.70$, $SD=.564$) is also another key issues to discuss. The response from the most of participants suggests that, parents do not attend PTA meetings.

There are several times we call for PTA meeting which most parents fail to attend. The most recent one is when we called for a PTA meeting some few weeks ago, and the number present was so bad that, we couldn't form a quorum, and therefore we had to postpone the meeting to a later date (Interview transcript, HT-1)

PTA meetings are to foster co-operation between parents and teachers, meet regularly to discuss issues which promotes the welfare of the pupils as well as opportunity to let parents feel that the school belongs to them and thus visit it frequently to acquaint themselves with the activities and programs in the school among others. Therefore failure of parents to attend PTA creates a setback for the purpose for which the PTA was set up. Epstein (1995), demonstrates that parent's involvement in PTA meetings leaves a long lasting positive effect on the children as major decisions are taken in the best interest of the child.

The last item in Table 4 which is key is the failure of parents and community members to assist with the provision of teaching and learning materials ($M=4.02$, $SD=.800$). The response suggests that the community in which the schools being studied are based as well as parents through the PTA have not made any effort to assist with the provision of teaching and learning materials. The issue of lack of TLMs is a challenge with little support from the school authorities. With parents and the community being stakeholders of the school it is expected of them to make an effort in supporting the school by providing them with teaching and learning materials. Unfortunately that has not been the case and therefore is one of the parent-related challenge being faced by the headteacher in managing the early grade level of education.

4.1.4 Research question four

What are the strategies that can be employed to help headteachers overcome challenges in the early grade school in Awutu Senya West District?

The descriptive statistics table below presents the responses of participants in mean and standard deviation on the strategies to remedy the challenges in managing early grade schools.

Table 5: Strategies to remedy the challenges in managing early grade schools

Strategies	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Engage teachers in decision making	87	4.57	.497
Being assertive at times	87	4.46	.696
Communicate goals and vision to staff in the midst of the challenges	87	4.45	.500
Delegate work to staff (subordinate)	87	4.44	.499
Creating long-term work relationship with teachers	87	4.41	.495
Negotiate with stakeholders (community) for support	87	4.40	.493

Source: Field survey (2021)

Under this section, the study sought to examine the parent-related challenges in managing early grade schools. The scale used ranged from 1 – 5 thus, strongly disagree to strongly agree. 1-1.80 represents strongly disagree, 1.81-2.60 represents disagree, 2.61-3.40 represents neutral, 3.41-4.20 represents agree, 4.21-5.00 represents strongly agree.

In Table 5, participants strongly agree to the following statements; engage teachers in decision making (M=4.57, SD=.497), being assertive at times (M=4.46, SD=.696), communicate goals and vision to staff in the midst of the challenges ((M=4.45, SD=.500), delegate work to staff (subordinate) (M=4.44, SD=.499), creating long-term work relationship with teachers (M=4.41, SD=.495), and negotiate with stakeholders (community) for support (M=4.40, SD=.493). The responses from the participants signifies that, the strategies identified, can be employed to remedy the challenges in managing early grade schools.

In general, the best way to deal with a challenge of any kind is to find a solution that works for that particular challenge. As a way of overcoming the challenges related to administration, there is the need to engage teachers or staff in decision making and delegate work to staff (subordinate). According to Vasiley and Tamara (2016), delegating task and including subordinates in decision making means that the school leader is practicing a participative leadership style of governance to overcome the administrative-related challenges he or she is encountering. This serves as a motivation incentive to get teachers or staff to stay and work despite the prevailing challenges confronting the school. As Sekyere (2016) assert that the teacher motivation is diverse, this form of motivation works for teachers who wants to have a feeling of being valued and appreciated to help take decisions or performs tasks.

Eklund et al. (2017), are of the opinion that, failure to include teachers or subordinates in decision making, or delegating task to them, may create the impression that, the headteacher is trying to be more autocratic. This causes subordinates to be more likely to complain because they expect the headteacher to be participative. So to help ease the burden and overcome the administrative-related challenges, it is incumbent for the leader to practice the participative leadership style.

Furthermore to overcome the challenges headteachers encounter in managing early grade schools, there is the need to communicate effectively the goals and vision to staff in the midst of the challenges. Effective communication is key as it serves as the pathway to disseminating information. The headteacher in the midst of the challenges, can take advantage to communicate effectively to the teachers and or subordinates with regards to the goals and vision expected to be achieved. The communication of the vision and or goals can serve as a form of motivation to the teachers, to stay in the school and give off their best in the midst of the prevailing challenges.

Also, effectively communicating the goals and objectives propels some staff to be the mouthpiece of the school in seeking help or sponsorship for the school from philanthropist or wealthy individuals as well as corporate institutions to come to the aid of the school. In so doing, the basic needs of the school such as textbooks, TLMs, stationery, furniture and even classroom structures can be provided to the school to make the vision or goal of the school achievable. This affirms the claim by Ntumi (2016) that headteachers can transform early grade schools into academic excellence through the use of their intuitive power.

Negotiation is a key component under the task oriented leadership style. According to Radu et al. (2017) most headteachers prefer to negotiate to get this done. Therefore in overcoming an administrative-related challenge like lack of furniture, classroom and textbooks, to mention but a few, the headteacher can negotiate with the stakeholders in the community, notably the Chief and opinion leaders to seek for assistance in providing these necessary materials and amenities. The negotiation skills that individuals in leadership position bring to the table can compel the community as a stakeholder to come to the assistance of the school by putting up classroom structures through communal labour, solicit the benevolence of other artisans such as carpenters to help supply the school with furniture at no cost or at most, at a minimal cost. This will help solve both administrative and financial-related challenges confronting the headteacher.

It is also important to create a long-term working relationship, if the headteacher is to overcome the administrative-related challenge. According to Lee (2018), mentoring is a close-long term work relationship between a superior and a subordinate. Mentoring subordinates is a way of delegating tasks and reducing the workload the on the superior (headteacher). This gives the headteacher the room to focus on more pressing challenges that needs immediate attention or solution. This also promotes task to be well handled and completed since the mentee will want to do a standard work, whereas the superior (headteacher) also have enough room to attend and perform other task effectively.

Last but not least, it is important to be assertive at time. According to Kariuki (2007), being an assertive leader helps to get things done without being taken for granted. This is because, often time, headteachers are often taken for granted and this

negatively affect their performance on the job. Kariuki thus encourage headteachers to choose assertive or outright authoritative means to get things done, in order to overcome or compounding the challenges they are facing both administratively and financially.

The next chapter discusses the summary of these findings, draws conclusions based on the findings revealed in this study, makes recommendations and makes suggestion for future research.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the summary of findings, conclusions drawn from the study as well as the recommendations made.

The purpose of this study is to examine the challenges faced by headteachers in the management of early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District and how they cope with the challenges. The objectives that guided the study were; to find out the administrative-related challenges in managing early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District, to find out the financial-related challenges headteachers in early grade schools encounter in Awutu Senya West District, examine the parent-related challenges that headteachers encounter in early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District and to find out strategies that can be employed to help remedy the challenges affecting their performance in managing their schools in the Awutu Senya West District. Based on the objectives, the following research questions were formulated.

1. What are the administrative-related challenges that headteachers encounter in early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District?
2. What are the financial-related challenges headteachers encounter in early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District?
3. What are the parent-related challenges that headteachers encounter in early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District?
4. What strategies can be employed to help headteachers overcome challenges in the early grade school in Awutu Senya West District?

The study employed the mixed-method approach which was underpinned by pragmatic paradigm. The sequential explanatory design was used as the framework for data collection and analysis. The census sampling technique was employed for the quantitative phase whereas purposive sampling technique was employed for the qualitative phase. The structured questionnaire was the instrument used for collecting quantitative data in the quantitative phase whereas the semi-structured interview guide was used to gather qualitative data for the qualitative phase. SPSS version 25 was used to generate the tables for the descriptive statistical analysis using frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The qualitative data was transcribed using the Nvivo 11 to generate key themes relating to the analysed quantitative data. The issue of ethics was ensured, and paramount to the success of this research was the anonymity of participants and confidentiality of the data provided.

5.1 Summary of key Findings

The following findings emerged from the study in line with the research questions.

- i. The first research questions explored the administrative-related challenges confronting headteachers in managing early grade schools. It emerged that inadequate teaching staff, lack of motivation, lack of school resources and facilities, teacher retention, work overload and large class size were the administrative-related challenges confronting early grade school headteachers in Awutu Senya West District.
- ii. The second research questions explored the financial-related challenges confronting headteachers in managing early grade schools. It emerged that, inadequate funding by the government, budgetary constraints, delay in funds (capitation grant), lack of financial support from external agencies and

inadequate knowledge on financial management were some of the financial-related challenges confronting headteachers in early grade schools.

- iii. The third research question examined the parent-related challenges confronting headteachers in managing early grade schools. It emerged from the study that the parents-related challenges includes; failure of parents to visit the school to check on their ward's performance, parent's poor responds to teacher's call and misinterpretation of information heard, failure to attend PTA meetings, lack of parental involvement in their children's education and failure of parents and community members to assist with the provision of teaching and learning materials.
- iv. The fourth research question explored the strategies that can be employed to overcome the challenges confronting headteachers in managing early grade schools. It was revealed that, engage teachers in decision making, delegate work to staff (subordinate), communicate goals and vision to staff in the midst of the challenges, negotiate with stakeholders (community) for support, creating long-term work relationship with teachers and being assertive at times.

5.2 Limitations of the study

1. The sample for the study consisted of the headteachers of Public Early Grade Centres in Awutu Senya West District. Therefore, the findings could not be generalised beyond that district. Moreover, the study did not focus on the Private Early Grade Centres in the District and therefore the findings could not applied to such settings as well.
2. Access to the setting of the study was a problem. The bureaucratic process in gaining access to conduct the study hindered the researcher from working

within the specified timeframe which led to extra financial cost of travels for series of meetings in order to gain access.

3. Lastly, but not the least, some headteachers were not willing to participate in the study, due to fear of the sanctions from their superiors in Ghana Education Service. Such headteachers could have shared their knowledge and experiences regarding the challenges they face, improving the quality of data collected.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn;

- i. Based on the findings on the administrative-related challenges of headteachers, it can be concluded that, headteachers were confronted with administrative-related challenges in line of duty and this serves as a threat to the school's development administratively.
- ii. Based on the findings on research question two, it can be concluded that, headteachers encountered financial-related challenges such as long delay in the release of funds to school. These financial-administrative-related challenges poses a threat to the infrastructural and material development of the school.
- iii. Based on the findings of the third research question, headteachers encountered parent-related challenges such as delay in the release of funds to school. Thus, the failure of parents to be actively involved in their wards education can lead to a fundamental breakdown in the child's educational foundation and academic performance.
- iv. Based on the findings of the fourth research question, it can be concluded that strategies such as delegation, coordination, assertiveness and long-term

working relationship can be employed to overcome the challenges affecting the headteachers in managing public early grade schools in Awutu Senya West District.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study; the following recommendations were drawn;

- i. The study revealed that the schools did not have adequate teaching and learning resources to support the development of the Early Grade learners. Therefore the headteachers should liaise with the Ghana education Service in the Municipality to provide basic resources such as textbooks, syllabus, TLMs, furniture and conducive condition of service such as proper accommodation for the teachers.
- ii. The study discovered that the centres were facing financial challenges because the grants from the government were not forthcoming. It is therefore recommended that the Ghana Education Directorate in Awutu Senya West District should liaise with corporate institutions in the municipality to provide financial aid to the school as part of its corporate social responsibility.
- iii. It came out of the study that most of the parents of the learners were reluctant to attend meetings organised by the centres to discuss their children's welfare issues, as they were more committed to their farming activities. It is recommended that, the headteachers should liaise effectively with the parents (act as in-loco parentis) to get them onboard in their wards education in order to strengthen their academic foundation.
- iv. It was revealed in the study that currently headteachers of the Early Grade schools lack administrative skills (i.e.delegation/coordination). Hence it is

recommended that series of workshops and in-service training programmes should be organised by the District Education to help remedy the situation.



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APPENDICES
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND
MANAGEMENT

Questionnaire on challenges of female head teachers in managing early grade schools

SECTION A: Your Background Information

Instruction: Please tick (✓) the column that is applicable to you

1. Gender: Male [] Female []
2. Your age range:
 - a. Below 30 years []
 - b. 31yrs – 40yrs []
 - c. 41yrs – 50yrs []
 - d. 51yrs – 60 yrs []
3. Your academic qualification
 - a. Diploma []
 - b. Bachelor's Degree []
 - c. Master's Degree []
4. Your working experience:
 - a. 1-5 years []
 - b. 6-10 years []
 - c. 11-15 years []
 - d. 16 years and above []
5. Your job position
 - a. Head teacher []
 - b. Assistant head teacher []



Section B: Administrative-related challenges in managing early grade schools

This section gathers your views on the administrative-related challenges in managing early grade schools. Please tick (√) to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to each of them *Let SA represent Strongly Agree (5), A represent Agree (4), U represent Uncertain (3), D represent Disagree (2) and SD represent Strongly Disagree (1).*

S/N	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	Inadequate teaching staff					
2.	Lack of motivation					
3.	Lack of school resources and facilities					
4.	Teacher retention					
5.	Work overload					
6.	Large class size					

Section C: Financial-related challenges in managing early grade schools

This section gathers your views on the financial-related challenges in managing early grade schools. Please tick (√) to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to each of them *Let SA represent Strongly Agree (5), A represent Agree (4), U represent Uncertain (3), D represent Disagree (2) and SD represent Strongly Disagree (1).*

S/N	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	Inadequate funding by the government					
2.	Budgetary constraints					
3.	Delay in funds (capitation grant)					

4.	Lack of financial support from external agencies (NGOs)					
5.	Inadequate knowledge on financial management					

Section D: Parent-related challenges in managing early grade schools

This section gathers your views on the Pupil-related challenges in managing early grade schools. Please tick (√) to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to each of them *Let SA represent Strongly Agree (5), A represent Agree (4), U represent Uncertain (3), D represent Disagree (2) and SD represent Strongly Disagree (1).*

STATEMENTS	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. High level of truancy among pupils					
2. Pupils do not attend school punctually					
3. Pupils leave school before closing time					
4. Pupils not adhering to classroom rules					
5. Pupils always sleep in class					
6. Pupils do not pay attention in class during lessons					

Section E: Strategies that can be employed to help remedy the challenges affecting their performance in managing early grade schools

This section gathers your views on strategies that can be employed to help remedy the challenges affecting their performance in managing early grade schools. Please tick (✓) to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to each of them *Let SA represent Strongly Agree (5), A represent Agree (4), U represent Uncertain (3), D represent Disagree (2) and SD represent Strongly Disagree (1).*

S/N	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	Engage teachers in decision making					
2.	Delegate work to staff (subordinate)					
3.	Communicate goals and vision to staff in the midst of the challenges					
4.	Negotiate with stakeholders (community) for support					
5.	Creating long-term work relationship with teachers					
6.	Being assertive at times					

Thank you!!!!!!!!!!