

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**SIGHTED STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS STUDENTS WITH
VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN WENCHI METHODIST SENIOR HIGH
SCHOOL, BRONG AHAFO**



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

DECEMBER, 2017

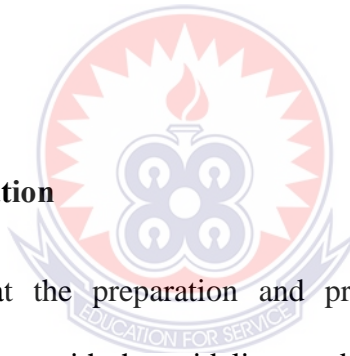
DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, **Daniel Oteng**, do hereby declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have been duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and that 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 thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines and supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Daniel Dogbe

Signature:

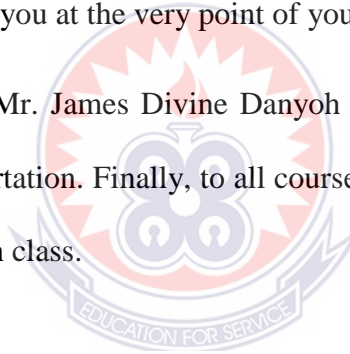
Date:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My first gratitude goes to Adonai; in fact, He has been my provider, He has done it again. May His name be lifted high forever. I am very grateful to the following persons for their encouragement and motivation; my supervisor, Dr. Daniel Dogbe, a senior lecturer in the Department of Special Education, University of Education, Winneba, Philipa Adu my wife, Selina Boateng, Esther Adu Poku, Emelia Adu Poku, and Joseph Adu Poku (Cape Coast Teaching Hospital).

I cannot end this section without acknowledging the Headmaster of Wenchi Methodist Senior High School and Esaso Basic School, Mr. Paul Opong Boateng (Headmaster, Esaso Basic School) and entire staff. I pray that God almighty should meet you at the very point of your needs. God richly bless you!

I also wish to thank Mr. James Divine Danyoh for providing me with brilliant insights into the dissertation. Finally, to all course mates, I thank you all for your wonderful company in class.



DEDICATION

This work I dedicated to my Late mother, Rose Opoku, and my daughter,
Emerald Oteng Boatemaa.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
DECLARATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
DEDICATION	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	4
1.3 Purpose of the Study	5
1.4 Research Questions	6
1.5 Significance of the Study	6
1.6 Delimitations of the Study	7
1.7 Organization of the Study	7
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	9
2.0 Introduction	9
2.1 Theoretical Framework	9
2.1.1 Social Disability Theory	9
2.1.2 Functionalist Theory of Attitude	11
2.1.3 Learning Theories on Attitude Formation	13
2.1.4 Fazio's Attitude Accessibility Theory	14
2.2 Models of Disabilities	15

2.2.1 The Medical Model	15
2.2.2 The Social Model	17
2.3 Concept of Inclusive Education in Ghana	18
2.3.1 Importance of Inclusive Education	22
2.4 Understanding the Concept of Visual Impairment	24
2.5 Meaning and Nature of Attitude	26
2.6 Students' Perception of Integration Programme	30
2.7 Challenges facing Sighted Students concerning Integration Programme	31
2.7.1 Culture and Beliefs	32
2.7.2 Religion	33
2.8 Attitude towards Visual Impairments	34
2.9 Gender perspectives on Attitude towards Visually Impaired	38
2.10 Summary of Literature Review	38
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	40
3.0 Introduction	40
3.1 Research Design	40
3.2 Population of the Study	41
3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques	42
3.4 Data Collection Instrument	42
3.4.1 Questionnaire	42
3.4.2 Pre-testing of Instrument	44
3.5 Validity and Reliability of Instrument	44
3.6 Data Collection Procedure	45
3.7 Data Analysis Procedures	45
3.8 Ethical Considerations	46

3.8.1 Informed Consent	46
3.8.2 Anonymity and confidentiality	47
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	
FINDINGS	48
4.0 Introduction	48
4.1 Response Rate	48
4.2. SECTION A – Demographic Characteristics of Respondents	48
4.3 Analysis of Research Question One	50
4.4 Analysis of Research Question Two	53
4.5 Research Question Three	56
4.6 Research Question Four	59
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
AND RECOMMENDATIONS	62
5.0 Introduction	62
5.1 Summary of Findings	62
5.2 Conclusions	64
5.3 Recommendations	64
5.4 Recommendations for Future Research	65
5.5 Limitations	65
REFERENCES	67
APPENDIX A: INTRODUCTORY LETTER	75
APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SIGHTED STUDENTS	76

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
4.1: Gender Distribution of Respondents	48
4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents	49
4.3: Distribution of Students' Living Statuses	49
4.4: Sighted students' Perception towards the Integration Programme	50
4.5: Challenges of Sighted students concerning Integration Programme	54
4.6: Attitudes of Sighted students towards students with Visual Impairment	57
4.7: T-test of attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment	60



ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to determine the attitudes of sighted students towards the integration of students with visual impairments in the Wenchi Methodist Senior High School in Brong Ahafo Region. The study employed the case study approach. A sample of 80 students was selected using purposive sampling. Structured questionnaire was the tool for data collection. The data collected were analyzed descriptively using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to explore patterns of association among variables. The result of the study revealed that integrating students with visual impairments with sighted students may disrupt classroom discipline. It also emerged that teachers are the biggest challenge to the school's integration programme because they usually neglect the needs of the students with visual impairment in class. It was further revealed that students who are visually impaired are helpless and incapable of performing the tasks required for day to day living. Finally, it emerged that females have more positive attitude towards students with visual impairments than their male counterparts. It was also found that the concept of inclusive education would suffer a great deal if the perception and attitude of sighted students towards students with visual impairment remain unchanged. It was recommended that the school authorities and the guidance team should organise disability sensitization programmes in the school to orient non-disabled students on the causes and related issues about visual impairments and other disabilities.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The discussion on inclusive education featured prominently during the 1994 Salamanca Conference in Spain where contemporary educators and educationists reaffirmed the principle of inclusive education as advocated in the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education regarding access and quality education for all (UNESCO, 1994). Part of this framework stated that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangement, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities (UNESCO, 1994). It was this commitment, and the difficulties experienced with existing special school systems, that encouraged governments, including that of Ghana, to start moving towards an inclusive education paradigm.

Education is imperative for both individuals and societies, and research has shown that education is also important in bringing about improvement in the lives of people and their communities (Haug, 2006). Education, according to Terzi (2010), is crucial for people's well-being and plays a substantial role for the promotion of individuals to participate effectively in society. Again, one major role of education, as argued by Vandeyar (2003), is its liberation role. Thus, it is clear that education is very essential in the life of the individual as it has the potential of securing a better life for him or her. This implies that when people are given the right training and tools through

education, irrespective of their physical status, they become empowered and can live dignified lives and contribute their quota to developing their societies and nation at large. Nonetheless, Ocloo (2002) observes that in many communities in the world today obstacles exist that alienate persons with disabilities, such as those with visual impairment, and which hamper their development. Problems, which they face in classrooms and how they manage to deal with them, are worth investigating.

Although the sense of sight was fundamental important in the olden days, it is even more important in modern societies with the advent of technological devices that require its extensive use. which is organized mainly according to those who have vision and is considered a vehicle of communication in the world. Students with visual impairments have unique educational needs which are most effectively met using a team approach involving professionals, parents and students themselves where possible. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2011), in order to meet the unique needs, students with visual impairment and sighted students should relate well. The relationship with the sighted students with the visually impaired in the inclusion or integration is not well recognized (Karangwa, 2003).

Successful participation in learning by students with visual impairment can be achieved if sighted students exhibit positive attitude towards students with visual impairments It is also anticipated that regular schools, which have adopted inclusive programme, are required by policy to progressively make their environments disability-friendly (WHO, 2011). While teachers exhibit positive attitudes towards the non-sighted students in classrooms, Wittenstein and Sovin (2006) noted that the sighted students show negative attitude towards the idea of inclusion creating negative classroom environment and non-meaningful learning for visually impaired students. It

is believed that psychological adjustment and acceptance of one's disability are necessary for successful rehabilitation. Bell (2010) reiterated that children who have disabilities are very sensitive to peer evaluation of their disability.

With the recognition of the potential and capabilities of children with visual impairments, what is needed is to change the existing attitudes or the formation of new attitudes (Korir, 2015). This is important because attitudes have been one of the greatest impediments towards the integration programme. Those students with visual impairments feel ostracized by their sighted counterparts, as manifested in the covert actions of sighted students. Students with visual impairments are more likely to have several problems of unstable relationship because of how they are perceived by sighted students, less positive social interaction, negative attitudes towards integration and behavioural and social problem (UNESCO, 1994) out of this negative.

Knowledge of attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairments helps us to understand the nature of interaction between the two groups. In education, for inclusion to be effective, it is generally agreed that sighted students who will be most responsible for its success should be receptive to the principles and demands of inclusion. Sighted students' attitudes may well act to facilitate or constrain the implementation of inclusion education (UNESCO, 2005). Ghana is among the countries in the world with a very high rate of students with visual impairments (UNESCO, 2005). The state of students with visual impairments in Ghana is even more tragic and severe due to the negative attitude of teachers and visual students toward them (Spungin, 2002; Tooze, 2001). Students with visual impairments are more likely to have several problems of unstable relationships because of how they

are perceived by sighted students, less positive social interaction, negative attitudes toward integration and behavioral and social problem.

Positive attitudes have been found to play an important part in effective inclusive education. Studies have shown that positive attitude of sighted students who are attending inclusive classes is the greatest source of success for inclusive education (Tooze, 2001; Spungin, 2002). Therefore, attitude change among sighted students towards students with visual impairments is critical for the successful implementation of inclusive education (Korir, 2015). It is therefore, important to identify those negative attitudes and to provide interventions that targets negative associations with the disability.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Around the world, it is estimated that about 115 million children do not attend school and 40 million of them are believed to have disabilities (World Bank, 2002). Dakar Framework for Action aimed at realising the Education For All (EFA) policy by 2015 stated that member countries must “create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments conducive to excellence in learning with clearly defined levels of achievement for all” (Dakar Education For All Forum, 2000, para 8). This provision unequivocally, makes it mandatory for member countries to make learning environment safe and devoid of depressive tendencies for all students with or without disabilities.

In line with this provision, many countries are adopting inclusive education policy which aims at optimizing learning environments for all learners to be successful, especially the visually impaired (Ocloo, 2002). For inclusive education to be

effective, Ocloo concluded that sighted students, who are stakeholders for its success, should be receptive to the principles and demands of inclusion. Sighted students' attitudes may well act to facilitate or constrain the implementation of inclusion education (UNESCO, 2005). Positive attitudes have been found to play an important part in effective inclusive education. For instance, studies by Spungin (2002) and Tooze (2001) have shown that positive attitudes of sighted students who are attending inclusive classes is the greatest source of success for inclusive education.

However, it appears the situation in Wenchi Methodist Senior High School in Brong Ahafo Region, Ghana is quite different as enrolment of students with visual impairment continues to record low figures despite the availability of teacher support services and facilities. Every year, the school admits an appreciable number of students with visual impairments but only few are able to complete their studies successfully. For instance, in September, 2014, the school admitted 21 students with visual impairments but only 9 were able to complete their studies in May, 2017. If the school has facilities and other resources for students with visual impairments, what then could be influencing these frustrating experiences? What is the attitude of sighted students towards the visually impaired in Wenchi Methodist Senior High School? Answers to these questions are not readily available in the literature and therefore, finding empirically supported answers constitute the problem the study is designed to investigate.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the attitudes of sighted students towards the integration of students with visual impairments in the Wenchi Methodist Senior High School in Brong Ahafo Region. Specifically, the study seeks to;

1. Determine the perception of sighted students towards the integration programme.
2. Examine challenges facing the sighted students concerning those with visual impairment.
3. Find out the attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment.
4. Determine the gender differences in attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What are the perceptions of sighted students towards the integration programme?
2. What are the challenges facing the sighted students concerning the integration of those with visual impairment?
3. What are the attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment?
4. What are the gender differences about attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study helps in providing basic information for planners and policy makers to make society aware and also bring improvements in the educational settings which would provide solution to problems that sighted students face as a result of the inclusive education practice.

It is envisaged and believed that the findings would be a contribution to the on-going discussions about the situations and inclusion of students with disabilities in the mainstream schools. Furthermore, upon the completion of this research project, it would become an important document which would provide insight into the experiences of the visually impaired students in inclusive senior high schools in Ghana and perhaps other parts of Africa.

In addition, this study would probably encourage other researchers to conduct further research in the area. Finally, it would increase and widen the researcher's scope and horizon of understanding concerning some of the perceptions of sighted students on inclusive education.

Finally, the findings of the study would help the government through the Ministry of Education to create an enabling environment for the inclusion of learners with visual impairment. They could also be used as a guide to reforming and restructuring special education delivery programmes in an inclusive setting.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to Wenchi Methodist Senior High School due to its inclusive settings. It was further delimited to sighted students' perception of the integration programme, challenges of the integration programme, attitudes towards students with visual impairment and gender differences.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This study was organized into five chapters. The first chapter focuses on the introductory part of the study which consists of background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study,

delimitation and organization of the study. The second chapter deals with review of relevant literature pertinent to the research. The third chapter also deals with methodology that consist of research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentations, validity and reliability, data collection and analysis procedures and ethical issues. The collected data from the participants of the study are carefully analyzed and interpreted in the fourth chapter. The fifth chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendation of the study.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher reviewed literature relevant to the study. That is the researcher looked at the relevant literature under the following subheadings:

1. Theoretical Framework
2. Models of Disabilities
3. Concept of Inclusive Education in Ghana
4. Understanding the Concept of Visual Impairment
5. Meaning and Nature of Attitude
6. Students' perception of Integration Programme
7. Challenges facing sighted students' concerning Integration Programme
8. Attitude towards Visual Impairment
9. Gender perspectives on Attitude towards Visually Impaired
10. Summary of Literature Review

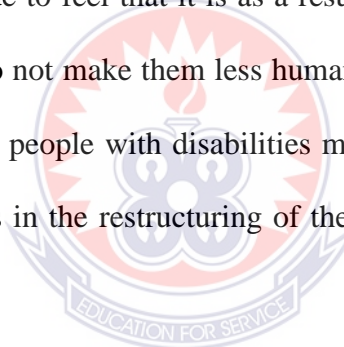
2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study is underpinned by two theoretical perspectives; first, theoretical perspective on inclusive education and second, theoretical perspectives on attitude and attitude formation are presented.

2.1.1 Social Disability Theory

The social disability theory is undergirded by the philosophy of social model of disability. The theory seeks to encourage the society to view the issue of persons with disabilities from a human right and equality perspective rather than focusing on

persons with disabilities from participating in any situation as what hinders their progress (Oliver & Barnes, 2008; Rieser 2002). It further sees disability as a product of specific social and economic structures and aims to address issues of oppression and discrimination of disabled people that are caused by institutional forms of exclusion and by cultural attitudes embedded in social practices (Terzi, 2004). The social model believes that attitudinal and environmental barriers are the predominant obstacles existing in society: able-bodied people tend to fix their gaze on the disability of people rather than noticing their abilities (Mulvany, 2000). It advocates that places like buildings, schools and playing grounds should be made suitable to accommodate people with varying disabilities (Chappell, Goodley, & Lawhorn, 2001). People with disabilities are often made to feel that it is as a result of their own fault that they are different. Impairments do not make them less human beings. This is emphasized well by the social model. The people with disabilities movement believes that cure to the problem of disability lies in the restructuring of the society, and not focusing on the individual's impairment.



In an inclusive setting, it is the school's responsibility to re-adjust in order to meet the needs of learners with visual impairments. In the social model, it is well emphasized that children with visual impairment could experience difficulties in the education system. This could be due to negative attitude of sighted students towards students with visual impairment. The inclusive education approach however suggests that those difficulties should not be explained simply in terms of children with visual impairments. It discourages the view that the learner faces such problems due to his/her impairments. Under those circumstances, the option is not to establish a separate special school, which could further separate these children from their peers

and families, neither is it cost effective. Instead the school should not be seen as creating barriers to learning for the learners with special needs by failing to create an enabling and supportive environment for them. A more appropriate response is to understand the barriers to learning and work out systematically to alleviate them. This model first sees the strength of the child, rather than the disability. It advocates for the inclusion of all children; however it excludes students with “severe” disabilities in the mainstream education system (Diana, 2008).

According to Rieser (2002), the social model of disability makes an important distinction between the terms impairment and disability. It aligns with this study that many learners with visual impairments are locked out of education opportunities due to negative attitude of sighted students towards students with visual impairment. That could be done by trying certain measures which could lead to removal of barriers. When this is done, it is expected that the disability would be limited even though the impairments would still be there (Wormnaes, 2001). This study therefore, used the social model of disability for it supports the ideas of inclusive education and encourages the removal of barriers that hinder the learners with visual impairments from accessing quality (higher) education. In the performance of students with visual impairments, learning may be highly affected by attitude of sighted students towards students with visually impaired students and unless these negative attitudes of sighted students towards those with visual impairment are removed, the academic performance of students with visual impairments may not be improved.

2.1.2 Functionalist Theory of Attitude

Katz proposes a functionalist theory of attitudes (McLeod, 2014). Katz (cited in McLeod, 2014) is of the view that attitudes are determined by the functions they serve

for us. People hold certain attitudes because these attitudes help them achieve their basic goals. Katz further distinguishes four types of psychological functions that attitudes meet. These are discussed below.

- i. **Instrumental:** Katz says that people develop favourable attitudes towards things that aid or reward them. They would want to maximize rewards and minimize penalties. According to him, we develop attitudes that help us meet our goal. For instance, we favour political parties that will advance our economic prospects. If we are in business, we favour the party that will keep our taxes low; if unemployed, we favour one that will increase employment and end-of- service benefits. We are more likely to change our attitudes if doing so allows us to fulfill our goals or avoid undesirable consequences.
- ii. **Knowledge:** Katz discloses that attitudes provide meaningful, structured environment. In life, we seek some degree of order, clarity, and stability in our personal frame of reference. Attitudes help supply us with standards of evaluation. Via such attitudes as stereotypes, we can bring order and clarity to the complexities of human life.
- iii. **Value-expressive:** This focuses on our desire to express basic values, and reinforce our self-image. For example, if one views oneself as a catholic, one can reinforce that image by adopting catholic beliefs and values.
- iv. **Ego-defensive:** Some attitudes serve to protect us from acknowledging basic truths about ourselves or the harsh realities of life. They serve as defense mechanisms. Those with feelings of inferiority may develop an attitude of superiority. Katz's functionalist theory also offers an explanation as to why attitudes change. According to Katz, an attitude changes when it no longer

serves its function and the individual feels blocked or frustrated. That is, attitude change is achieved not so much by changing a person's information or perception about an object, but rather by changing the person's underlying motivational and personality needs. This implies that in trying to change the attitude of learners towards English, one must focus on things that motivate them besides identifying the appropriate learning theory that should be applied to enhance the teaching and learning process. A close examination of some of the leaning theories will be useful at this stage (McLeod, 2014).

2.1.3 Learning Theories on Attitude Formation

Jung (2006) stresses attitude formation and explains several means by which attitudes are formed. His views are summarized as follows:

- a. **Classical Conditioning:** this is when the individual becomes used to a particular situation as a result of repeated exposure to that situation. If a child's parents are football fans and cheer football players during football games in the presence of the child, the child may grow to love football without knowing why he/she does so besides the fact that he likes the parent's happy attitude towards football.
- b. **Instrumental or Operant Conditioning:** these are behaviours or attitudes that are followed by positive consequences and are occasionally reinforced. They are more likely to be repeated than behaviours and attitudes that are followed by negative consequences.
- c. **Observational Learning:** these are situations in which children watch the behaviour of people around them and imitate what they see. For instance, if a young girl sees her parents always reading and sharing what they read with each other, she may take up that habit in school. Whether she continues to repeat that

behaviour depends on the responses of her classmates, teacher, and parents. That is, observations determine the responses we learn, but reinforcement determines the responses we express.

- d. **Cognitive Dissonance Theory:** stresses attitude change and explains how behaviours can determine attitudes. The individual's perception or attitude, beliefs, and behaviours can change when others make a decision favouring one alternative and which he might have not originally supported.

The prevailing view among cognitive social psychologists was that "attitude" has both affective and belief components, and that attitude and behaviour should be consistent; Example, people with positive attitudes should behave positively toward the attitude object. However, many other researchers on attitudes do not agree that people's attitudes generally predict their natural behaviour, not even when such attitudes are measured under optimal conditions (Jung, 2006).

2.1.4 Fazio's Attitude Accessibility Theory

Fazio (2006) defines attitude as a learned association between a concept and an evaluation. According to him, like any construct based on associative learning, attitude strength varies. Fazio indexes strength using a reaction time paradigm. The more rapidly an attitude can be expressed, the greater its strength. The stronger the attitude, the more accessible it is. To guide behaviour, attitudes must be accessible. He is of the view that attitudes that are highly accessible from memory are much more likely to guide behaviour than less accessible attitudes. Fazio further demonstrate that accessible attitudes are activated spontaneously upon presentation of the attitude issue.

Changing the attitude of sighted students towards students with visual impairments requires thorough assessment of the motivation and various attitude formation modes girding the activation of the current behaviour of sighted students. Attitudes are learned behaviours which can be altered within the context of the environment in which such behaviours are openly displayed.

2.2 Models of Disabilities

Contemporary issues in disability and inclusion in education have their origin in the discourses of the medical and social model of disability (Ferguson, 2008). The models of disability are associated with different value systems, attitudes and behaviours with contrasting ideas between disability and inclusion (Pearson, 2009). Within these models, arguments about children with disability gaining equal access to education provoked worldwide movements to support an inclusive education. Understanding differences in the conceptualization of disability may explain the presence of conceptual and methodological variations in the existing literature. There are two major models of disability most frequently cited in literature, the medical model and the social model.

2.2.1 The Medical Model

The medical model of disability viewed disability as a sickness or disease of some sort whereby only the medical profession could intervene with treatment to correct it as much as possible (Mulvany, 2000). This theory of disability views that problems experienced by people with disabilities are the consequence of a disease (Kett, Lang, & Trani, 2009). These ideas made it possible for medical professionals to measure a person's limitation and devise corrective procedures to ensure the greatest degree of normalization. For example, when a wheelchair user is unable to get into a building

because of the stairs, the medical model would suggest that it is the way the wheelchair is made that restricts the disabled person's access to the building. However, Barton (2007) argues that the medical lens is fixed on the individual's disability and the larger political, economic and material structures that are at play in an able-bodied society fall somewhere outside the frame.

The medical model equated an individual's health status, impairment and capacity limitation, and failed to address social factors such as discrimination, prejudice and the inaccessibility disabled people faced (Officer & Groce, 2009). It saw disability purely as a problem of the person with disability, without considering the difference between the type of impairment and the disability (Mulvany, 2000). Impairment is the physiological loss or abnormality on the person's body while disability is what reduces the person's full function and participation in all activities due to the loss of the body part (Crow, 2002). The medical model perceived that because of the physical and psychological defect in their bodies, disabled people were more dependent, unintelligent, unattractive, helpless and childlike and unable to fulfil tasks (Badley, 2008; Fisher & Goodley, 2007).

The limitation of the medical model is that it sees only the alternative path a wheelchair user could take, such as the lift. The medical lens narrows its sight to wheelchair provision as a solution rather than considering what other things the wheelchair-bound person can do to survive. Other senses and parts of the body still function for this person. The social model of disability is an alternative lens that has challenged the medical model's tradition of overlooking the normal functions and abilities of disabled people.

2.2.2 The Social Model

The social model believes that attitudinal and environmental barriers are the predominant obstacles to the functionality of persons with disabilities. It is common seeing able-bodied people fixing their gazes on the disability of people rather than noticing their abilities (Mulvany, 2000). It advocates that places like buildings, schools and playing grounds should be made suitable to accommodate people with varying disabilities (Chappell, et al., 2001). In other words, this model calls for modifications in the school environment, making such environment least restrictive for persons with disabilities.

The social model of disability aims to eradicate the attitudinal and environmental problems faced by disabled persons by understanding them as full members of the society and adjusting situations to enable them to adapt and function within their society (Kett, Lang, & Trani, 2009). It became a tool for supporting the principle of equity and inclusion in society by taking a firm stand that no longer should a person with disability be considered inferior nor seen as self-pity and unworthy but as a full human being (Skrtic, 2001). From this perspective, the social model of disability has shifted the negative stereotypical attitudes towards people with disabilities and drawn people to appreciate that everyone, able-bodied or disabled is equal. Therefore, the social model has the incremental influence that sparked human rights movements across the globe (Kett, et al. 2009; Terzi, 2004) and called for disabled people to participate in all aspects of life including an inclusive education (Chappell, et al., 2001).

2.3 Concept of Inclusive Education in Ghana

One key concept around which the study revolves is inclusion. In recent years, the concept has attracted attention in the circles of education, both locally and internationally. Nevertheless, literature on inclusive education implies that there is an on-going debate on the concept which connotes different meanings in different countries and to different people.

Inclusive Education started in 1994 at a UNESCO conference. The UNESCO wanted a situation where there would no longer be a separate system of education for learners with special education needs and a regular school for able children (Tawiah, 2016). Ghana was among the many nations that bought into this concept. However, Tawiah (2016) reports that plans to implement the inclusive education policy was announced in Ghana in 2014. Prior to that announcement, the policy was piloted in 749 schools in 48 districts in the country, notably among them were National Basic School in Cape Coast and the St. Joseph Basic School at Bechem. This policy made it mandatory for all heads to admit persons with disabilities.

Inclusion assumes that students with disabilities attend ordinary schools. The fundamental principle is that all children are together as much as possible. Inclusive education of high quality should focus on; curriculum, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use, and partnership with the communities. Inclusion is a process, not a place, service or setting. In her attempt to highlight the debate concerning the diverse meanings and practices of inclusive education, Terzi (2010) states that inclusive and special education is “characterized by systems of schooling”. She maintains that in countries, such as Sweden, Italy and Spain inclusion of all students is within mainstreamed schools, while in other countries for example, France,

Slovenia, Finland, Denmark and Austria, inclusion is done in mainstream schools alongside special schools.

According to Haug (2006) the term inclusion encompasses many issues at different levels ranging from politics, ideology, philosophy and values. By way of inference from the above arguments, it could be maintained that the concept of inclusive education is opened to all kinds of interpretations depending on the point of view under scrutiny by the individual or the lens through which a society looks at the concept. It could mean a place occupied by the child with special needs in the classroom in the mainstreamed school and or all those concerned to ensure that the process of inclusion works. In relation to this study, the focus is not to go deep into the enigma and complexities surrounding the concept, but to give a brief and general understanding about the concept in connection to this thesis.

With this in mind, international organizations such as UNESCO place great emphasis on the right to education by all persons and hence declared that:

Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning ... those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which accommodate them within child centered pedagogy capable of meeting these needs (UNESCO, 1994).

This, in essence, implies that every child is qualified to be an equal, valued and regarded member of a school culture irrespective of his/her physical condition. In this regard, inclusion is seen as the means and process of increasing the scope of accessibility and participation of all persons including the marginalized in society as

well as those with special educational needs in the school system. According to Garbarino (2002), inclusive education does not just mean the integration of children and young adults with physical, sensory or intellectual disabilities into ordinary schools or just access to education for excluded learners. Inclusion is a two-way process of increasing participation in learning and identifying and reducing or removing barriers that inhibit learning and participation. It is a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners and will involve change and modifications in content, approaches, structures and learning strategies.

Inclusive education as captured in the above account has moved away from just talking about issues that concern only persons with special needs to a wider range of understanding things pertaining to increasing accessibility and participation of other marginalized groups in society. These groups include children living in poverty and on the streets, those from ethnic and linguistic minorities, those displaced as a result of political situations in their home countries and those from remote areas who are excluded from education (Garbarino, 2002). The concept of inclusive education is considered in this thesis as a move to fight for the marginalized and other vulnerable groups in society as well as persons with disabilities to have access to education where all forms of barriers and considerations along language and ethnic backgrounds do not exist (Tirosh, 2007).

Inclusive education is an approach to educating persons with special educational needs (disabled students) alongside those without special educational needs (non-disabled students) in the same classroom where they interact socially with one another and share resources together (Tirosh, 2007). The concept of inclusion on the one hand frowns upon the use of special schools or classrooms to separate learners with

disabilities and other marginalized groups from those without disabilities. On the other hand, the idea of inclusion aims at removing barriers, for example, inappropriate designed curricular, untrained teachers who cannot work with diverse learners with diverse needs, attitudes towards learners with special needs and even the environment where the learning is to take place (Garbarino, 2002). Some of these barriers militate against full access and participation in education by the marginalized and persons with special needs in society. This therefore suggests that a premium is highly placed upon full participation by learners with disabilities and upon respect for their social, civil, and educational rights.

According to UNESCO (1994), inclusive education is a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities. Kirk and Gallagher (2008) also describe inclusion as the process of increasing participation of every learner. This therefore means that inclusion reduces exclusion from education and from within education. The concept of inclusive schools is built on the strong philosophical belief that all children are educable no matter what barriers there are to their learning. When given the chance, all children can be successful within a shared academic environment where all learners are offered equal opportunities and support that will allow them to become self-determined, productive, and socially involved citizens. I now turn my attention to the importance of inclusive education.

According to the Ministry of Education (MOE, 2015), inclusion denotes ensuring access and learning for all children: especially those disadvantaged from linguistic, ethnic, gender, geographic or religious minority, from an economically impoverished background as well as children with special needs including those with disabilities.

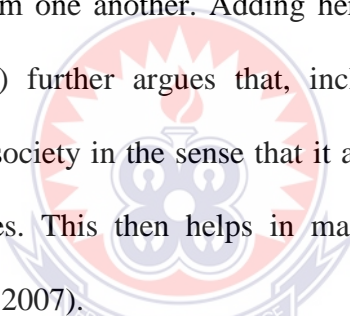
The inclusive policy of Ghana, locates inclusion as a part of the wider reform of the education system, that aims to create learning environments that are responsive to all learners' needs and conducive to successful educational outcomes, and ultimately to a more equitable society. It goes beyond the education system to the communities in which learners live to ensure that they are welcomed, nurtured and given the opportunity to thrive to their optimum capacities (MOE, 2015).

2.3.1 Importance of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education has been identified by international organizations such as UNESCO in its annual EFA Global Monitoring Report (2010) as important and a means of reaching out to the marginalized and other excluded groups in society by improving and increasing their access to education (Oskemp, 2004). Increasing and improving access to education by the excluded and other marginalized communities could be done by bringing schools closer to them and also subsidizing cost by their respective governments. Inclusive education therefore can go a long way to affect and change the lives and fortunes of these excluded groups as well as individuals. Inclusion is to value that every child is equal (Kirk & Gallagher, 2008). Maintaining some group of learners in segregated schools just on their physical condition is nothing more than discrimination and cannot be justified on the basis of equity (Arum, Beattie, & Ford, 2011). This implies the recognition of every child as equal and including them in the mainstream class and giving them fair equality of opportunity (Barton, 2007). This can psychologically boost their moral which will go a long way to impact positively on their achievement in school and society.

Furthermore, inclusion on the one hand will enable children with special needs to learn from their peers faster than would have been in the special schools. On the other

hand, their regular peers will learn to appreciate and understand the weaknesses and strengths of the “special” children amongst them better leading to full cooperation with them. According to Tirosh (2007) research has shown that children learn together, live together, play together and share resources together when the opportunity is given to them. In the same perspective Barton (2007) noted that one of the big disadvantages of segregated education is the isolation and the loss of opportunity of sharing with peers of the same age and learning from one another relevant behaviours and skills. If one big disadvantage of segregated education is what is stated in the above quote, then one can argue that inclusive education will offer the opportunity for children with the same age to share and learn positive behaviours and skills from one another. Adding her voice to the need for inclusive education, Tirosh (2007) further argues that, inclusion is a radical reform that encourages an inclusive society in the sense that it attempts to eliminate all forms of discriminatory approaches. This then helps in maintaining equal opportunities of education for all (Barton, 2007).



Inclusive education can be cost effective since it is likely to be less costly to establish and run schools which educate all children together than to build two separate schools for specific groups of learners. In other words, there is an economic justification and cost effectiveness in delivering Education for All. Finally, and essentially, inclusion generally embraces diversity but speaks against the practice of segregation which can be considered as morally unacceptable. It is therefore important to acknowledge that a normal society is characterized by its multiplicity and diversity-not by sameness (Barton, 2007).

2.4 Understanding the Concept of Visual Impairment

The sense of sight is one of the five senses that humans rely on in their daily activities. Mittler (2000) points out that “the human eye is one of the important senses that is responsible for the greatest amount of sensory input in man. Knouwds (2010) also argues that vision provides about 80% of what humans learn and contributes to incidental learning which visually impaired persons lack; this then has a significant impact on their academic achievement. Even though all the senses are important and support each other to ensure holistic functioning of the individual, Mowes (2002) argues that a loss of one especially the sense of sight can have serious consequences on the educational pursuit of the individual. Knouwds concluded that vision therefore serves as the stabilizer, coordinator and the integrator of the activities of other senses.

Peters (2003) noted that we live in a visual world where much of the information of today’s technology is acquired through the sense of sight. This then implies that educational implications of good vision are tremendous and cannot be underestimated. Sharing similar sentiments, Mowes (2002) underscored the importance of the eye when he mentioned that, the eye can be seen as one of the most important senses on which humans place greater reliance when learning as compared to the other senses combined. Ultimately, the sense of sight plays an influential role in the educational pursuit of the individual. Each visually impaired child who enters an inclusive school presents new challenges and should be considered as unique individual with unique educational needs in the whole school community.

Thomas, Walker, and Webb (2008) consider visual impairment as a condition which falls within a continuum ranging from mild or low vision to severe eye condition and then blindness. In this perspective, however, visual impairment should therefore be

seen as a result of loss of vision rather than an eye disorder. The working definition of visual impairment in this study shall be that of Ocloo (2002) who defined visual impairment as a functional loss of vision to the degree that the individual needs some additional support in terms of movement, education and other self-help activities. Assistance to the visually impaired persons and other marginalized groups could help them go far in their educational pursuit.

The literature demonstrates that there two major types of visual impairments (viz., low vision and blindness). Individuals with low vision have residual vision, therefore, when some reasonable modifications are done for them, they can read printed material. In contrast, individuals who are blind have minimal or no vision at all. They require instruction in Braille to be able to read, write and participate fully in the teaching and learning process (Ocloo, 2002). Most often clinicians use the Snellen chart for determining visual acuity. Students with visual impairments generally exhibit the following characteristics;

1. They write with lots of mistakes by reversing letters and words, below or above the line,
2. They often read with difficulties, either by drawing the reading materials closer or far away,
3. They stumble and bump into objects often, etc.

The causes of visual impairment include refractive errors and diseases. Refractive errors include myopia (short-sightedness); hyperopia (far-sightedness) and astigmatism (distorted vision). Most of these errors can be corrected using medicated glasses. Diseases include glaucoma (high pressure within the eye), onchocerciasis,

strabismus (non-alignment of two eyes), nystagmus (is characterised by a rapid movement of the eyes and cataracts (Deku & Gyimah, 2014).

2.5 Meaning and Nature of Attitude

According to Allport (cited in Eagly & Chaiken, 2003) an attitude is a mental and natural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive and dynamic influence up on the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related. Cialdini (2001) on the other hand described that an attitude is a predisposition to react favourably or unfavourably towards ideas, objects, persons, events or situations. An individual develops certain kinds of attitudes from his previous experiences in favour of or against, a particular idea, person, object etc. An attitude is not innate but it is learned. It persists relatively for a long period of time. It also motivates the individual to act, helping to shape, and direct his behaviour.

Allport (cited in Eagly & Chaiken, 2003) identified four ways in which attitudes are developed. These are:

- The integration of numerous specific responses of a similar type into a generalized response pattern.
- The differentiations as in one's feelings and actions towards a group, favourable to some and unfavourable to others.
- The traumatic experience and
- The imitation or identification.

The comments of one person towards somebody or something may influence another person to develop favourable or unfavourable attitudes towards that object. Eiser (2004) categorized attitudes into three component parts. These are:

- Cognitive, which includes perceptions of objects and events or reports or beliefs about them.
- Affective, which includes feelings about and emotional response to objects and events.
- Behaviour, which refers to intentions and predictions about the way in which an individual may behave in relation to an object or events. Eiser (2004) described that it is difficult to measure attitude by separating in to the above three components. Cognitive, affective and behavioural responses are often not empirically distinguishable as three classes.

The concept of attitude is very complex, and in most of the literature it is said to be very diverse. According to Coleridge (2003), attitude may be viewed as a positive or negative emotional reaction to a person or object accompanied by specific beliefs that tend to cause its holder to behave in specific ways towards its object. This definition is useful since it explicitly states that an attitude can be both positive and negative and that it is an emotional reaction. Another interesting part of the definition is that it is the attached beliefs that make a person react towards another person in a certain way. Attitudes are something that every person has towards others and it is also something that every person experiences from others. All attitudes that we have or experience can be of positive or negative character. When you have a positive attitude towards somebody else, that attitude may influence the person in a positive way and often builds up the self-esteem. But if the attitude that you have towards somebody else is negative, that also may have an influence on that person's life; the way he/she looks at him/herself and his/her self-esteem.

Coleridge (2003) explains how important it is to change negative attitudes in a society and the way the attitudes influence people's lives; this is because there are many areas of a person's life that become affected by negative attitudes. When all of these areas are affected with negative attitudes, it makes a big psychological impact that can result in the distortion of a person's good self-esteem.

According to Evans (2005), attitudes have been defined as being composed of three main components of Affect, Behaviour, and Cognition, known as the ABCs of attitudes. These components combined make up the disposition of attitudes: (A) Affect defines the emotions of attitudes, which are the likes and dislike; (B) behaviour explains the direct action that is connected with the internal attitude; and (C) cognition describes how the organization and formation of attitudes about an object are stored.

Although many definitions of attitudes have emerged throughout the years, scholars agree that some components have stayed the same: (a) Attitudes are learned; (b) attitudes are complex, multi-component structures; (c) attitudes are stable (even rigid); (d) attitudes have a social object of reference; (e) attitudes vary in their quality and quantity; and (f) attitudes are multifaceted behaviourally (Heider, 2006).

Definitions of attitudes have varied over time. Some definitions have been abstract and operationally inconsistent, and some definitions have been based on a single component of affect, behaviour, or cognition. To Heider (2006) attitude is the predisposition of the individual to evaluate some symbol or object or aspect of his world in a favourable or unfavourable manner.

Attitudes are defined as basic aspects of human life, helping human beings to be able to analyse and react to events, make decisions, and make sense of their relationships with other people (Kaino, 2001). Oskemp (2004) also pointed out that attitudes are thoughts, feelings and actions that human beings have about other people and things they encounter in their daily lives, and can guide them in deciding whether or not they like or dislike someone or something. It can be a positive or negative evaluation of something that can influence us to act in a certain way towards that particular thing.

Bandura (2001) highlighted that the learning of attitudes is an integral part of the socialization process which may occur through direct experience and interactions with others or as a product of cognitive process. The attitude formed eventually influences an individual's behaviour. However, the quantum of the influence is generally believed to be moderated by personal characteristics. Attitudes do not necessarily correlate with behavior but under certain conditions they may. According to Fazio (2006), attitudes should be regarded as a learned association between a given object and a given evaluation. People are assumed to behave the way they do because of meanings they assign to their environment and events and objects within it.

With regard to inclusive education, students' attitudes play a significant role on whether inclusive education policies can be fully implemented in regular schools or not (Oskemp, 2004). The way sighted peers see and cognitively process what they see about their fellow peers with visual impairment would influence their attitude either positively or negatively towards the integration of visual impairments into mainstream education programmes.

2.6 Students' Perception of Integration Programme

In some instances, it has been found out that mainstreaming may not be the least restrictive environment for children who need the consistent individualized attention possible in smaller groups (Barnes & Mercer, 2005). Some youngsters are served most effectively in self-contained settings when regular classes with appropriate supplemental assistance are not sufficient to meet their needs. Nonetheless, these children should have the opportunity to interact with peers at recess, mealtimes and after school as well as in regular classrooms when appropriate subjects are being taught. There are four educational handicapped children who need full time special educational programme namely:

1. Those who need help in learning to care for themselves
2. Those who need help in preparing for vocational lives
3. Those who need help in learning social and working skills
4. Those who need to learn basic academic skills

Classification should be based on educational objectives so that specialized service can be directed to the nature of educational handicap. Ballard (2005) stated that, in the past, educational response to an individual child has been primarily administrative rather than pedagogical. The earliest method of dealing with individual differences was to fail the student until educational requirement was mastered. While Barton (2005) noted that the range of individual differences, mainstream classrooms can accommodate varies considerably, the personalized classroom programmes based upon the following principles are promising approaches to minimizing learning problems.

1. The importance of how the child perceives what is being done is acknowledged in relation to the environment and programme.
2. Each child takes an active role in making choices related to major intervention decisions as a way to increase commitment to and personal responsibility for achievement through contractual agreements.
3. A continuum of structure is provided to ensure communication support, direction and limits including periods which children work either independently or in small groups without adult supervision.
4. Informal and formal conferences are held regularly for communication about enhancing a child's perceptions of options, decisions and commitments.

The majority of young people, together with those with disabilities, reported that friendships were a key aspect of school life and that negative peer attitudes were generally recognized as being a major barrier to full social inclusion at school for learners with disabilities (Barling, 2000). On this point of social inclusion, Easter (2011) argues that mainstream schools are not always the best option because, in their current state, they are discriminatory and do not allow full access to the curriculum, resources and perhaps most importantly, friendship networks. Research indicates that learners with disabilities are likely to be perceived as different, they are more likely to be ostracized, suffer from lack friends, and are bullied when compared with their classmates (Easter, 2011).

2.7 Challenges facing Sighted Students concerning Integration Programme

There are different factors, which affect the perception of persons towards those with disabilities in general, and blindness in particular. These are culture, religion, knowledge concerning disability and others.

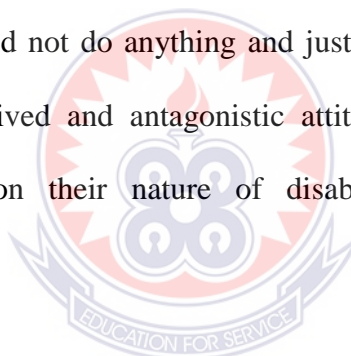
2.7.1 Culture and Beliefs

The way people treat disabled persons with disabilities differs from family to family, community to community and country to country. It is related with the culture of the society (Werner, 1994). This means the culture of the society has an impact on the attitude of that society towards persons with disabilities which in turn affect their way of treatment. Ferguson (1979) pointed out in Nigeria, the presence of different ethnic cultural beliefs regarding the cause for disability. These are curse from God, breaking laws and family sins, offences against gods, witches and wizards, adultery, misfortune, God's representatives, misdeed in a previous life, illegal or unapproved marriage, shows the omnipotence of God, evil spirit, killing certain forbidden animals, a warning from God and fighting elders during harvest. Werner (1994) also described that in some part of the world, people think a child is blind as a punishment for something the parents have done. According to him in Latin America, villagers believe that blindness occurs when a bat's urine fell in the baby's eyes, or a 'black witch moth' flew by the baby's face. Generally, the beliefs held by different cultural groups determine the degree of acceptance or rejection of persons with disabilities in that society.

Early Roman civilization viewed the persons with disabilities with a mixture of superstitions and ruthlessness (Ndurumo, 1990). For instance, in Rome, Athens and Sparta, blind children were put to death in a legally approved manner, and fathers had a right to abandon their newborn infants if they were deformed. Those learners with disabilities who survived were seen as inferior and were given severe punishment as it was believed that they possessed evil spirits (Ndurumo, 1990). In other societies,

children who exhibited disabilities were isolated from society and some were even taken to the forest and left to die (Ndurumo, 1990).

In a nutshell, cultural beliefs about persons with visual impairments play an important role in determining the way in which the sighted perceives visual impairment and the kind of assistance to be rendered to such persons in class. Studies report that the general expectations from sighted learners for pupils with visual impairment are mostly negative and unrealistic (Ndurumo, 1990). Ndurumo (1990) investigated cultural beliefs and attitudes towards disability and came to the conclusion that most people possess fatalistic attitudes towards persons with disabilities, and most especially persons with visual impairments. Most of the respondents felt that these category of persons could not do anything and just needed help and sympathy. The society holds pre-conceived and antagonistic attitude towards person with visual impairment, dwelling on their nature of disability and not on their innate potentialities.



2.7.2 Religion

Different studies have indicated that religion has a powerful role in influencing the attitude of persons towards disabilities. Tirussew, Savolainen, Agdew, and Danail (1995) stated that the Christian doctrine introduced the view that disabling disease is neither a disgrace nor a punishment for sin, instead a means of purification and a way of grace. This ideology shows that suffering perfects the sufferer. The sick has a preferential position, and it is a privilege for the healthy to minister them where as Hall (2001:13) stated that, in Britain, the biblical and Christian tradition tends actually to encourage and authorize negative attitudes to disability.

Fritzon (2001) tried to show the meanings of disabilities in the bible by mentioning different scripture and the way people interpret. According to the bible, every human being is created in God's will and knowledge regardless of their physical or mental capacities. The love that God has for every being also applies to people with different kind of disabilities. Even if, the meanings given for disabilities in the bible are positive, people interpret in different way.

According to him, the disciples' questions to Jesus when they meet the man who was blind from birth; (John 9:2) "who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answer is clear: "It was not that this man sinned or his parents." These answers should have prevented any interpretation that the bible teaches as that disabilities is a punishment from God for sins.

2.8 Attitude towards Visual Impairments

Allport (2003) described a friend as someone you have a significant mutual relationship with, someone you want to spend time and share experiences with. The majority of young people, together with those with disabilities, reported that friendships were a key aspect of school life and that negative peer attitudes were generally recognized as being a major barrier to full social inclusion at school for learners with disabilities (Barling, 2000).

On this point of social inclusion, Easter (2011) argues that mainstream schools are not always the best option because, in their current state, they are discriminatory and do not allow full access to the curriculum, resources and perhaps most importantly, friendship networks. Research indicates that learners with disabilities are likely to be

perceived as different, they are more likely to be ostracized, suffer from lack friends, and are bullied when compared with their classmates (Easter, 2011).

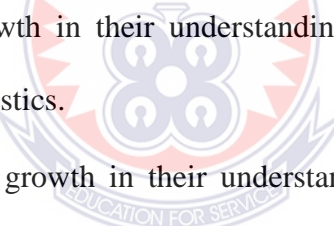
According to Shapiro (2009), attitude refers to a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some favour or disfavours. This definition shows the link between attitude and one's evaluation of a given object or state of being. In the case of visually impaired students, they have the internal self-construct, which makes them have a certain psychological tendency of what other peoples' attitude is towards their state of being visually impaired. This has always influenced the way visually impaired students behave towards the sighted students and vice versa.

Traditionally, the general attitude for the visually impaired people in many societies had negative connotations. There was a social stigma, an attribute which impedes their social and economic welfare (Stone, 2005). However, the landmark in changing the philosophy and practices towards such people in the society is engulfed in the Salamanca Declaration of 1994.

In the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, every child has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning...those with special needs must have access to regular schools, which should accommodate them within child centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs (UNESCO, 1994). The Kenya Integrated Education Programme picks-up from this declaration, to shift the paradigm from, the traditional attitude towards visually impaired people as incapacitated beings, to viewing them as people with similar potential as their sighted counterparts.

With the recognition of the potential and capabilities of handicapped children, what is needed is to change the existing attitude or the formation of new attitudes (Stone, 2005). This is important because attitude has been one of the greatest impediments towards the integration programme. Those visually impaired students feel ostracized by their sighted counterparts, as manifested in the covert actions of the sighted students. Attitude change should also be holistic, from fellow students to teachers to parents and the society at large towards the visually impaired students.

There is also evidence that the positive effects on the attitudes of non-disabled learners will last over time (Batshaw & Perret, 2001). They further found that the high school learners perceived the following five benefits to their social relationships with peers who had visual impairment:

- 
- **Self-concept:** growth in their understanding and appreciation of their own personal characteristics.
 - **Social cognition:** growth in their understanding of the feelings and beliefs underlying the behaviour of other learners.
 - **Reduced fear of human differences:** reduced anxiety and fear of learners who look different or behave in an unusual fashion and/or increased confidence in their ability to respond appropriately and effectively in interpersonal interactions with such learners.
 - **Tolerance of other learners:** increased acceptance of the feelings, behaviour, and personal limitations of other non-disabled people, including family and friends.

- **Development of personal principles:** relationships with learners with disabilities contribute to reflection and/or action toward the further formation, clarification, or commitment to personal, moral or ethical principles.

Tinto (2007) made an analysis of visually impaired learners' perceptions of social inclusion by family and friends. They argue that, in relation to developing inclusive social practices, informal support from friends is as valid as more formal ideas of citizenship and participation, and as such deserves greater policy development.

Certain environmental factors have been identified as well: family environmental factors, including parental attitudes toward persons with disabilities, socio-economic status, and ethnicity have been indicated to play a major role influencing learners' attitudes toward their peers with disabilities (Friedrich, 2001). Garbarino (2002) also identified alienation and anxiety as important correlates of negative attitudes towards persons with visual impairment. In most of their studies, Hogg and Vaughan (2002) found that learners attitudes towards peers with visual impairment were negatively biased and in need of improvement.

Attitudes held by the sighted public towards disabilities in general have similar impact on the psychological wellbeing of people with disabilities as on people who are blind. Hazard (cited in Meggie & Edward, 2012) discovered that one deficit in children's knowledge about people with disabilities appeared to be their adherence to the "pathetic" stereotype of the disable person, embodying a view of people with disabilities as different, helpless, and distressed individuals who deserve or desire pity.

2.9 Gender perspectives on Attitude towards Visually Impaired

Gender of abled-students has been reported to play significant role in the formation of attitudes toward disability (Meggie & Edward, 2012). Research suggests that adolescent girls tend to have more positive attitudes toward persons with disability in general than do adolescent boys (Bossaert, Copin, Piljl, & Petry, 2011; Meggie & Edward, 2012). At the collegial level, Chen, Ma, and Zhang (2011) found that Chinese undergraduate males have more negative implicit attitudes toward disability than do undergraduate females. Meggie and Edward (2012) also found marginal gender differences in self-reported attitude towards visual impairment of college undergraduate students, citing cultural norms of nurture among females as probable reasons for the differences. This empirical evidence, made Seo and Chen (2009) to conclude that gender may be one significant factor for predicting attitudes towards disability.

2.10 Summary of Literature Review

Literature has established that sighted students possess negative perception about the integration programmes in schools (Barnes & Mercer, 2005; Easter, 2011). Easter (2011) contends that integration programmes normally creates discriminatory environment for the visually impaired, contributing significantly to the frustration of such students. However, literature is limited to Ghanaian perspectives making it very difficult to empirically ascertain what sighted students perceive of the integration programmes. This study is designed to fill this knowledge gap. Secondly, two fundamental challenges have been espoused in the literature, thus, cultural and religion (Hull, 2001; Werner, 1994) to be the factors militating against the integration programmes.

Moreover, there are negative connotations in the general attitude of sighted students towards students with visual impairment (Stone, 2005; UNESCO, 1994). Gender differences in sighted students' attitude toward students with visual impairment have been established in studies outside Ghana (e.g., Meggie & Edward, 2012; Seo & Chen, 2009). However, little is known in the Ghanaian literature with respect to this phenomenon. There is the need for this study to be conducted to provide empirically supported data to fill this knowledge gap.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of the research methods and procedures used in gathering the data. It covers the research design, the population, the sample size, sampling method, instruments, administration of the research instruments, trustworthiness, data collection procedure and analysis and lastly, ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

This study aimed at examining the attitudes of sighted students towards integration of visually impaired students in Wenchi Methodist Senior High School in Brong Ahafo Region. The study employed the case study approach. According to Rubin & Babbie (2003), a case is a unit of human activity embedded in the real world, which can only be studied or understood in the context, which exists in the here and now. In a case study, the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon (the case) bound by time and activity (a programme, event, practice, socialization process, institution) and collects detailed information by using a variety of data collection procedures during a sustained period of time (Creswell, 2009). The case study was employed to allow for in-depth exploration of sighted students' attitudes towards students with visual impairment in the selected school.

The case study method was chosen since it entails the collection of very extensive data in order to produce an in-depth understanding of the entity being studied (Creswell, 2009). It investigates contemporary phenomenon within a real life context using multiple sources in order to produce a case description and case-based themes

(Creswell, 2009). The objectives of the study made the case study suitable for this study because it focuses on contextual meaning-making rather than generalized rules.

Furthermore, the case study examines the individual or small groups in naturalistic settings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). A naturalistic setting allows the researcher to discover the phenomenon being investigated. In this study, real people and events in real situations and would be observed as well as participants' reaction to naturally occurring events. In a natural setting, human behaviours can be genuinely reflected on and their meanings interpreted in their true perspective (Rubin & Babbie, 2003). This research sought to understand why among other reasons, the participants behaved the way they did in relation to their attitude towards visually impaired students. They had their own reasons for their behaviour in relation to issue under investigation.

With regard to the research approach, the study followed the qualitative research approach. According to Amin (2005), qualitative research involves studying things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. This approach was considered important in this study because it helped the investigator to study deeper the visual students' attitude towards visual impairments students. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) emphasize that in empirical study, the qualitative approach is well suited for the difficult task of representing groups out-side the mainstream setting.

3.2 Population of the Study

Population is defined as the larger group upon which a researcher wishes to generalize: it includes members of a defined class of people, events or objects (Kothari, 2004). Creswell (2009) has indicated that population is the sum aggregate or

totality of the phenomena of interest to the researcher. The target population of this study included all sighted students in the third-year class of Wenchi Methodist Senior High School with an estimated population of 148 students.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

According to Kothari (2004), when a representative set of cases from a much larger set is selected for the study, the process is termed sampling. In this study, purposive sampling, which involves selecting subjects based on purpose of the study and the characteristics of the population (sighted students) under study. This sample technique was used to select 80 sighted students for the study. Though the use of purposive sampling has been criticised for increasing biasness in results, the technique was chosen because it prevented unnecessary and irrelevant items entering into the sample per chance and it was less costly and less time consuming.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

The task of data collection begins at once after a research problem and research design has been clear (Kothari, 2004). In this study, questionnaire method of data collection was used.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

Open and close-ended question items were constructed to collect information from the sighted students. The question items were prepared in English and developed using Likert-type five-point rating scales. The five points were weighed according to the degree of agreements: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Not Sure (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1).

The researcher used questionnaire because of its advantages namely; easy to administer on a large population which is largely literate, sighted students who were the main respondents are literate. Questionnaires require less time and money compared to other methods like focus group discussions.

On the other hand, a questionnaire requires some level of expertise to develop. Some respondents may not be honest in their answers thereby distorting the overall findings of the study. Also, some respondents may not fully understand some aspects of the questions while some may misinterpret the question as the researcher may not be around to clarify or respond to respondents' queries. Another setback to questionnaire is that participation on the part of respondents is voluntary so many people may refuse to complete the questionnaire while some may not return completed questionnaires. The questionnaires contained items on a Likert-type scale. All of the questions were closed-ended.

Questionnaire for the respondents had five sections, i.e., Section A, B, C, and D. Section "A" collected data on respondents' background information. Section "B" had 7 items that collect data on the attitudes of sighted students towards those with visual impairment. Section "C" collected data on the challenges experienced by both sighted and visually impaired students in the inclusive setting. This section had consisted of 7 items. Section "D" collects data on sighted students' attitude towards inclusion. It consisted of 8 items. All of the questions were of 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The questionnaire obtained satisfactory Cronbach Alpha of 0.79.

3.4.2 Pre-testing of Instrument

The researcher pre-tested the instrument using 30 sighted students at Okuapeman Senior High School to ensure the correct information was obtained in relationship with the objectives of the study. The questionnaire content, structure, sequence, meaning of questions was appropriately designed. No ambiguities were raised. The pilot study helped the researcher to make advancement on data collection instruments and to have a summary of what was important in the study (Kalof, Dan & Dietz, 2008).

3.5 Validity and Reliability of Instrument

The study instrument was content-validated. Creswell (2009) posits that content validity is determined by expert judgment. My supervisor scrutinized the instrument to find out whether it addressed all the possible areas that were intended to measure, ensured its appropriateness, completeness and accuracy. They were relied upon to determine whether items in the instrument were adequate representation of all the areas that were under investigation.

Reliability refers to the consistency of the instruments in tapping information from more than one respondent. A pre-testing was conducted at Okuapeman Senior High School that was not part of the study. Thirty (30) sighted students were selected to participate in this pre-test. The purpose of the pre-test was to remove ambiguities, and unnecessary items in the questionnaire. Pilot testing of the questionnaire helped to unearth the face and content validity and reliability of the questions in measuring what it was intended. The questionnaire was then amended accordingly for use in the field. The refining of the items in the questionnaire was intended to make the items very simple for the respondents to understand so that they could provide the

appropriate response to the items. The pre-test also gave a fair idea of the responses to be obtained from the field. The responses were fed into the SPSS version 22.0 and run the reliability analysis to obtain the overall Cronbach Alpha of 0.79 for the questionnaire.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Structured questionnaires containing close ended questions were administered to respondents. This was done during school days between 10am – 2:00pm. The researcher visited the selected school and interacted with the headmaster and with the head's assistants, the researcher appointed a research assistant. The researcher grouped students who were selected to participate in the study and administered the questionnaire to them. After administering the instruments, particularly the student questionnaires, the researcher collected them so that students could not discuss and modify their responses.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedures

After sorting out the questionnaires, the data were computed and analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. In analysing the data, items on the various sections of the questionnaire were used to answer each research question. The demographic characteristics of the respondents (e.g. gender, age and living status) were descriptively analysed and presented in simple frequency counts and percentages.

Research question 1 which sought to determine the perception of sighted students toward visually impaired students was answered using the respondents' responses to section "B" of the questionnaire. The responses were descriptively analysed (in

frequency and percentages). Research question 2, which examined the challenges of sighted students in an integrated school environment was answered using the responses to section “C” of the respondents’ questionnaire. Simple frequency counts and percentages were appropriately utilised. Research question 4, which found the attitude of sighted students towards peers with visual impairment was answered using section “D” of the respondents’ questionnaire. The analysis was done using frequency counts and percentages. Finally, for research question 4, all the items under section “D” of the respondents’ questionnaire were collapsed to form a single construct, “Attitude”. Thereafter, an independent sample t-test was run to examine whether male and female sighted students hold different attitudes toward students with visual impairments. The alpha-level was pecked at 0.05 for acceptance of critical value and for objective interpretation of results.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The research methods describe the procedures used to collect and analyse the data. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) state that researchers need to be sensitive to ethical principles regarding informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy and being considerate of the participants. Accordingly, in this study, the researcher developed a scenario that elicited the cooperation, trust, openness and acceptance of the subjects as well as providing ethical protection of the subjects as discussed in the next section.

3.8.1 Informed Consent

The researcher obtained informed consent from all the participants by means of a dialogue, during which each participant was informed of the purpose of the study and also assured of the confidentiality of the data obtained and the anonymity of the

respondents (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). In accordance with the suggestions of Bryman (2008), the participants were provided with adequate information regarding:

- The procedures to be followed during the research.
- The possible advantages and disadvantages of participating in the investigation.
- The credibility of the researcher.

Additionally, the researcher was sensitive to the participants' readiness to share their information. After obtaining their consent, he made it clear to the participants that they were free to withdraw from the investigation at any time they wished to do so. This enabled them to make voluntary, informed and carefully considered decisions concerning their participation.

3.8.2 Anonymity and confidentiality

The participants were assured of anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses. Thus, settings such as the schools and personal details of the participants would not be identifiable in print. McMillan & Schumacher (2006) recommend the use of code names for people and places as a common practice employed by researchers and, accordingly, this practice was employed in this study to ensure anonymity.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two major sections. The first section provides the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The second section presents the results and discussions to the research questions.

4.1 Response Rate

The researcher distributed surveys 80 to the participants and 75 of them were returned. This implies that 75 surveys were usable, representing a response rate of 93.8%. Creswell (2009) posited that a response rate of 60% is acceptable in descriptive social sciences; Babbie (2010) set the adequacy bar at 75%. Based on these assertions, the response rate of 93.8% was very good. The high response could be attributed to self-administration of the questionnaire.

4.2. SECTION A – Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics sought from the respondents include gender, age and living statuses.

Table 4.1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	38	50.7
Female	37	49.3
Total	75	100

The gender distribution of respondents as indicated in Table 4.1 revealed that 38 (50.7%) male and 37 (49.3%) female participated in the study. This data was used to

estimate the gender differences in reported attitude of sighted students towards the visually impaired students. The age distribution of the respondents was also investigated. Table 4.2 illustrates the age distribution of the respondents.

Table 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 18 years	22	29.3
18 – 20 years	39	52
21+ years	14	18.7
Total	75	100

Table 4.2 shows the age group of the respondents. The dominant age group of the students ranged between 18–20 years representing 39 (52%), followed by age group less than 18 years representing 22(29.3%) whereas 21 and above made up the smallest group, representing 14 (18.7%) of the students. The living statuses of the respondents were also investigated. The result is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Distribution of Students' Living Statuses

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Mother only	26	34.7
Father only	8	10.7
Both Parents	34	45.3
Other Relatives	7	9.3
Total	75	100

With regard to respondents living status, Table 4.3 indicates that 26 (34.7%) reported that they stayed with their mothers only, 8 (10.7%) indicated that they stayed with their fathers only, 34 (45.3%) reported that they stayed with both parents while 7 (9.3%) indicated that stayed with other relatives.

SECTION B – ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS**4.3 Analysis of Research Question One****What are the sighted students' perceptions towards the integration programme?**

The research question sought to examine the perception of sighted students towards the integration programme in the Wenchi Methodist Senior High School. Responses to items in Section B of the respondents' questionnaire were used for the analysis and responses are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Sighted students' Perception towards the Integration Programme

Statements	SD	D	N/S	A	SA
I support the integration of visually impaired students into regular classes	10(13.3)*	17(22.7)	6(8)	21(28)	21(28)
Integrating visually impaired students with sighted students will disrupt class room discipline	3(4.0)	2(2.7)	3(4.0)	15(20.0)	52(69.3)
If visually impaired students are integrated into regular classes, they would get better results in their academic results	7(9.3)	10(13.3)	8(10.7)	30(40.0)	20(26.7)
Integrating visually impaired students into regular class will hinder regular students' education	7(9.3)	15(20)	2(2.7)	27(36)	24(32)
I support the idea that visually impaired students attend their education in a separate special school	10(13.3)	15(20.0)	5(6.7)	21(28.0)	24(32.0)
The integration of visually impaired students into regular classes will increase work load on regular teachers	6(8)	15(20)	8(10.7)	19(25.3)	27(36.0)
If visually impaired students are integrated they would show improvement in their academic	6(8)	9(12)	4(5.3)	21(28)	35(46.7)

* Percentage, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N/S = Not Sure, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Agree

Results in table 4.4 show the respondents' perceptions towards the integration programme in the Wenchi Methodist Senior High School. In the first place, the researcher wanted to find out from the respondents if they support the integration of visually impaired students into regular classes. With this statement, 10 (13.3%) strongly disagreed, 17 (22.7%) disagreed, 6 (8%) were not sure, 21 (28%) agreed while 21 (28%) strongly disagreed.

Again, 3 (4%) strongly disagreed that integrating visually impaired students with sighted students will disrupt class room discipline, 2 (2.7%) disagreed, 3 (4%) were not sure, 15 (20%) agreed while 52 (69.3%) strongly agreed to that statement. Moreover, the wanted to find out from the respondents if visually impaired students are integrated into regular classes, they would get better results in their academic results. With this statement, 7 (9.3%) strongly disagreed, 10 (13.3%) disagreed, 8 (10.7%) were not sure, 30 (40%) agreed while 20 (26.7%) strongly agreed.

The researcher further wanted to find out from the respondents if integrating visually impaired students into regular class will hinder regular students' education. With this statement, 7 (9.3%) strongly disagreed, 15 (20%) disagreed, 2 (2.7%) were not sure, 27 (36%) agreed while 24 (32%) strongly agreed. Moreover, the researcher wanted to find out from the respondents if they support the idea that visually impaired students attend their education in a separate special school. With this statement, 10 (13.3%) strongly disagreed, 15 (20%) disagreed, 5 (6.7%) were not sure, 21 (28%) agreed while 24 (32%) strongly agreed.

Again, researcher further wanted to find out from the respondents if the integration of visually impaired students into regular classes will increase work load on regular

teachers. With this statement, 6 (8%) strongly disagreed, 15 (20%) disagreed, 8 (10.7%) were not sure, 19 (25.3%) agreed while 27 (36%) strongly agreed to the statement. Lastly, the researcher wanted to find out from the respondents if visually impaired students are integrated they would show improvement in their academic performance. With this statement, 6 (8%) strongly disagreed, 9 (12%) disagreed, 4 (5.3%) were not sure, 21 (28%) agreed while 35 (46.7%) strongly agreed to the statement.

In summary, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that integrating visually impaired students with sighted students will disrupt class room discipline. This finding was in line with Rowland and Bell (2012) who noted that teachers highly spend more time with students with visual impairments, and that in turn, creates indiscipline in the classroom. The finding also supports that of Robinson and Lieberman (2004) who claimed that though teachers' high attention on students with visual impairments in classroom improves their classroom participation, the discipline in the entire classroom situation is negatively toughened. Piquart and Pfeiffer (2011) also added that head teachers recognizing students with visual impairments helps to build confidence that in turn improves their performance, yet the classroom turns to be disorganized.

The students with visual impairments need additional efforts and resources in order to be able to benefit substantially from regular education. It could be argued that the absence of itinerant teachers in the school has accounted for this problem. It is the desire of every teacher to see his/her students excel and for that matter, most teachers would spend substantial amount of time on students with disabilities, just to see them succeed socially and academically. However, this special attention given to students

with visual impairments appears to cause substantial damage to classroom discipline and organization as some sighted students tend to be mischievous due to unequal level of attention exhibited by teachers.

Many students with visual impairments spend substantial amount of time on tasks accomplishment as compared to sighted students. The sighted students may perceive extra attention extended to the students with visual impairments as further demonstration of the teachers' favouritism towards other students. This perceived act of favoritism is more likely to degenerate into fidgeting, irritability, lack of interest in classroom activities, lack of motivation to accomplish tasks on time, and behavioural problems among the sighted students.

4.4 Analysis of Research Question Two

What are the challenges facing the sighted students concerning the integration of those with visual impairment?

This section of the research question was meant to determine the challenges facing the sighted students concerning the integration of those with visual impairment in the regular schools. The respondents' responses to the items on section "C" of the questionnaire were recorded in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Challenges of Sighted students concerning Integration Programme

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
The school does not have physical facilities for students with visual impairment.	10(13.3)*	8(10.7)	4(5.3)	26(34.7)	27(36.0)
The school does not have specially trained teachers to handle students with visual impairment	6(8.0)	11(14.7)	3(4.0)	30(40.0)	25(33.3)
Students with visual impairment have problems in moving from place to place within the school	7(9.3)	6(8.0)	13(17.3)	14(18.7)	34(46.7)
Students with visual impairment have problems with making friends on campus.	9(12.0)	11(14.7)	3(4.0)	30(40.0)	22(29.3)
Teachers usually neglect the needs of the students with visual impairment in class	4(5.3)	6(8.0)	3(4.0)	20(26.7)	42(56.0)
Students with visual impairment usually feel lonely and less integrated	6(8.0)	7(8.0)	2(2.7)	27(36.0)	34(45.3)
Students with visual impairment are always caught up with time while doing assignment	6(8.0)	2(2.7)	3(4.0)	40(53.3)	24(32.0)

* Percentage, SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N/S=Not Sure, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

Table 4.5 shows the respondents' views on the challenges facing the sighted students concerning the integration of those with visual impairment in the regular schools. The respondents were asked if the school does not have physical facilities for students with visual impairment. With this statement, 10 (13.3%) strongly disagreed, 8 (10.7%) disagreed, 4 (5.3%) were not sure, 26 (34.7%) agreed while 27 (36%) strongly agreed. The researcher wanted to find out from the respondents if the school does not have specially trained teachers to handle students with visual impairment and 6 (8%) strongly disagreed, 11 (14.7%) disagreed, 3 (4%) were not sure, 30 (40%) agreed while 25 (33.3%) strongly agreed to this statement. Moreover, the wanted to find out from the respondents if students with visual impairment have problems in moving from place to place within the school and 7 (9.3%) strongly disagreed, 6 (8%)

disagreed, 13 (17.3%) were not sure, 14 (18.7%) agreed while 34 (46.7%) strongly agreed to the statement.

Again, the researcher wanted to find out from the respondents if students with visual impairment have problems with making friends on campus. With this statement, 9 (12%) strongly disagreed, 11 (14.7%) disagreed, 3 (4%) were not sure, 30 (40.0%) agreed while 22 (29.3%) strongly agreed. In addition, the researcher further wanted to find out from the respondents if teachers usually neglect the needs of the students with visual impairment in class. With this statement, 4 (5.3%) strongly disagreed, 6 (8%) disagreed, 3 (4.0%) were not sure, 20 (26.7%) agreed while 42 (56%) strongly agreed.

Moreover, the researcher wanted to find out from the respondents if students with visual impairment usually feel lonely and less integrated. With this statement, 6 (8%) strongly disagreed, 7 (8%) disagreed, 2 (2.7%) were not sure, 27 (36.0%) agreed while 34 (45.3%) strongly agreed. Lastly, the researcher wanted to find from the respondents that if students with visual impairment are always caught up with time while doing assignment in class and 6 (8%) strongly disagreed, 2 (2.7%) disagreed, 3 (4%) were not sure, 40 (53.3%) agreed while 24 (32%) strongly agreed.

In summary, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that teachers usually neglect the needs of the students with visual impairments in class. This finding was in line with Hsien (2007) who noted that teachers strongly exhibit negative feelings towards learners with visual impairment and felt that most teachers were out of touch with classroom realities with learners who are visually impaired. The finding also supports that of Mastropieri and Scruggs (2010) who claimed that one of the reasons for a lot of students with visual impairments not able to maintain in regular class depends crucially on the negative attitudes of teachers towards them. The authors concluded

that teacher attitudes have been identified as being important to the success of any mainstreaming program.

Teachers' negative attitudes towards students with visual impairments not only set the tone for the relationship between teachers and their students who are visually impaired, but they also substantially influence the attitudes of classmates who are non-visually impaired. Attitudes and knowledge teachers have concerning students with visual impairments are highly influential in determining the social, intellectual, psychological and emotional problems of students and also determine the amount of support to give to the students with visual impairments.

4.5 Research Question Three

What are the attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment?

This research question was designed to determine the attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment in the Wenchi Methodist Senior High School and their responses to section "D" of the questionnaire are presented in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Attitudes of Sighted students towards students with Visual Impairment

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
I will not like to have a friendship with a visually impaired student	9(12)	19(25.3)	10(13.3)	26(34.7)	11(14.7)
I like to play with visually impaired students in my spare time	12(16)	25(33.3)	17(22.7)	13(17.3)	8(10.7)
If visually impaired students are assigned in my class, I will accept them positively	22(29.3)	21(28)	14(18.7)	15(20)	3(4)
Visually impaired students are helpless and incapable of performing the tasks required for day to day living	3(4)	12(16)	6(8)	12(16)	42(56)
I believe that sighted people will become visually impaired if they touch or shake hands with a visually impaired person	39(52)	21(28)	9(12)	2(2.7)	4(5.3)
I believe that visually impaired people possess extra or special powers that sighted people do not have	13(17.3)	16(21.3)	8(10.7)	15(20)	23(30.7)
I believe that visually impaired people can judge better than sighted people	14(18.7)	12(16)	9(12)	16(21.3)	24(32)

* Percentage, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N/S = Not Sure, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Table 4.6 shows the respondents' views on the attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment in the Wenchi Methodist Senior High School. The respondents were asked if they will not like to have a friendship with a visually impaired student. With this statement, 9 (12%) strongly disagreed, 19 (25.3%) disagreed, 10 (13.3%) were not sure, 26 (34.7%) agreed while 11 (14.7%) strongly

agreed. The researcher wanted to find out from the respondents if they like to play with visually impaired students in my spare time and 12 (16%) strongly disagreed, 25 (33.3%) disagreed, 17 (22.7%) were not sure, 13 (17.3%) agreed while 8 (10.7%) strongly agreed. Furthermore, the researcher wanted to find out from the respondents if visually impaired students are assigned in my class, they will accept them positively and 22 (29.3%) strongly disagreed, 21 (28%) disagreed, 14 (18.7%) were not sure, 15 (20%) agreed while 3 (4%) strongly agreed.

In addition, the researcher wanted to find out from the respondents if visually impaired students are helpless and incapable of performing the tasks required for day to day living and 3 of the respondents representing 4% strongly disagreed, 12 (16%) disagreed, 6 (8%) were not sure, 12 (16%) agreed while 42 (56%) strongly agreed. Moreover, the researcher wanted to find out from the respondents if they believe that sighted people will become visually impaired if they touch or shake hands with a visually impaired person and 39 of the respondents representing 52% strongly disagreed, 21 (28%) disagreed, 9 (12%) were not sure, 2 (2.7%) agreed while 4 (5.3%) strongly agreed.

Again, the researcher wanted to find out from the respondents if they believe that visually impaired people possess extra or special powers that sighted people do not have and 13 of the respondents representing 17.3% strongly disagreed, 16 (21.3%) disagreed, 8 (10.7%) were not sure, 15 (20%) agreed while 23 (56%) strongly agreed. Lastly, the wanted to find out from the respondents if they believe that visually impaired people can judge better than sighted people and 14 of the respondents representing 18.7% strongly disagreed, 12 (16%) disagreed, 9 (12%) were not sure, 16 (21.3%) agreed while 24 (32%) strongly agreed.

In summary, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that visually impaired students are helpless and incapable of performing the tasks required for day to day living. This finding support that of Heward (2000) who noted that traditionally, the general attitude for the visually impaired people in many societies had negative connotations and concluded that there was a social stigma, an attribute which impedes their social and economic welfare. Bishop (2006) added that such situation had made the visually impaired helpless and dejected that affects their schooling.

The finding was in line with Kelley and Gale (2008) who noted that students exhibit negative towards learners with visual impairments that made it hard for them to meet their educational needs. Students with visual impairments in Wenchi Methodist Senior High School appear to face attitudinal barriers from sighted colleagues and these are commonly reflected in labeling, misunderstanding people's rights and opportunities, and misconceptions. It could be deduced that sighted students, most at times, are neither learning-friendly nor responsive to the diversity of needs and abilities among students who are visually impaired, thereby making their learning experiences in the regular school extremely difficult.

4.6 Research Question Four

What are the gender differences about attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment?

Objective of this research question aimed at determining the gender differences about attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment. The respondent's responses are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: T-test of attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment

Attitude/Gender	N	M	SD	<i>df</i>	<i>t_value</i>	Sig.
Male	38	2.81	0.63	73	-2.460	0.016
Female	37	3.12	0.43			

The result indicates that there is statistically significant mean differences in the attitude of sighted male and female students towards students with visual impairments ($t = -2.460$, $df = 73$, $p = 0.016$). This finding is in line with Vogel, Wade and Haake (2006) who indicated that there are gender differences on attitude towards visually impaired. They further noted that girls scored higher than boys and concluded that most boys misbelieve about touching visual people (e.g. sighted persons will become blind if they touch or shake hands with a blind person).

The findings further confirmed similar studies by Chen, et al. (2011) among Chinese college students. Bossaert, et al. (2011) suggest that adolescent girls tend to have more positive attitudes toward persons with disability in general than do adolescent boys (Meggie & Edward, 2012), also found slightly higher gender differences in self-reported attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairments. Indeed, gender may predict attitude of sighted students towards peers with visual impairments.

However, the findings produced some contradictory findings. For instance, Southall and Wittich (2012) who found out that girls highly discriminate towards students with visual impairments as compared to boys and concluded that such discrimination affects students with visual impairments in a variety of ways. The authors further

concluded that students who are not aware of the implications of visual impairments are not able to assist students with visual impairments in their educational opportunities that will lead them to successful academic and social experiences.

It could be reasoned that females have innate affection for people irrespective of disability and would like to offer the needed assistance when the need arises due to the nature of their socialization tendencies. For instance, right from infancy, girls are taught to take care of younger siblings and in most cases the home, when the mother is absent. This socialisation process inculcates in girls the culture of nurturing attitude, making them to easily accept peers with visual impairment.

Males, on the other hand, tend to have judgmental personality that enables them to easily discriminate on the grounds of disability or chronic conditions. Traditionally, disabilities are seen as a punishment from the deity and those possessing such conditions are considered as unclean and imbecile. Males with strong egoistic tendency would appear more skeptical about their involvement with persons with disability such as visual impairment for being tag as unclean or imbecile.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the study, which is to determine the attitude of sighted students towards integration of visually impaired students in Wenchi Methodist Senior High School in Brong Ahafo Region. This chapter includes the summary of the research findings, and conclusions from the results and finally the recommendations for further studies.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study attempted to determine the attitude of sighted students towards integration of visually impaired students in Wenchi Methodist Senior High School in Brong Ahafo Region. The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What are the sighted students' perceptions towards the integration programme?
2. What are the challenges facing the sighted students concerning the integration of those with visual impairment?
3. What are the attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment?
4. What are the gender differences about attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment?

The following findings were arrived at in the present study:

1. The first research question which determined sighted students' perception towards the integration programme at the Wenchi Methodist Senior High School revealed that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that integrating visually impaired students with sighted students will disrupt classroom discipline. This because the visually impaired students are more likely to drag the progress of the class back, giving some sighted students to misbehave in class.
2. The second research question examined the challenges facing the sighted students concerning the integration of those with visual impairment in the regular schools revealed that majority of the respondents strongly agreed teachers usually neglect the needs of the students with visual impairment in class.
3. The research question three sought to find out the attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment at the Wenchi Methodist Senior High School revealed that majority of respondents strongly agreed that visually impaired students are helpless and incapable of performing the tasks required for day to day living.
4. Lastly, research question four examined the gender differences about attitudes of sighted students towards students with visual impairment. It emerges that females have more positive attitude towards students with visual impairment than their male counterparts.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded integrating students with visual impairment with those sighted under the same learning environment would suffer a great deal if the perception and attitude of sighted students towards students with visual impairment remain unchanged. Another plausible conclusion from this study is that most sighted students are apathetic to the plight of the visually impaired and wish that these students receive special tuition in special schools rather than in the regular education. This apathetic feeling may emanate from lack of necessary learning and teaching materials for the different student categories. Integration has reduced to a greater extent stigmatization of the visually impaired students in regular classroom.

5.3 Recommendations

The study recommends among other things;

1. The school authorities and the guidance team should organise disability sensitization programme in the school to orient non-disability students on the causes of disability. When this is done, non-disabled students would appreciate the unique personality of visually impaired students.
2. Teachers should assign group work where the visually impaired student is made the leader of the group. Both the sighted students and visually impaired learners ought to work cooperatively.
3. There should be open policy of education for all children, law of education and law of disabled students.
4. The teachers of learners with visual impairment should be made aware of the importance of concentrating more on children with visual impairment as well as making them active participants in class.

5. The Ministry of Education should widen the integrated education program for students with visual impairment to be implemented in more schools, especially in the rural areas. This is because such program is crucial in enhancing livelihood of the visually impaired students, as well as creating a positive public image towards children with disabilities (Korir, 2015).
6. The government through Ministry of Education should ensure that it provides teachers with special education on visual impairment to all integrated schools. This will enhance the acquisition of visual efficiency skills by the student, which is an essential element in their education (Korir, 2015).

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

The areas suggested by the study for further research include:

1. Similar studies can be carried out in other inclusive primary schools so that the findings can be compared and generalizations be made.
2. Attitudes of Teachers towards Inclusive Education
3. The present study, focused on sighted students, the future study is recommended to focus of teachers and visually impaired students

5.5 Limitations

The major limitation of the study was the sample size used for study. A larger sample would have captured the views of more students to increase the representation of respondents in the study. Though the sample size was small, the findings reflected the true situations in Wenchi Methodist Senior High School. Another weakness was that the findings reflected only what each respondent chose to report. Hence it is possible that respondents may provide answers that put them in a more favourable position. To

minimize the incidence of this, the instrument clearly stipulates anonymity and confidentiality and this was echoed during the data gathering process.



REFERENCES

- Allport, C. L. (2003). *Individual and society*. New York: McGraw Hill Inc.
- Amin, M. E. (2005). *Social science research: Conception, methodology and analysis*. Uganda, Kampala, Makerere University.
- Arum, R., Beattie, I. R., & Ford, K. (Eds). (2011). *The structure of schooling: Readings in the sociology of education*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Babbie, E. (2010). *The practice of social research*. Belmont, CA; Wadsworth.
- Badley, E. M. (2008). Enhancing the conceptual clarity of the activity and participation components of the international classification of functioning, disability and health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 66(11), 233-2345.
- Ballard, K. (2005). Inclusion, paradigms, power and participation. In C. Clark, A. Dyson, & A. Millward (Eds.), *Towards inclusive schools?* (pp. 1-14). London: David Fulton Publishers.
- Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*. 52(4), 1-26.
- Barling, J. (2000). *Employment, stress and family functioning*. New York: Wiley.
- Barnes, C., & Mercer, G. (2005). Disability, work and welfare: Challenging the social exclusion of disabled people. *Work, Employment and Society*, 19(3), 527-543.
- Barton, E. (2007). Disability narratives of the law: Narrative and counter narratives. *Narrative*, 15(1), 95-112.
- Barton, L. (2005). The politics of education for all. *Support for Learning*, 10(4), 156-160.
- Batshaw, M. D., & Perret Y. P. (2001). *Children with handicaps: A medical primer*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bell, E. C. (2010). Mentoring transition age youth with blindness. *The Journal of Special Education*, 20(1), 1-11.
- Bishop, V. E. (2006). *Teaching visually impaired children* (2nd Ed.). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

- Bossaert, G., Colpi, H., Pijl, S. J., & Petry, K. (2011). The attitudes of Belgian adolescents towards peers with disabilities. *Research in Developmental Disabilities, 32*(2), 504-509.
- Bryman, A. (2008). *Social research methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chappell, L. C., Goodley, D., & Lawthorn, R. (2001). Making connections: The relevance of the social model of disability for people with learning difficulties. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities, 29*, 45-50.
- Chen, S., Ma, L., & Zhang, J. (2011). Chinese undergraduates' explicit and implicit attitudes toward persons with disabilities, *Rehabilitation Counselling Bulletin, 55*(1), 38-45.
- Cialdini, R. B. (2001). *Influence: Science and practice* (4th Ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Coleridge, F. (2003). *Home environment and the school*. London: University of London Press Ltd.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods approaches*. (3rd Ed.). Los Angeles: Sage Publication, Inc.,
- Crow, L. (2002). *Including all our lives: Renewing the social model of disability*.
- Deku, P., & Gyimah, E. (2014). *Educating the special individual*. College of Distance Education, University of Cape Coast: Paramount Printing Works Limited.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Diana, P. C. (2008). *Foundation of disability awareness*, California, University of San Diego.
- Eagly, A. H., Chaiken, S. (2003). *The psychology of attitudes*. New York NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Producers
- Easter, S. (2011). Living with disabilities. *Journal of Rehabilitation, 44*, 31-33.
- Eiser, J. R. (2004). *Attitudes, chaos and the connectionist mind*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Evans, K. M. (2005). *Attitudes and interest in education*. London: Routledge and Keg and Paul.

- Fazio, R. H. (2006). How do attitudes guide behaviour? In R. M. Sorrentino & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *The handbook of motivation and cognition: Foundations of social behaviour* (pp. 204-243). New York: Guilford Press.
- Ferguson, D. L. (2008). International trends in inclusive education: The continuing challenge to teach each one and everyone. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 23 (2), 109- 120.
- Fisher, P., & Goodley, D. (2007). The linear medical model of disability: Mothers of disabled babies resist with counter narratives. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 29(1), 66-82.
- Friedrich, W. L. (2001). Psychology aspects of handicapped children: *American Journal*, 12(4), 102-105.
- Fritzon, A. (2001). *People with disabilities in the bible: Who are they and what can we learn from them. Justice, peace and creation echoes*. Geneva: World Council of Churches.
- Garbarino, J. (2002). *Children and families in the social environment*. New York: Aldine.
- Hall, J. M. (2001). *Do you think I am stupid? Justice, peace and creation echoes*. Geneva: World Council of Churches.
- Haug, P. (2006). *Understanding inclusive education. The example of Norway*. Volda University College.
- Heider, F (2006). Attitude and cognitive organizations. *Journal of Psychology*, 21, 107 – 112.
- Heward, W. L. (2000). *Exceptional children: An introduction to special education*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hogg, M., & Vaughan, G. (2002). *Social psychology* (3rd Ed.) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hsien, M. L. (2007). Teacher attitudes towards preparation for inclusion in support of a unified teacher preparation programme. *Journal of Educational Research*, 8(1) 49-60.
- Jung, C. G. (2006). Two essays on analytical psychology. *Collected Works*, 7. New York.

- Kaino, L. M. (2001). *Students attitudes and interaction in learning mathematics in Botswana junior secondary schools*. Gaborone: University of Botswana Press.
- Kalof, L., Dan, A. & Dietz, T. (2008). *Essentials of social research*. England: Open Univ. Press.
- Karangwa, E. (2003). *Challenging the exclusion of Blind students in Rwanda*. Kigali, EENET.
- Kelley, P., & Gale, G. (2008). *Towards excellence: Effective education for students with vision impairments*. Sydney: North Rocks Press.
- Kett, M., Lang, R., & Trani, J. (2009). Disability, development and dawning of a new convention: A cause for optimism? *Journal of International Development*, 22.
- Kirk, S. A., & Gallagher, J. J. (2008). *Educating exceptional children*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Knouwds, T. (2010). *Including learners with visual impairments in a Namibian mainstream secondary school*. Dissertation (Master of Education)- Stellenbosch University.
- Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology. Methods and techniques* (2nd Ed.). Wishwa: Prakashan.
- Mastropieri, M. A., & Scruggs, T. E. (2010). *The inclusive classroom: Strategies for effective instruction* (4th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall
- McLeod, S. A. (2014). *Attitude and behaviour*. Retrieved from www.simplypsychology.org/attitudes.html.
- McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2001). *Research in education: A conceptual introduction* (5th Ed.). New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2006). *Research in education: Evidence-based inquiry*. (6th Ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Meggie, P. R., & Edward C. B. (2012). Measuring the attitudes of sighted college students towards blindness. *Journal of Blindness Innovation and Research*, 2(2).
- Ministry of Education. (2015). *Inclusive education policy*. Government of Ghana, retrieved from www.gov.gh, on 23/10/2017.

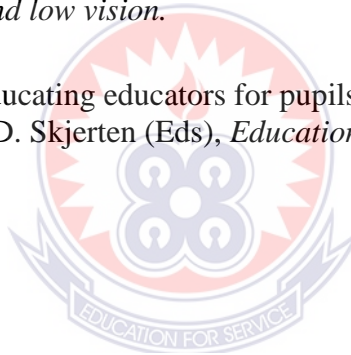
- Mittler, P. (2000). *Working towards inclusive education: Social context*. London: David Fulton Publishers
- Mowes, A. D. (2002). Key aspects of inclusion in practice. In L. Mostert and C.D. Kasanda. (Eds.), *Education in Namibia: A collection of essays*. (pp.1-20) Windhoek. University of Namibia Publishers
- Mulvany, J. (2000). Disability, impairment or illness? The relevance of the social model of disability to the study of mental disorder. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 22(5), 582-601.
- Ocloo, M. K. (2002). *Effective education of persons with visual impairment in Ghana*. Cape Coast: Primrod Press.
- Officer, A., & Groce, N. E. (2009). Disability: Beyond the medical model. *Disability and Health Journal*, 374(9704), 1795-1796.
- Oliver, M., & Barnes, C. (2008). *Disabled people and social policy: From Exclusion to inclusion*. Harlow: Longman.
- Oskemp, S. (2004). *Applied social psychology*. Upper saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Peters, S. J. (2003). *Inclusive education: Achieving education for all by including those with disabilities and special education needs*. Paper presented at World Bank.
- Pinquart, M., & Pfeiffer, J. P. (2011). Psychological well-being in visually impaired and unimpaired individuals: A meta-analysis. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 29(1), 27-45.
- Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25632347> on 21/03/2017.
- Rieser, R. (2002). *Medical and social model of disability*. [Http// inclusion. Uwe. Ac. Uk/ inclusion week/ articles/ socmod. Html](http://inclusion.uwe.ac.uk/inclusionweek/articles/socmod.html). Retrieved on 24th May 2017.
- Robinson, B. L., & Lieberman, L. J. (2004). Effects of visual impairment, gender, and age on self-determination. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 98(6), 351-366.
- Rowland, M. P., & Bell, E. C. (2012). Measuring the attitudes of sighted college students toward blindness. *Journal of Blindness Innovation and Research*, 2(2).
- Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (2003). *Research methods for social work* (2nd Ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

- Seo, W., & Chen, R. K. (2009). Attitudes of college students toward people with disabilities. *Journal of Applied Rehabilitation Counselling*, 40(4), 3-8.
- Shapiro, A. (2009). *Everybody belongs: Changing negative attitudes toward classmates with disabilities*. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.
- Skrtic, T. M. (2001). The special education paradox: Equity as the way to excellence. *Harvard Educational Review*, 61(2), 148-206.
- Southall, K., & Wittich, W. (2012). Barriers to low vision rehabilitation: A qualitative approach. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 106(5), 261-274.
- Spungin, S. J. (2002). *When you have a visually impaired student in your classroom: A guide for teachers*. New York. AFB Press.
- Stone, J. H. (2005). *Culture and disability: providing culturally competent services*. California: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Tawiah, A. (2016). *Inclusive education for all children*. Retrieved from <http://www.graphic.com.gh> on
- Terzi, L. (2004). The social model of disability: A philosophical critique. *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 21(2), 7-9.
- Terzi, L. (2010). *Justice and Equality in education: A capability perspective on disability and special educational needs* (Ed.). New York: Continuum.
- Thomas, G., Walker, D., & Webb, J. (2008). *The making of inclusive school*. London: Routledge.
- Tinto, V. (2007). Classrooms as communities. Exploring the educational character of student persistence. *Journal of Higher Education*, 68(6), 600-623.
- Tirosh, E. (2007). Children's attitude toward peers with disabilities, *Developmental medicine and child neurology*, 39(12), 811-814.
- Tirussew T, Savolainen, H., Agdew R. & Danail, D. (1995). *Baseline survey on disabilities in Ethiopia*. IER: AAU
- Tooze, D. (2001). *Independence training for visually handicapped children*. London: Croomhelm.
- UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education*. Salamanca: Spain.

UNESCO. (2005). *Guidelines for inclusion: Ensuring access to education for all*.
Paris: UNESCO.



- Vandeyar, S. (2003). The jagged paths to multicultural education: international experiences and South Africa's response in the new dispensation. *Faculty of Education, University of Winneba*, A., & Babbie, E. (2003), *Research Methods for Social Work (2nd Ed.)*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Vogel, D. L., Wade, N. G. & Haake, S. (2006). Measuring the self-stigma associated with seeking psychological help. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 53(3), 325-337.
- Werner, D. (1994). *Disabled Village Children: A Guide for Community Health Workers, Rehabilitation Workers and Families*. Palo Alto: Hesperian Foundation.
- Wittenstein, S. H. & Sovin, J. M. (2006). Students who are blind or visually impaired. In B.L Genber & D. M, Guay, (Eds), *Research and teaching students with special needs through art* (pp. 127-137). Reston, Virginia: National Art Education Association.
- World Health Organization (2011). *WHO/PBL eye examination record for children with blindness and low vision*.
- Wormnaes, S. (2001). Educating educators for pupils with special needs. In B. H. Johnsen and M. D. Skjerten (Eds), *Education special needs: An introduction*. Oslo: Pub.



APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY LETTER



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

✉ P. O. Box 25, Winneba, Ghana

✉ sped@uew.edu.gh

☎ +233 (020) 2041069

August 18, 2017

THE HEADMASTER
WENCHI METHODIST SHS
P. O. Box 88
WENCHI - BRONG AHAFO

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I write to introduce to you, Daniel Oteng an M. ED student of the Department of Special Education, University of Education, Winneba with the registration number 7150150004.

He is currently working on his thesis on the topic: "Sighted students' attitudes towards students with Visual Impairment at Wench Senior High School, Brong Ahafo."

I should be grateful if you could give him the needed assistance to enable him to carry out his research work in your school. This forms part of the requirements to complete his programme.

Counting on your cooperation.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Esau Yao Yekple'.

ESAU YAO YEKPLE (PHD)

AG. HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

HEAD
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION
P. O. Box 25, WINNEBA



APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SIGHTED STUDENTS

Dear Respondent,

I am carrying out a study on the topic “Sighted students’ attitudes towards students with visual impairment”. It would thus be very helpful if you assist by answering the questionnaire as per instructions at the beginning of each section. You are required to provide the most appropriate answer in your opinion. Your responses will be kept confidential. In any case the questionnaire is anonymous. Thank you.

.....

Oteng Daniel

SECTION A: RESPONDENTS’ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Please help me classify your response by supplying the following facts about yourself and your opinion on the raised issues by ticking an appropriate box. There are no right or wrong answers, therefore no particular response is targeted.

1. Gender: Male []. Female [].
2. Age. Less than 18 years []. 18-20 years []. 21 years and above []
3. Living Statuses. Mother only [], Father only []. Both Parents []. Other Relatives []

SECTION B**SIGHTED STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF INTEGRATION PROGRAMME**

Please, respond to the statements by ticking the number of the 5-point scale using the following keys: 5=Strongly Agree (SA), 4=Agree (A), 3=Not Sure (NS), 2= Disagree (D), 1= Strongly Disagree (SD) as sincerely as possible.

Statements	SA	A	NS	D	SD
I support the integration of visually impaired students into regular classes					
Integrating visually impaired students with sighted students will disrupt class room discipline					
If visually impaired students are integrated into regular classes, they would get better results in their academic					
Integrating visually impaired students into regular class will hinder regular students' education					
I support the idea that visually impaired students attend their education in separate special schools					
The integration of visually impaired students into regular classes will increase work load on regular teachers					
If visually impaired students are integrated they would					
Teaching the visually and non- visually impaired students in the same class will help to avoid negative social stigma about visual impairment.					

SECTION C

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY SIGHTED STUDENTS

Please, respond to the statements by ticking the number of the 5-point scale using the following keys: 5=Strongly Agree (SA), 4=Agree (A), 3= Not Sure, 2=Disagree (D), 1=Strongly Disagree (SD) as sincerely as possible.

Statements	SA	A	NS	D	SD
The school does not have physical facilities for students with visual impairment.					
The school does not have specially trained teachers to handle students with visual impairment					
Students with visual impairment have problems in moving from place to place within the school					
Students with visual impairment have problems with making friends on campus.					
Teachers usually neglect the needs of the students with visual impairment in class					
Students with visual impairment usually feel lonely and less integrated.					
Students with visual impairment are always caught up with time while doing assignments in class.					

SECTION D

ATTITUDES OF SIGHTED STUDENTS TOWARDS THOSE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Instruction: Please, respond to the statements by ticking the number of the 5-point scale using the following keys: 5=Strongly Agree (SA), 4=Agree (A), 3 = Not Sure, 2=Disagree (D), 1=Strongly Disagree (SD) as sincerely as possible.

Statements	SA	A	NS	D	SD
I will not like to have a friendship with a visually impaired student.					
I like to play with visually impaired students in my spare time.					
If visually impaired students are assigned in my class, I will accept them positively.					
Visually impaired students are helpless and incapable of performing the tasks required for day to day living.					
I believe that sighted people will become visually impaired if they touch or shake hands with a visually impaired person.					
I believe that visually impaired people possess extra or special powers that sighted people do not have.					
I believe that visually impaired people can judge better than sighted people.					