

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA



**FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY FOR DEAF
AND HARD OF HEARING IN EFFUTU MUNICIPALITY - GHANA**



GLADYS MENSAH

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AND HARD OF HEARING IN EFFUTU MUNICIPALITY - GHANA**



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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

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

Signature.....

Date.....

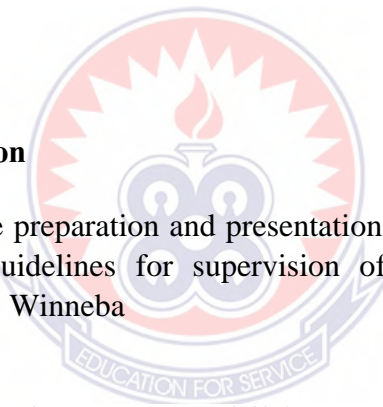
Supervisor's Declaration

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

Name of Supervisor: Prof. Yaw Nyadu Offei.

Signature.....

Date.....



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family for their support and to all who contributed to the success of this work.



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I would like to give all thanks and adoration to the almighty God for fulfilling his promise in my life. I am heartfully thankful to the following people and institutions in my life. Foremost, my sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor, Prof. Yaw Nyadu Offei, whose guidance and supervision helped me throughout my work. Many thanks to my family for the support in diverse ways to ensure my research come into a fruitful end.



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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate barriers to educational continuity and inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality: exploring challenges and opportunities. The study adopted the qualitative approach to research. The qualitative approach is particularly well-suited to research that seeks to explore complex, context-specific phenomena such as the barriers to educational continuity and inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children. A case study design is the most suitable qualitative design for this study. The sample size for this study includes 20 participants in total: 5 parents of deaf and hard of hearing children, 5 teachers, 5 school administrators, and 5 community leaders. The instrument used for data collection is an interview guide. The barriers to school enrollment and retention for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community include inadequate educational infrastructure, a lack of trained teachers, and pervasive negative societal attitudes towards the potential of deaf and hard of hearing children. The lack of appropriate facilities, such as specialised classrooms and teaching aids, combined with insufficient educator training and negative societal perceptions, prevents deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community from accessing quality education. Based on the findings, it is recommended there should be increased investment in the physical infrastructure of schools, including specialized classrooms, assistive technology, and teaching materials.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Education is the most effective means of creating effective human resources and a flourishing society in every nation. Education creates knowledgeable, well-balanced communities and individuals with the knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and values needed to lead healthy lives and successfully contribute to national development (Madani, 2019; UNICEF, 2015). Additionally, education is the cornerstone of global sustainable development, fosters national identity, builds healthy nations and individuals, and provides a strong basis for democracy (Haseena & Mohammed, 2015; Suriyankietkaew & Hallinger, 2019). The inputs, teaching and learning procedures, and results establish the value of education, according to Schindler et al. (2015).

Additionally, the necessity for the international community to fully commit to guaranteeing that its inhabitants have access to basic, high-quality education has been emphasized in a number of international declarations (Syanda-Mutisya, 2010). According to Haseena and Mohammed (2015) and Suriyankietkaew and Hallinger (2019), having access to high-quality education promotes inclusivity, lessens inequality, and advances sustainable development goals. However, the path to educational inclusion and continuity frequently encounters major obstacles for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

International declarations and frameworks like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) have made it a

priority to include children with disabilities, including deaf and hard of hearing children, in mainstream education. These frameworks emphasize that all students should have equal access to education, regardless of their cognitive or physical limitations (Limaye, 2016). However, inclusion for kids who are deaf or hard of hearing goes beyond simple access; it necessitates a setting where they can interact with classmates, teachers, and educational materials in an effective manner. Research shows that children who are deaf or hard of hearing experience a variety of obstacles that prevent them from continuing their education.

Sociocultural stigmatisation, inadequate teacher training, limited access to assistive technologies, and physical infrastructural barriers are among the most significant obstacles (Mprah et al., 2015; Mantey, 2014). Additionally, the lack of effective communication strategies, such as sign language proficiency among teachers and peers, significantly affects the learning experience of these children (Mpofu & Chimhenga, 2013).

The World Bank (2015) estimates that children with disabilities make up 30–40% of the 115 million children who do not attend school worldwide. Children with disabilities make up one-third of the 61 million children who do not attend school, according to UN figures. The biggest percentage of children not attending school is seen in Sub-Saharan Africa (43%) and South and West Asia (27%) (UNESCO, 2007 and 2011). Studies on children with special needs in Ghana (Associates for Change, 2011; CREATE, 2010a; Thurman, 2003; UNESCO, 2010) show that a significant percentage of out-of-school children fall into this category despite efforts to make education more accessible in Ghana.

That is, access to education has become a growing concern for children with special needs. In Ghana, societal perceptions and stigmatisation often isolate children with deaf and hard of hearing. Negative attitudes from educators, peers, and community members diminish their sense of belonging and limit their opportunities for inclusion (Idrissu et al., 2010). This stigmatisation is exacerbated by cultural beliefs that associate disabilities with curses or misfortunes, leading to reluctance among parents to send their deaf and hard-of-hearing children to school (Korboe et al., 2011). Children who are deaf or hard of hearing frequently experience poor enrollment and high dropout rates as a result of these societal hurdles. Teachers are essential to deaf and hard-of-hearing children's educational experiences. However, many educators are ill-prepared to assist these kids due to a lack of specialized training and resources. According to Kipkosgei et al. (2017), a large number of instructors in Ghanaian schools are not trained in inclusive teaching methods and are not proficient in sign language.

This shortfall creates an environment where deaf and hard-of-hearing children struggle to grasp lessons, leading to poor academic performance and high dropout rates. The deaf and hard of hearing also face challenges because of negative and stereotypical attitudes among educators, parents, staff, and colleagues due to a lack of knowledge about and sensitivity to disability issues (Mprah et al.,). The availability and utilization of assistive technologies, such as hearing aids and captioning devices, are critical for the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children. Yet, these resources are often limited in Ghana's educational institutions due to financial constraints and inadequate government funding (Mprah et al., 2015). Additionally, teaching materials and curricula are rarely adapted to meet the needs of deaf and hard of hearing learners, further compounding the challenges they face.

Educational infrastructure in many parts of the Effutu Municipality remains unfriendly to children with deaf and hard of hearing. Schools lack visual aids, accessible classroom layouts, and soundproof facilities that enhance the learning environment for deaf and hard of hearing children (Adams, 2016). Furthermore, the absence of inclusive transport options makes it difficult for many children to commute to and from school. Despite these challenges, several opportunities exist to improve the educational experiences of deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality. Strengthening the enforcement of inclusive education policies, such as Ghana's Inclusive Education Policy (2015), can address systemic gaps. Advocacy efforts focusing on raising awareness about the rights and potential of deaf and hard of hearing children can dismantle cultural stigmas and foster acceptance. Introducing mandatory sign language training and inclusive teaching methodologies for educators can enhance their ability to support deaf and hard of hearing children effectively (Morina, 2017). Equipping schools with affordable assistive devices through partnerships with NGOs and international organizations can also significantly improve the learning experience of these children. Furthermore, digital learning tools that cater to diverse needs should be incorporated into teaching practices. Engaging parents, community leaders, and stakeholders in dialogue about the importance of education for deaf and hard of hearing children can build a supportive ecosystem for their inclusion. Investments in inclusive infrastructure, such as soundproof classrooms and visual learning aids, are equally crucial in enhancing the educational landscape for deaf and hard of hearing children. The barriers to educational continuity and inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality are deeply rooted in societal, institutional, and infrastructural challenges. However, by leveraging policy frameworks, fostering community engagement, and prioritizing

resource allocation, significant strides can be made to create an inclusive educational landscape. This study aims to explore these challenges and opportunities in-depth, contributing to a more inclusive future for deaf and hard-of-hearing children in Ghana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

By giving children with special needs the skills and knowledge they need to actively participate in development, decision-making, and the democratic process, basic education significantly increases their chances of finding employment. When kids can completely engage and gain from their education, it is effective (Ferguson, 2014).

However, the majority of children who are deaf and hard of hearing are among the most disadvantaged in terms of access to and completion of basic school education (Limaye, 2016).

According to Kabuta (2014), children with special needs, as well as deaf and hard-of-hearing children, have limited opportunities to enjoy school surroundings or activities since educational providers have given them less priority. These could be explained by the lack of assistance for people with disabilities, particularly in developing nations, in areas like curricula, educational resources, infrastructure, special programs like sports and games, environmental concerns, and overall educational quality (Kabuta, 2014). Schools are therefore unable to hold them all. Reaching marginalized children with disabilities continues to be one of the primary issues causing the group's widespread exclusion from high-quality education, according to the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (2010) (Macleod, 2014).

According to Chataika (2010), children with special needs also have to deal with issues including cramped classrooms, a shortage of seats, standing room, and bad acoustics. He contends that even during instruction, there are so many students in the classroom—particularly in theater or education classes—that a disabled student who arrives late chooses to remain in the back, where it is extremely difficult to hear the lecturer or teacher. This is a challenging circumstance that has a detrimental effect on the impaired children's academic achievement.

The study by Firmer (2005), which demonstrates that over sixty percent (60%) of children with physical disabilities studying in an unfavorable learning environment fared poorly in their studies as a result of the challenges they faced, is an excellent example. Long walking distances, restricted access to educational resources, and ascending building steps were some of the challenges students faced.

Numerous studies conducted in poor nations like Ghana have consistently found a lack of information regarding basic level education support programs for children with special needs. According to Madriaga (2007), impaired children did not always understand who oversaw evaluating their needs. Additionally, it was unclear what rights and facilities were accessible to them. This had to do with the legal concept of reasonable accommodation. In this way, children with special needs struggle to get ready for higher education in addition to experiencing worry and anxiety.

Having students with special needs in the classroom is typically met with resistance from many educators (Obeng, 2017). Based on the researcher's observations, the majority of school facilities do not provide adequate support for children with special

needs. In one of the study area's basic schools, it was noted that a pupil was sent away because he was deemed "mentally retarded," making him incapable of receiving instruction. Because the special needs child's condition prevented them from fitting into the conventional system and learning using only the strategies and resources available to "normal" children, the teachers of that era considered educating this individual to be a complete waste of time.

As a result, several teacher evaluations have had a detrimental impact on the education of children with special needs, which has caused issues in their academic performance. Alghazo (2002) discovered that teachers generally had a negative attitude toward people with disabilities and disliked the concept of integrating them into regular education classes. Children with learning difficulties received greater acceptance from many educators, but children with mental retardation received less.

The number of unskilled and illiterate individuals and young people who are not prepared for job rises due to the growing number of special needs children who are not attending school and the unfavorable learning settings for disabled children in basic education institutions (Kabuta, 2014). These kids start to rely on other people to meet their fundamental daily requirements. Some commit risky crimes in order to make money (Nakpodia, 2010). The issue is unlikely to be resolved anytime soon unless significant steps are taken to improve the situation. This makes achieving the EFA target extremely difficult (Syanda-Mutisya, 2010).

Several studies (Limaye, 2016; Akinkugbe, 2013; Adams, 2016; Munyao, 2019) have examined factors influencing inclusion and accessibility of education for children with disabilities or special needs. However, there is little information on barriers to educational continuity and inclusion for the deaf and hard-of-hearing children in basic

schools at the study area. As a result, the purpose of this study is to fill a knowledge gap by examining the barriers to educational continuity and inclusion for deaf and hard-of-hearing children in the Effutu Municipality. It explores the challenges and opportunities within the school learning environment, teachers' attitudes, instructional strategies, and support services that impact access to quality education for deaf and hard of hearing children

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate barriers to educational continuity and inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu municipality: exploring challenges and opportunities.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objective of the study seeks to:

1. identify the barriers to school enrollment and retention for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community.
2. examine the factors contributing to the low transition rate of deaf and hard of hearing children from junior high school to senior high school.
3. explore the perceptions of schools and the community regarding the education of deaf and hard of hearing children.
4. recommend strategies for improving access and continuity in deaf and hard of hearing education within the Effutu community.

1.5 Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions.

1. What are the barriers preventing deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community from enrolling and staying in school?

2. What are the factors contributing to the low transition rate of deaf and hard of hearing children from junior high school to senior high school in the Effutu community?
3. How do schools and the community perceive the education of deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community?
4. What strategies can be implemented to improve access to education and ensure continuity for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Oso and Onen (2009) define importance as the study's relevance in terms of scholarly contributions and the practical application of the findings. It illustrates how the research either fully or partially benefits or affects other people. By addressing any unfavorable attitudes, making changes, providing resources, and enhancing support strategies in the basic schools in Effutu Municipality, the study's findings will assist educators and school administrators in strengthening the implementation of inclusive education. The results would be useful to Effutu Education administration, who would then take the necessary steps to properly administer inclusive education. Better education for everyone would result from this (EFA).

Additionally, the study's conclusions may help the government and other interested parties develop a foundation for future research on how to give children with hearing impairments in the Effutu Municipality an accessible, high-quality, and equitable basic education. The study's results may also assist policymakers and education planners in reviewing current educational policies, plans, and priorities in order to identify more effective ways to fund and assist deaf and hard-of-hearing children in

basic education while simultaneously raising the enrollment, survival, completion, and performance rates of this population in basic learning institutions.

The study's findings on the impact of support services such as psychotherapy and guidance and counselling may help the Ministry of Education (MOE) decide which professional services are necessary in an inclusive setting. Researchers interested in the factors influencing the accessibility of quality education for deaf and hard of hearing children may find the study findings useful.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1. Educational Continuity: Educational continuity refers to the sustained and uninterrupted participation of learners in formal education from one level to another, ensuring consistent access to learning opportunities, support services, and academic progression without dropout or prolonged interruption.

2. Deaf Learners: Deaf learners are individuals with severe to profound hearing loss that significantly limits their ability to perceive spoken language through hearing, often requiring alternative communication methods such as sign language for effective learning.

3. Hard of hearing Learners: Hard of hearing learners are individuals with partial hearing loss who may perceive speech with the use of hearing aids or assistive devices but still experience challenges in typical classroom communication.

4. Inclusive Education: Inclusive education is an educational approach that ensures learners with disabilities, including deaf and hard of hearing learners, are educated in mainstream schools with appropriate support, accommodations, and adaptations to meet their learning needs.

5. Sign Language: Sign language is a visual-gestural language used primarily by deaf and hard of hearing individuals, employing hand shapes, facial expressions, and body movements to convey meaning and facilitate communication in educational and social contexts.

6. Educational Support Services: Educational support services refer to specialized resources and interventions such as sign language interpreters, special educators, assistive technologies, counseling, and learning materials designed to support deaf and hard of hearing learners' academic success.

7. Parental Involvement: Parental involvement refers to the active participation of parents or guardians in supporting their children's education through monitoring academic progress, attending school activities, providing learning support at home, and collaborating with teachers and schools.

8. Teacher Preparedness: Teacher preparedness refers to the level of training, skills, knowledge, and attitudes teachers possess to effectively teach and support deaf and hard of hearing learners using appropriate instructional strategies and communication methods.

9. Assistive Technology: Assistive technology includes devices and tools such as hearing aids, cochlear implants, FM systems, captioning tools, and visual learning aids that enhance access to information and communication for deaf and hard of hearing learners.

10. School Environment: The school environment refers to the physical, social, and instructional conditions within a school, including classroom layout, availability of

learning resources, peer support, and administrative policies that influence the educational participation and continuity of deaf and hard of hearing learners.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

The boundaries set by the researcher to manage the study are known as delimitations. These will typically be established before any study or investigations are carried out (Simon, 2011). This study was restricted to deaf and hard-of-hearing students in public basic schools in the Effutu Municipality due to the availability of different special requirements in different basic schools. Since private basic schools do not have the same facilities and other resources, including teachers, as public basic schools, they were excluded from the study. Moreover, the results of the study cannot be extrapolated to the entire nation.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

There are five chapters in this work. The study's history, problem statement, goal, research aims and questions, significance, delimitations, definitions of important terminology, and organization are all covered in the first chapter, which serves as an introduction. The literature review of pertinent studies on the school learning environment, instructors' attitudes, instructional methodologies, and support services is presented in Chapter 2. The study's theoretical and conceptual framework is also included. The research approach and techniques for gathering and analyzing data are covered in Chapter 3.

This covers the study's demographic, sample size, sampling technique, research instruments, data gathering methods, data processing, and ethical considerations. The data analysis, results presentation, and interpretation are all included in Chapter 4. The research findings, conclusions, and suggestions for further study are summarized and discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter contains a review of the literature. It is done under the headings' theoretical framework, conceptual review and empirical review. The conceptual review was done under the following concepts: barriers to educational access for deaf and hard-of-hearing children, factors influencing transition rates of deaf and hard-of-hearing children, perceptions of education for deaf and hard-of-hearing children, policy and institutional support for deaf and hard-of-hearing education, teaching and learning strategies for deaf and hard-of-hearing children

2.1 Barriers to Educational Access for Deaf and hard of hearing Children

Access to education is considered a fundamental human right, yet for deaf and hard of hearing children, several barriers continue to impede their ability to fully participate in educational opportunities. Despite advancements in inclusive education policies globally, children with deaf and hard of hearing still face significant challenges. These barriers can be categorized into socio-cultural, economic, physical, and communication-related factors, each of which plays a crucial role in limiting their educational access and success.

Socio-cultural barriers, particularly stigma and discrimination, are among the most pervasive obstacles for deaf and hard of hearing children in many societies. According to a study by Alemu and Goh (2020), societal attitudes toward disabilities, including hearing impairment, often lead to the exclusion of these children from mainstream schools. In many cultures, children with deaf and hard of hearing are perceived as less capable or inferior, which can perpetuate negative stereotypes and

reduce the opportunities available to them. Morrison (2017) further emphasized the role of cultural beliefs in shaping societal attitudes, noting that in some cultures, disability is viewed as a form of divine punishment or bad luck, contributing to the social marginalization of individuals with deaf and hard of hearing. This stigma is often compounded by misconceptions about the capabilities of children with disabilities, leading to low expectations and a lack of support from educators and peers. As a result, deaf and hard of hearing children are frequently placed in special education institutions, which limits their social integration and academic opportunities (Gordon & Tan, 2021). These negative societal attitudes significantly affect the self-esteem and social inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children, further hindering their educational development.

Economic barriers also present a significant challenge for deaf and hard of hearing children. Families from low-income backgrounds often struggle to afford the specialized education and assistive devices that are necessary for their children's success. Mann and Verma (2018) highlighted that the high cost of assistive technologies, such as hearing aids and cochlear implants, often leaves families in low-income settings unable to provide the necessary tools for their children's education. In many cases, the financial burden associated with special education programs, including school fees, transportation, and therapy services, further exacerbates this problem. Research by Durkin (2019) found that in developing countries, the lack of financial resources and limited access to funding for special education services often result in children with deaf and hard of hearing being denied access to formal schooling. Even when public schools offer inclusive education programs, the additional costs for specialized services, such as sign language interpreters and classroom modifications, can be prohibitively expensive for many families (Petrie et

al., 2020). This economic exclusion leaves many deaf and hard of hearing children with no educational options, contributing to high dropout rates and perpetuating cycles of poverty.

In addition to socio-cultural and economic barriers, physical and infrastructural limitations in educational settings also hinder the educational progress of deaf and hard of hearing children. Many schools, particularly in rural or underfunded areas, lack the physical infrastructure necessary to accommodate children with disabilities. According to Riverson and Lee (2021), schools that are not equipped with ramps, elevators, and other accessible facilities often prevent deaf and hard of hearing children from fully participating in academic activities. Furthermore, inadequate classroom settings that do not incorporate essential technologies such as amplification systems or soundproofing can create an environment where deaf and hard of hearing children struggle to hear their teachers or peers (Elliot & Gane, 2020). The lack of visual aids and appropriate teaching materials also presents a significant barrier, as deaf and hard of hearing children are often unable to access alternative modes of learning that are crucial for their academic success (Schaff & Harris, 2022). In this context, the absence of inclusive educational infrastructure not only limits children's access to learning but also impedes their ability to engage meaningfully with the curriculum.

Communication-related barriers are perhaps the most critical and direct obstacle to educational access for deaf and hard of hearing children. The ability to communicate effectively with both teachers and peers is essential for successful learning, yet the shortage of qualified sign language interpreters and teachers trained in inclusive communication strategies remains a significant issue. Studies have shown that many

schools, particularly in rural or underserved areas, do not have enough trained sign language interpreters (Stewart et al., 2020). In a study by Johnson and Brown (2020), it was noted that the lack of sign language training among teachers in mainstream schools is a critical factor in the educational exclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children. Without the proper communication support, such as sign language interpreters or visual aids, deaf and hard of hearing children face difficulties in understanding lessons, resulting in academic underachievement and disengagement. Moreover, in many countries, sign language is not incorporated into the curriculum, leaving children to rely on oral language, which is often inaccessible for those with deaf and hard of hearing (Lopez et al., 2020). According to Kiser and Ellsworth (2021), when teachers lack the skills to effectively communicate with deaf and hard of hearing children, learning becomes fragmented, and children are unable to achieve their academic potential.

The importance of teacher training in inclusive education is emphasized in a study by Schneider et al. (2019), which found that when educators are not adequately trained in teaching children with deaf and hard of hearing, the quality of education provided is significantly compromised. The failure to incorporate sign language into teaching practices and the reliance on outdated methods that are not suited to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children exacerbates the educational challenges faced by these children. Horner and Harwood (2020) further stress that professional development for teachers is essential in creating an inclusive learning environment that addresses the diverse needs of all children, including those with deaf and hard of hearing. Teachers who are trained in inclusive education strategies can create learning environments that promote effective communication and foster academic success for deaf and hard of hearing children.

The barriers to educational access for deaf and hard of hearing children—socio-cultural, economic, physical, and communication-related—are complex and interrelated. These barriers not only prevent deaf and hard of hearing children from fully participating in educational opportunities but also contribute to their exclusion from society. The literature suggests that overcoming these barriers requires a multifaceted approach that involves policy reforms, increased funding for assistive technologies, improved teacher training, and a shift in societal attitudes toward disabilities. As articulated by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007), all children, regardless of disability, have the right to inclusive education that allows them to develop their full potential. Future research should continue to explore strategies for addressing these barriers and ensuring that deaf and hard of hearing children have the necessary support and resources to thrive academically and socially.

2.2 Factors Influencing Transition Rates of Deaf and hard of hearing Children

Transitioning from one educational level to another is a critical stage for all children, but it poses additional challenges for deaf and hard of hearing children. These challenges can significantly impact their ability to successfully transition from primary to secondary or post-secondary education. Various factors, including academic preparedness and performance, parental and community support, availability of inclusive education policies, and structural barriers, play crucial roles in determining the success of these transitions.

Academic preparedness and performance are primary factors that influence the transition rates of deaf and hard of hearing children. According to McBride and Stephens (2019), children who have developed strong academic skills and are

prepared for the next educational level are more likely to experience successful transitions. However, children with deaf and hard of hearing often face delays in language development and academic skills due to communication barriers, which can hinder their academic progress (Furlong & Fennessy, 2018). A study by Smith et al. (2020) demonstrated that deaf and hard of hearing children who received early interventions, such as specialized language support and adaptive learning techniques, were better equipped to succeed academically, which in turn improved their transition outcomes. On the other hand, children who struggle academically due to inadequate support or late interventions may find the transition process more challenging, leading to higher dropout rates and reduced academic achievement in subsequent educational phases (Bryant et al., 2021).

Parental and community support is another significant factor that influences the transition rates of deaf and hard of hearing children. Parents who are actively involved in their child's education can provide essential advocacy, resources, and emotional support that enhance their child's chances of success in transitioning to higher levels of education. Research by Beasley and Pittman (2018) found that parental involvement in educational decisions and advocacy for appropriate accommodations played a critical role in ensuring that deaf and hard of hearing children transitioned successfully to secondary schools. Moreover, community support, including social networks, support groups for families of deaf and hard of hearing individuals, and access to resources such as counseling services, can significantly influence children's academic performance and transition experiences (Gorman & Miller, 2019). A study by Lee and Kuo (2021) suggested that communities with strong support systems for children with disabilities generally report higher transition rates, as families are more

knowledgeable about available resources and are better equipped to navigate educational systems.

The availability of inclusive education policies and specialized schools plays a significant role in the educational trajectory of deaf and hard of hearing children. Inclusive education policies that promote the integration of deaf and hard of hearing children into mainstream schools can improve their access to educational opportunities and contribute to better transition rates. According to Hassan et al. (2019), inclusive education policies that mandate the provision of accommodations, such as sign language interpreters, captioning, and assistive technology, enhance the academic experience for deaf and hard of hearing children and facilitate smoother transitions to higher levels of education. However, the effectiveness of these policies largely depends on the resources allocated to implement them. In countries where inclusive education policies are underfunded or poorly implemented, deaf and hard of hearing children are often left behind in terms of both academic achievement and transition rates (Fleming & Purcell, 2020). In contrast, specialized schools that cater specifically to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children offer tailored education and support services that can greatly enhance children's ability to succeed academically and transition successfully to post-secondary education (O'Brien et al., 2021).

Structural barriers in transitioning to senior high school also play a major role in shaping the transition experiences of deaf and hard of hearing children. A key structural barrier identified in the literature is the limited placement opportunities for children with deaf and hard of hearing in mainstream or specialized senior high schools. In many cases, there is a lack of hearing-friendly environments, such as

classrooms equipped with sound amplification systems or access to sign language interpreters, which can hinder children's ability to engage fully with the curriculum (Vasquez & Webb, 2018). According to a study by Wilson and Morris (2020), the lack of accessible infrastructure and resources in senior high schools leads to children with deaf and hard of hearing being either underrepresented or placed in schools that cannot meet their educational needs. Furthermore, the limited availability of trained teachers and specialized staff for deaf and hard of hearing children in many senior high schools presents another obstacle (Vargas & Arnold, 2021). In cases where children are placed in schools without the necessary support, their educational experience may be compromised, affecting their transition success.

The transition rates of deaf and hard of hearing children are influenced by a combination of academic, social, policy-related, and structural factors. Ensuring a smooth transition for deaf and hard of hearing children requires a holistic approach that addresses their academic preparedness, provides strong parental and community support, and creates inclusive educational policies and practices. Additionally, the availability of specialized schools and accessible infrastructure in senior high schools is essential for ensuring that deaf and hard of hearing children are able to transition successfully and achieve their full academic potential.

2.3 Perceptions of Education for Deaf and hard of hearing Children

Perceptions of education for deaf and hard of hearing children are shaped by various factors, including teachers' attitudes, parental and community perceptions, and societal myths and misconceptions. These perceptions can significantly impact the learning experience of deaf and hard of hearing children, influencing their academic achievement and social integration. Understanding the various influences on

perceptions is crucial for improving educational outcomes and creating an inclusive learning environment for deaf and hard of hearing children.

Teachers' attitudes and understanding of deaf and hard of hearing education play a significant role in shaping the educational experience of deaf and hard of hearing children. Teachers who possess positive attitudes toward inclusion and have a solid understanding of deaf and hard of hearing education are more likely to create a supportive learning environment for their children. According to Lane et al. (2019), teachers' beliefs about the capabilities of deaf and hard of hearing children significantly impact their instructional methods and expectations. Teachers who have been trained in deaf and hard of hearing education are more likely to use strategies that accommodate the specific learning needs of deaf and hard of hearing children, such as visual aids, sign language, and modified communication techniques (Miller & Reed, 2018). In contrast, teachers with little to no training in deaf and hard of hearing education may have lower expectations for their children, which can hinder the development of children' academic potential. A study by Montgomery et al. (2021) found that teacher training and professional development in deaf and hard of hearing education were associated with more positive perceptions of deaf and hard of hearing children and improved academic outcomes. Teachers' understanding of deaf and hard of hearingness and its impact on communication and learning also helps in fostering an inclusive classroom environment where deaf and hard of hearing children feel valued and supported (Schwartz & Greenberg, 2020).

Parental and community perceptions of the value of education for deaf and hard of hearing children are also crucial in shaping the educational outcomes of deaf and hard of hearing children. When parents and communities recognize the importance of

education for deaf and hard of hearing children, they are more likely to advocate for appropriate resources, accommodations, and support systems. According to Gorman and Petty (2018), parental involvement and advocacy are essential for ensuring that deaf and hard of hearing children have access to quality education. In some cultures, however, there may be a lack of awareness regarding the educational potential of deaf and hard of hearing children, which can lead to negative perceptions and lower expectations. A study by Garcia and Tan (2019) highlighted that in communities with strong cultural biases or limited understanding of deaf and hard of hearingness, deaf and hard of hearing children may face stigmatization and exclusion from educational opportunities. In contrast, communities that value education for deaf and hard of hearing children tend to have better support systems, such as access to specialized schools, sign language training, and the involvement of advocacy groups (Williams et al., 2020). Parental and community support is also crucial in helping deaf and hard of hearing children transition successfully to higher levels of education, as these individuals are key advocates in promoting the inclusion of these children in mainstream educational settings (Turner & Hughes, 2021).

Myths and misconceptions about deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their learning potential can significantly influence how society perceives their education. Common misconceptions include the belief that deaf and hard of hearing children cannot excel academically or that they are intellectually inferior to their hearing peers (Gorman & Miller, 2020). These myths are often rooted in a lack of understanding about the nature of hearing loss and its impact on communication, as well as limited exposure to successful deaf and hard of hearing role models. A study by Schneider et al. (2020) found that misconceptions about the capabilities of deaf and hard of hearing individuals were prevalent in many societies, leading to a lack of educational

opportunities and social integration for deaf and hard of hearing children. For instance, the myth that deaf and hard of hearing children cannot develop language skills can result in limited educational options, as educators and parents may underestimate their potential and fail to provide appropriate language interventions (Bryant & Jackson, 2020). Additionally, misconceptions about the social and emotional needs of deaf and hard of hearing children can lead to the creation of environments that are not conducive to their holistic development. According to Thompson and Harper (2019), debunking these myths through awareness campaigns and increased exposure to successful deaf and hard of hearing individuals is essential for changing public perceptions and improving educational opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing children.

In conclusion, perceptions of education for deaf and hard of hearing children are shaped by teachers' attitudes and understanding of deaf and hard of hearing education, as well as parental and community perceptions of the value of education for deaf and hard of hearing children. Myths and misconceptions about deaf and hard of hearing individuals' learning potential also play a significant role in shaping societal attitudes and influencing educational opportunities. Efforts to improve teacher training, raise awareness about the importance of education for deaf and hard of hearing children, and challenge misconceptions about deaf and hard of hearingness are essential for creating an inclusive educational environment that fosters the academic success and social inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children.

2.4 Policy and Institutional Support for Deaf and hard of hearing Education

Policy and institutional support for deaf and hard of hearing education is a critical component of creating an inclusive learning environment for deaf and hard of hearing

children. The development of inclusive educational policies, the involvement of governmental and non-governmental organizations, and the implementation of specialized training programs for educators are essential for enhancing the educational experience of deaf and hard of hearing children. Understanding the role of these factors in shaping the educational landscape can help identify gaps in support and improve the quality of education for deaf and hard of hearing children.

An analysis of existing educational policies reveals a significant gap in the inclusivity of policies for deaf and hard of hearing children in many countries. While some countries have made strides in adopting inclusive education policies, others still lack clear frameworks for integrating deaf and hard of hearing children into mainstream educational settings. According to Kauffman et al. (2020), inclusive education policies aim to provide equitable access to quality education for all children, including those with disabilities. However, the implementation of these policies often faces challenges, including inadequate funding, a shortage of trained educators, and a lack of accessible learning materials. A study by O'Toole et al. (2021) found that in many regions, educational policies do not adequately address the unique needs of deaf and hard of hearing children, such as access to sign language interpreters, assistive technologies, and specialized educational resources. This gap in policy can lead to exclusion from mainstream education and limited opportunities for academic success. On the other hand, some countries have developed robust policies that promote the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children in general education schools, ensuring access to sign language instruction, audiological support, and other necessary accommodations (Liu et al., 2019). Thus, a comprehensive review of national education policies is essential to ensure that they are inclusive and cater to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children.

The role of governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in supporting deaf and hard of hearing education is crucial in filling the gaps left by formal educational policies. Governments play a key role in providing financial resources, creating regulations, and implementing programs that support the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children in mainstream schools. According to Stone and Rowe (2020), governmental agencies are often responsible for funding specialized programs, providing assistive devices, and ensuring that educational institutions comply with national and international standards for disability inclusion. Non-governmental organizations, on the other hand, often play a complementary role by advocating for the rights of deaf and hard of hearing children, providing training for educators, and raising awareness about the importance of inclusive education. A study by Harris et al. (2018) emphasized the impact of NGOs in providing additional support services, such as after-school programs, vocational training, and social integration activities for deaf and hard of hearing children. NGOs also collaborate with governments to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children have access to quality education by lobbying for better policies and advocating for the rights of people with disabilities (Simons & Boucher, 2021). The combination of governmental support and the work of NGOs helps to create a more supportive and inclusive environment for deaf and hard of hearing children, both inside and outside the classroom.

Training programs for educators on inclusive practices and teaching deaf and hard of hearing children are another essential component of effective deaf and hard of hearing education. Educators who are well-trained in inclusive teaching strategies are more likely to provide a supportive and accessible learning environment for deaf and hard of hearing children. According to Peters (2019), teacher training programs should

focus on building educators' knowledge of the specific needs of deaf and hard of hearing children, including strategies for communication, classroom management, and the use of assistive technologies. These programs should also include training in sign language, as well as approaches to fostering social inclusion and academic success for deaf and hard of hearing children (Williams et al., 2018). Research by Dillon and Thompson (2020) found that teachers who received specialized training in deaf and hard of hearing education demonstrated greater confidence in their ability to meet the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children and provided more effective support in the classroom. However, many educators still lack adequate training in inclusive teaching practices, which can result in missed opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing children (McDonald et al., 2021). Therefore, ongoing professional development in inclusive education practices is essential for ensuring that educators are equipped to support the diverse needs of deaf and hard of hearing children and create an inclusive classroom environment.

Policy and institutional support for deaf and hard of hearing education are vital in ensuring that deaf and hard of hearing children have access to high-quality, inclusive education. A review of existing educational policies highlights the importance of developing inclusive frameworks that address the unique needs of deaf and hard of hearing children. Governments and NGOs play a key role in supporting deaf and hard of hearing education by providing resources, advocating for policy changes, and offering supplementary services. Additionally, training programs for educators on inclusive teaching practices are crucial for creating supportive learning environments that promote academic success and social integration for deaf and hard of hearing children. Strengthening these areas of support is necessary to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children receive the education they deserve.

2.5 Teaching and Learning Strategies for Deaf and hard of hearing Children

Teaching and learning strategies for deaf and hard of hearing children require specialized approaches that accommodate their unique needs and ensure equitable access to quality education. The use of best practices in inclusive pedagogy, the role of technology and assistive devices, and the importance of curriculum adaptation are central components in facilitating learning for deaf and hard of hearing learners. A review of these strategies highlights the importance of providing appropriate accommodations and creating a supportive learning environment to maximize the educational experience of deaf and hard of hearing children.

Best practices in inclusive pedagogy for deaf and hard of hearing learners emphasize the use of teaching methods that promote participation, communication, and academic success in a diverse classroom setting. According to Harkins et al. (2020), inclusive pedagogy involves creating learning environments that are flexible and responsive to the needs of all children, including those with deaf and hard of hearing. One effective strategy is the use of visual aids, such as pictures, charts, and diagrams, which help to reinforce concepts and ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children can access the content (Smith et al., 2021). Another key aspect of inclusive pedagogy is the use of sign language, which facilitates communication and enhances the understanding of lessons (Baker et al., 2019). Research by Gagné et al. (2020) supports the importance of providing children with deaf and hard of hearing the opportunity to interact with peers in a natural, inclusive environment, which not only promotes social skills but also enhances learning outcomes. Moreover, differentiated instruction, where teachers tailor lessons to meet the varying abilities and learning styles of children, is particularly beneficial for deaf and hard of hearing learners who may require alternative methods of instruction. By incorporating various teaching strategies and

fostering an inclusive classroom culture, educators can create a positive learning environment for all children, including those with deaf and hard of hearing.

The role of technology and assistive devices in facilitating learning for deaf and hard of hearing children cannot be overstated. Technological advancements have provided innovative tools that improve access to education for children with deaf and hard of hearing. According to Watson and Turnbull (2020), assistive devices such as hearing aids, cochlear implants, and FM systems (frequency modulation systems) are essential for enhancing the auditory experience of deaf and hard of hearing children. These devices help to amplify sound and improve the clarity of speech, making it easier for children to participate in classroom activities. Additionally, the use of captioning and subtitling in multimedia presentations and videos is another important technology that ensures children can access verbal content (Yang & Yang, 2019). The integration of educational technologies, such as interactive learning platforms and virtual classrooms, has also been shown to support the learning of deaf and hard of hearing children by providing them with opportunities to engage in self-paced learning and collaborate with their peers (Koller et al., 2021). These technologies not only improve accessibility but also promote independent learning and academic achievement for children with deaf and hard of hearing.

Curriculum adaptation is an essential strategy for ensuring the inclusivity of education for deaf and hard of hearing children. Adapting the curriculum to accommodate the needs of deaf and hard of hearing learners involves modifying teaching materials, adjusting the pace of lessons, and providing additional support when necessary. According to Lewis and Johnson (2018), adapting the curriculum can involve providing alternative formats for reading materials, such as audio versions or digital

texts, to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children have equal access to information. Teachers may also need to adjust their teaching methods to include more visual and interactive components, as well as provide additional opportunities for hands-on learning (Liu & Wang, 2021). Furthermore, collaboration between educators, speech therapists, and special education professionals can help to create personalized learning plans that address the specific needs of deaf and hard of hearing children (Barker et al., 2020). These adaptations not only make the curriculum more accessible but also enhance the overall learning experience by ensuring that children can fully engage with the material and meet academic expectations.

Effective teaching and learning strategies for deaf and hard of hearing children are critical for ensuring their academic success and inclusion in mainstream education. Best practices in inclusive pedagogy, including the use of visual aids, sign language, and differentiated instruction, help create an inclusive classroom environment that supports the diverse learning needs of deaf and hard of hearing children. The role of technology and assistive devices further facilitates learning by improving access to auditory content and promoting independent learning. Finally, curriculum adaptation ensures that educational materials and methods are tailored to the unique needs of deaf and hard of hearing learners, helping them to fully participate in the educational process. By implementing these strategies, educators can create an inclusive and supportive learning environment that maximizes the potential of deaf and hard of hearing children.

2.6 Challenges and Opportunities in Deaf and hard of hearing Education in the Effutu

Community

Deaf and hard of hearing education in the Effutu community, like in many other regions, is influenced by a range of socio-cultural dynamics, which can both hinder and facilitate the educational experiences of deaf and hard of hearing children. Understanding the unique challenges and identifying opportunities for improvement is critical for promoting educational inclusion and enhancing the learning experiences of deaf and hard of hearing children in the community. This review examines the socio-cultural dynamics of the Effutu community, opportunities for partnerships with local organizations, and the potential for advocacy and awareness campaigns in supporting deaf and hard of hearing education.

The unique socio-cultural dynamics of the Effutu community play a significant role in shaping the educational experiences of deaf and hard of hearing children. Socio-cultural factors such as community beliefs, attitudes, and practices can impact how deaf and hard of hearing individuals are perceived and treated. In many societies, including the Effutu community, deaf and hard of hearingness may be stigmatized or misunderstood, leading to negative attitudes and limited opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing children (Boateng et al., 2021). According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), cultural attitudes towards disability, particularly deaf and hard of hearing, can greatly influence the level of support provided to deaf and hard of hearing individuals in terms of education and integration into society. In the Effutu community, cultural norms may dictate how individuals with disabilities, including deaf and hard of hearing, are treated, which can result in lower expectations for educational achievement and social participation. These cultural perceptions can

contribute to the marginalization of deaf and hard of hearing children and limit their access to quality education. Therefore, addressing these socio-cultural barriers is essential for improving the educational outcomes of deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community (Davis & Jones, 2019).

Despite these challenges, there are also numerous opportunities for partnerships with local organizations that can significantly enhance deaf and hard of hearing education in the Effutu community. Local organizations, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations, and advocacy groups, play an essential role in promoting educational inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children. Research by Yawson et al. (2020) emphasizes the importance of collaboration between educational institutions and local organizations in improving educational outcomes for marginalized groups, including those with disabilities. These partnerships can help to provide resources, training, and support services that are essential for the success of deaf and hard of hearing education. For instance, organizations can assist in providing specialized learning materials, assistive devices, and teacher training to ensure that educators are equipped to meet the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children. Furthermore, local organizations can play a key role in raising awareness about the importance of deaf and hard of hearing education and advocating for the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children in mainstream schools. Such partnerships can strengthen the capacity of the Effutu community to support deaf and hard of hearing education and create a more inclusive educational environment (Afriyie & Kwarteng, 2019).

In addition to partnerships, there is significant potential for advocacy and awareness campaigns to promote educational inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children in

the Effutu community. Advocacy efforts can help to challenge existing stereotypes and misconceptions about deaf and hard of hearingness and promote positive attitudes towards the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children in mainstream education. A study by Oluwaseun and Adeola (2020) highlights the role of advocacy in changing societal perceptions and influencing policy decisions that support inclusive education. Advocacy campaigns can raise awareness about the educational rights of deaf and hard of hearing children and the benefits of inclusive education for society as a whole. These campaigns can also encourage parents, teachers, and community leaders to adopt more inclusive attitudes and practices, which can ultimately lead to better educational outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children. Furthermore, awareness campaigns can promote the use of sign language and other communication strategies that facilitate learning for deaf and hard of hearing children. The efforts of advocates and community leaders can play a vital role in ensuring that deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community have access to quality education and the support they need to succeed academically (Stewart et al., 2018).

While there are challenges associated with deaf and hard of hearing education in the Effutu community, there are also significant opportunities for improvement through addressing socio-cultural dynamics, forging partnerships with local organizations, and implementing advocacy and awareness campaigns. Socio-cultural factors that influence the perception of deaf and hard of hearingness must be addressed to foster more inclusive attitudes and practices. Additionally, partnerships with local organizations can provide much-needed resources and support for deaf and hard of hearing education, while advocacy and awareness campaigns can promote the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children in educational settings. By leveraging these opportunities, the Effutu community can create a more inclusive and supportive

educational environment for deaf and hard of hearing children, ensuring that they receive the education and opportunities they deserve.

2.7 Global and Regional Best Practices in Deaf and hard of hearing Education

Deaf and hard of hearing education, both globally and regionally, has seen a variety of successful models aimed at enhancing educational outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children. These models, often influenced by local contexts and needs, provide valuable lessons that can be applied to improve deaf and hard of hearing education systems in other regions, including the Effutu community. This review examines successful models in deaf and hard of hearing education from different regions, the lessons learned from inclusive education systems, and the role of international frameworks, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, in promoting education for deaf and hard of hearing children.

A comparative analysis of successful models of deaf and hard of hearing education from other regions or countries reveals significant diversity in approaches to inclusion and accessibility for deaf and hard of hearing children. In many high-income countries, there is a focus on integrating deaf and hard of hearing children into mainstream schools, utilizing specialized support services such as sign language interpreters and speech therapists. For example, in the United States and the United Kingdom, the use of inclusive education models, where deaf and hard of hearing children are provided with the necessary accommodations and support to learn alongside their hearing peers, has been widely implemented (Jones & Stewart, 2020). These systems have shown positive outcomes in terms of social inclusion and academic achievement for deaf and hard of hearing children, suggesting that inclusive

educational practices are crucial for ensuring that deaf and hard of hearing children receive equitable educational opportunities. On the other hand, in some developing countries, specialized schools for the deaf and hard of hearing continue to be the dominant model. While this approach may provide tailored resources for deaf and hard of hearing children, research has shown that children in segregated schools often face social isolation and limited exposure to diverse educational experiences (Ahmed & Hassan, 2019). The success of inclusive education in regions such as Europe and North America underscores the importance of adapting models based on local needs, resources, and cultural attitudes toward disability (Van Weelden & Jansen, 2021).

Lessons from inclusive education systems highlight the importance of providing flexible and adaptive learning environments that cater to the specific needs of deaf and hard of hearing children. One key lesson is the critical role of teacher training in ensuring that educators are equipped with the skills and knowledge to support deaf and hard of hearing learners effectively. Teachers in inclusive classrooms, when trained in sign language and deaf and hard of hearing culture, are better able to provide meaningful learning experiences for deaf and hard of hearing children (Sharma & O'Neill, 2020). Additionally, inclusive schools that emphasize collaborative learning and peer support have demonstrated improved outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children, as these settings foster a sense of belonging and reduce the stigma associated with disability (Mueller & Schmidt, 2018). Furthermore, the use of technology, such as digital platforms for learning and assistive devices like hearing aids and captioning systems, has proven to be an effective tool in making education more accessible for deaf and hard of hearing learners. The integration of technology in classrooms supports both academic and social engagement, helping children to overcome communication barriers (Timmerman & Hage, 2020). Thus, the

lessons learned from inclusive education systems emphasize the need for a holistic approach that combines teacher training, technology, and collaborative learning to create a supportive and inclusive environment for deaf and hard of hearing children.

International frameworks, such as the UNCRPD and SDG 4, play a pivotal role in promoting education for deaf and hard of hearing children. The UNCRPD, adopted in 2006, mandates that signatory countries recognize the right of people with disabilities, including the deaf and hard of hearing, to an inclusive, quality education on an equal basis with others. Article 24 of the UNCRPD specifically calls for the implementation of inclusive education systems that cater to the needs of children with disabilities, emphasizing the importance of accessibility, teacher training, and support services (United Nations, 2006). This international framework has led to significant changes in national education policies, with many countries revising their education systems to be more inclusive of children with disabilities. For example, in countries such as Canada and Australia, the implementation of inclusive education policies has resulted in increased enrollment of deaf and hard of hearing children in mainstream schools, as well as improved educational outcomes through the provision of necessary accommodations (Leigh & Fung, 2021). SDG 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all by 2030, also plays a crucial role in advancing education for deaf and hard of hearing children. This global agenda calls for the provision of education that is accessible to all learners, including those with disabilities, and encourages countries to develop and implement policies that support educational inclusion (UNESCO, 2019). The alignment of national education policies with these international frameworks has the potential to drive positive change in deaf and hard of hearing education systems worldwide.

Global and regional best practices in deaf and hard of hearing education provide valuable insights for improving the educational experiences of deaf and hard of hearing children in various contexts, including the Effutu community. Successful models from countries with established inclusive education systems highlight the importance of teacher training, technology integration, and collaborative learning. The lessons learned from these systems can be adapted to local contexts, ensuring that deaf and hard of hearing children receive the support they need to succeed academically. Additionally, international frameworks such as the UNCRPD and SDG 4 play a crucial role in promoting inclusive education and guiding policy development to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children have access to quality education. By drawing on these best practices and aligning with global frameworks, countries and communities can create more inclusive and equitable educational opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing children.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed literature on the education of deaf and hard of hearing children, focusing on barriers to access, transition factors, perceptions of education, policy and institutional support, and effective teaching strategies. The review revealed that deaf and hard of hearing children face interconnected socio-cultural, economic, physical, and communication barriers that limit their participation and success in education. Negative societal attitudes, limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and shortages of trained teachers and interpreters significantly hinder inclusive learning.

The literature further identified academic preparedness, parental and community support, inclusive policies, and institutional capacity as key factors influencing successful transition between educational levels. Perceptions of deaf and hard of

hearing education shaped by teachers, parents, and communities were found to affect expectations, support, and learning outcomes.

Additionally, the review highlighted the importance of strong policy frameworks, institutional collaboration, and teacher training in promoting inclusive education. Effective instructional strategies, including visual teaching methods, assistive technologies, and differentiated instruction, were emphasized as essential for improving learning outcomes.

Overall, the chapter established that improving educational access and success for deaf and hard of hearing children requires coordinated efforts addressing social attitudes, resource provision, institutional support, and inclusive teaching practices.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the paradigm underpinning the research, research approach, research design, study area, the population under study, the sampling procedure, sample technique and sample size, data collection instrument, data source, data analysis and ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Approach

The study adopted the qualitative approach to research. The qualitative approach is particularly well-suited to research that seeks to explore complex, context-specific phenomena such as the barriers to educational continuity and inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children. In the context of this study, which focuses on the Effutu Municipality, the qualitative method allows for an in-depth examination of the experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by deaf and hard of hearing children, their families, educators, and the broader community. The qualitative approach is grounded in the belief that reality is subjective and context-dependent, emphasizing the need to understand individuals' lived experiences within their specific socio-cultural settings (Creswell, 2014). Rather than seeking to generalize findings to a wider population, qualitative research aims to capture the nuanced realities of participants, making it an ideal method for understanding the intricate barriers to education faced by deaf and hard of hearing children in a particular community.

Qualitative research is designed to explore phenomena that are not easily quantified, particularly when investigating social, emotional, or cultural factors. By employing methods such as semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and open-ended

questionnaires, the study allows participants to express their perspectives in their own words. This approach is crucial for capturing the lived experiences of individuals who may be marginalized or underrepresented in educational research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this study, the voices of parents, teachers, school administrators, and community members are central, providing valuable insights into the challenges that deaf and hard of hearing children face in their educational journeys. For example, parents may discuss the emotional and logistical challenges of advocating for their child's education, while educators may highlight the difficulties they face in providing adequate support in classrooms that are not designed for children with deaf and hard of hearing. These qualitative responses allow for a deeper understanding of the factors that hinder educational inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children.

The qualitative approach aligns with the research questions of this study, which seek to explore the barriers to school enrollment, retention, and transition for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community. For instance, the first research question addresses the barriers to school enrollment and retention, which can best be understood through qualitative data that reveals the specific challenges faced by participants. Rather than focusing on numerical data, qualitative research captures the richness and depth of participants' personal accounts, making it possible to identify recurring themes and patterns (Patton, 2015). Through thematic analysis, the researcher can identify key barriers such as a lack of specialized teachers, inadequate resources, and negative societal attitudes towards disability. This approach allows for a more holistic understanding of the challenges that deaf and hard of hearing children face, which might not be fully captured through quantitative methods alone.

One of the primary strengths of qualitative research is its ability to give voice to marginalized or underrepresented groups. Deaf and hard of hearing children and their families are often excluded from mainstream educational research, and their experiences may be overlooked or misunderstood. Qualitative research ensures that these voices are heard, providing a platform for individuals to share their unique perspectives on the difficulties they encounter in the educational system (Punch, 2014). In this study, participants are given the opportunity to describe the specific barriers they face, such as financial constraints, lack of support services, or the stigma associated with disability. This approach aligns with the principles of inclusive education, which emphasize the importance of valuing all stakeholders and ensuring that marginalized groups have an opportunity to contribute to the conversation (Ainscow, 2005).

The study is further informed by social constructivist theory, which suggests that knowledge and meaning are created through social interactions and cultural contexts (Vygotsky, 1978). This theoretical framework is particularly relevant in the context of deaf and hard of hearing education, as perceptions of disability and deaf and hard of hearingness are often socially constructed and shaped by cultural norms and values. In many communities, including Effutu, attitudes toward disability can significantly impact how deaf and hard of hearing children are treated and supported in educational settings. By adopting a qualitative approach, this study is able to explore these perceptions in detail and understand how they influence educational decisions, policies, and practices. For example, teachers' beliefs about the potential of deaf and hard of hearing children, as well as societal stigma toward disability, can shape how deaf and hard of hearing children are integrated into schools and classrooms.

Understanding these social dynamics is crucial for identifying strategies to improve the educational experience of deaf and hard of hearing children.

The qualitative approach is essential for capturing the complexity of the barriers to educational continuity and inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality. It enables the researcher to gather detailed, context-rich data that reflects the diverse experiences of participants. By focusing on individual narratives and examining the social and cultural factors that influence deaf and hard of hearing education, the study provides valuable insights that can inform future policies and practices aimed at improving educational access and outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children. As a result, qualitative research not only deepens our understanding of the challenges faced by deaf and hard of hearing children but also contributes to the development of more inclusive and supportive educational environments (Mertens, 2014).

3.2 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative case study design to investigate the barriers to school enrolment and retention, transition challenges, community perceptions, and strategies for improving educational continuity for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community. A case study design is appropriate when a researcher seeks an in-depth understanding of a contemporary issue within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2018). The educational experiences of deaf and hard of hearing learners are shaped by social attitudes, institutional practices, and community conditions; therefore, examining the phenomenon within its natural setting is essential.

Qualitative case study research enables the exploration of complex social and educational issues through multiple sources of evidence, including interviews, observations, and document analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This design is particularly suitable for studies that aim to understand how and why certain challenges occur within a specific context and how stakeholders interpret and respond to them. In the present study, the case study approach facilitates a holistic examination of the educational realities of deaf and hard of hearing children by capturing the perspectives of learners, parents, teachers, and community members.

Furthermore, case study research is well suited for educational inquiry that seeks to generate contextually grounded knowledge capable of informing policy and practice (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). By focusing on a bounded system defined by location, population, and phenomenon, the study provides a detailed account of how structural and contextual factors influence access to education and continuity of schooling. This approach allows for the identification of patterns and themes that explain both the challenges faced by deaf and hard of hearing learners and the opportunities for improvement within the local educational environment.

The use of a qualitative case study design therefore aligns with the study's objective of producing a comprehensive, context-sensitive understanding of educational inclusion. Through rich, descriptive data and thematic analysis, the design supports the development of practical recommendations aimed at improving educational access and progression for deaf and hard of hearing children within the community.

3.3 Population of the study

The population for this study comprises key stakeholders involved in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children within the Effutu Municipality, including parents of

deaf and hard of hearing children, teachers, school administrators, and community leaders. These participants are selected due to their direct involvement and influence on the educational experiences of deaf and hard of hearing children. Parents provide valuable insights into the challenges they face regarding school enrollment and retention, while teachers and school administrators offer perspectives on educational practices and resources. Community leaders contribute to understanding the broader societal perceptions and attitudes toward deaf and hard of hearing education. This selection ensures a comprehensive understanding of the barriers and opportunities within the local educational system (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015).

3.4 Sample and Sampling technique

The sample for this study consists of individuals directly involved in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality, specifically parents of deaf and hard of hearing children, teachers, school administrators, and community leaders. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who possess specific knowledge or experience related to the challenges and opportunities in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children (Creswell, 2014). This method was chosen because it allows the researcher to focus on individuals who can provide in-depth, relevant, and detailed information to answer the research questions.

The sample size for this study includes 20 participants in total: 5 parents of deaf and hard of hearing children, 5 teachers, 5 school administrators, and 5 community leaders. This selection ensures that the study captures a variety of perspectives from different stakeholders who have direct involvement in or influence on the education of deaf and hard of hearing children. The purposive sampling technique ensures that each participant group contributes valuable insights into the barriers to school

enrollment, retention, and the broader societal perceptions of disability that affect the educational experience of deaf and hard of hearing children (Patton, 2015).

Data saturation, the point at which no new themes or insights emerge from additional interviews, was considered when determining the sample size (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). The study employed a purposive sampling technique, with approximately 20 participants selected across key stakeholder groups. Data collection continued until saturation was achieved, that is, when no new themes or insights emerged from additional interviews. Previous qualitative research suggests that data saturation in phenomenological studies is typically reached within 15–30 participants (Creswell, 2013; Guest et al., 2006). This number allows for a detailed exploration of the barriers and opportunities within the Effutu Municipality, while also ensuring that diverse perspectives from each group are included.

3.4.1 Justification for the sample size

The study adopted a phenomenological qualitative research design, which emphasizes depth of understanding and rich description of participants' lived experiences rather than large sample sizes. Consequently, a small but information-rich sample was considered appropriate. Five (5) participants were purposively selected from each key stakeholder group to ensure adequate representation while allowing for in-depth exploration of experiences related to educational continuity and inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality.

Methodological scholars have argued that phenomenological studies typically involve small sample sizes, as the goal is to gain detailed insights into a shared phenomenon. Creswell (2013) recommends between 5 and 25 participants for phenomenological research, indicating that five participants per group fall within an acceptable and

defensible range. Similarly, Polkinghorne (1989) suggests that a sample of 5 to 25 participants is sufficient to capture common meanings across individuals who have experienced the phenomenon.

Furthermore, Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) found that data saturation the point at which no new themes emerge often occurs within the first 6 to 12 interviews, particularly in studies with a relatively homogeneous participant group. By selecting five participants per group, the study ensured depth of data collection within each category of respondents while allowing for cross-group comparison and triangulation of findings.

In addition, using five participants per group enhanced the feasibility and manageability of the study, enabling prolonged engagement with participants and thorough analysis of interview data. This approach strengthened the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings by allowing the researcher to probe deeply into participants' experiences and perceptions.

3.5 Data collection instrument

An interview guide was used as the primary data collection instrument for this study on the barriers to educational continuity and inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality. The interview guide consists of a set of open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed responses from participants, providing an in-depth understanding of their experiences, perceptions, and insights regarding the challenges faced by deaf and hard of hearing children in accessing education. This semi-structured format allows for flexibility, enabling the researcher to explore topics that arise naturally during the conversation while ensuring that key areas of the study are covered.

The interview guide was chosen because it is well-suited to qualitative research that seeks to explore complex, subjective experiences, such as those of parents, teachers, and community leaders regarding the education of deaf and hard of hearing children. Using an interview guide allows for consistency in the questions asked across all participants while also providing room for participants to share their unique perspectives in their own words. This approach is particularly beneficial in capturing rich, contextual data and understanding the personal and emotional aspects of the challenges participants face, which would be difficult to capture through quantitative methods (Creswell, 2014).

Furthermore, the interview guide provides a structured framework for the researcher to ensure that all relevant topics related to the research questions are addressed. The open-ended nature of the questions encourages participants to provide in-depth responses and allows them to express their thoughts, feelings, and concerns freely (Patton, 2015). This instrument also helps the researcher build rapport with participants, fostering an environment where they feel comfortable sharing sensitive or personal information about their experiences in education, societal perceptions, and any barriers to access that they have encountered.

The interview guide was an appropriate instrument for this study because it allowed for the collection of rich, detailed qualitative data, offering insights into the barriers and opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing children's education in the Effutu Municipality. It provided a structured yet flexible approach to data collection, enabling the researcher to explore participants' lived experiences while ensuring that all important themes related to the research questions were addressed.

3.6 Trustworthiness of the Study

Several strategies were implemented to ensure the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the qualitative findings.

3.6.1 Credibility

To establish credibility, member checking was conducted by sharing the interview transcripts with the participants for verification. This allowed the participants to confirm that their responses were accurately captured and interpreted by the researcher. The participants were also given the opportunity to elaborate on their answers, ensuring that their experiences and perceptions were fully reflected in the findings. Additionally, triangulation was used to compare data from multiple sources. Parents, teachers, school administrators, and community leaders were interviewed to provide a range of perspectives on the challenges faced by deaf and hard of hearing children in accessing education. This helped validate the findings and provided a holistic understanding of the issues at hand. Furthermore, prolonged engagement was employed by spending an adequate amount of time in the Effutu Municipality to build rapport with participants and gain a deeper understanding of the local educational context. This engagement allowed the researcher to capture the richness and complexity of participants' experiences and perceptions over time.

3.6.2 Transferability

To enhance transferability, detailed thick descriptions of the study context were provided, including the socio-cultural and educational environment in the Effutu Municipality. The study also outlined the characteristics of the participants, such as their roles (parents, teachers, school administrators, community leaders), their level of involvement with deaf and hard of hearing education, and the challenges they encountered. These detailed descriptions offer readers the necessary information to

assess whether the findings of this study could be applicable to other similar contexts or settings.

3.6.3 Dependability

To ensure dependability, an audit trail was maintained throughout the research process. This included documenting the steps taken in data collection, the decisions made during the interview process, and the rationale behind the analysis. An audit trail allows other researchers to track the steps taken in the study and assess the consistency of the research process. In addition, a code-recode strategy was applied during data analysis. After initially coding the interview transcripts, the researcher waited for a period before recoding the data. This process confirmed that the coding remained consistent and that the themes emerging from the data were stable over time.

3.6.4 Confirmability

To ensure confirmability, the researcher engaged in reflexivity throughout the study. The researcher regularly reflected on their role in the research process, including any biases or preconceptions they brought to the study. These reflections were documented in a reflexive journal, allowing the researcher to remain aware of their influence on the research and to ensure that the findings were grounded in the data rather than shaped by personal biases. Additionally, peer review was conducted to enhance confirmability. A colleague in the field of education and qualitative research reviewed the interview data, codes, and emerging themes, providing an external perspective on the findings. This helped to identify any potential biases or errors in interpretation and ensured that the conclusions were well-supported by the data.

By employing these strategies member checking, triangulation, prolonged engagement, thick descriptions, audit trails, code-recode strategies, reflexivity, and

peer review the researcher ensured that the study was both credible and reliable, with findings that were grounded in the experiences of the participants and supported by multiple data sources. These practices reinforced the trustworthiness of the study and allowed for a rich, nuanced understanding of the barriers to educational continuity and inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality.

Through the use of these trustworthiness strategies, the study ensured that the findings accurately represented the lived experiences of participants and provided a deep understanding of the educational challenges and opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality. The careful attention to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability allowed the research to produce valid, reliable, and meaningful results that contribute to the field of deaf and hard of hearing education.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process was carefully planned and executed to ensure the research was ethical, reliable, and valid. The primary method for collecting data was semi-structured interviews, a qualitative research technique that allowed participants to share their perspectives in-depth while still ensuring that the key research topics were covered.

Before any interviews were conducted, informed consent was obtained from all participants. The researcher provided each participant with a detailed explanation of the study's purpose, the procedures involved, and their right to withdraw at any time without any penalty. This ensured that all participants were fully informed before deciding to participate. In some cases, where participants were unable to read, the consent form was read aloud, and verbal consent was obtained in the presence of a

witness to ensure clarity. By obtaining informed consent, the study adhered to ethical principles of voluntary participation and transparency (Creswell, 2014).

The data collection involved semi-structured interviews that took place in a private and comfortable setting to facilitate open and honest communication. The interview guide used in the study included open-ended questions that aimed to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and the barriers they encountered regarding the education of deaf and hard of hearing children. These questions covered key themes such as access to education, teacher preparedness, community support, and societal attitudes toward disability. Interviews were conducted face-to-face, but for participants who could not be present in person, alternative methods such as phone or video interviews were arranged. Each interview lasted between 30 and 60 minutes, providing participants ample time to share their thoughts in detail. The researcher maintained a neutral and respectful demeanor throughout the process, which encouraged participants to speak freely about their experiences (Patton, 2015).

To ensure the accuracy of the data collected, all interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent. This allowed the researcher to focus on the conversation and ensured that no important details were missed during the interview. After each interview, the recordings were transcribed verbatim to capture the exact words of the participants. This transcription process was done immediately after each interview to ensure accuracy and to preserve the integrity of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). All transcripts were reviewed carefully to ensure that the meanings of the participants' responses were accurately captured.

Confidentiality was a central consideration throughout the data collection process. To protect participants' identities, pseudonyms were used in the transcripts, and any other

information that could potentially identify participants was excluded. The data were stored securely, with access restricted to the researcher. Electronic files containing the data were kept on password-protected devices, and any physical documents were stored in a locked cabinet. These measures ensured that the privacy and confidentiality of participants were safeguarded throughout the study (Creswell, 2014).

Throughout the entire data collection process, ethical guidelines were followed to ensure that participants' rights and well-being were respected. Participants were assured that their involvement in the study was voluntary, and they were free to withdraw at any time without facing any negative consequences. The researcher maintained a nonjudgmental and empathetic approach throughout the interviews, especially given the sensitive nature of the topics discussed. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the university's ethics review board, ensuring that all ethical standards for research involving human participants were met (Bryman, 2016).

The data collection procedure followed a rigorous, ethical, and systematic approach to gather meaningful and rich data. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, informed consent, confidentiality, and ethical guidelines, the study ensured that the voices of participants were heard and that their rights were protected. The careful attention to ethical considerations allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the challenges faced by deaf and hard of hearing children in accessing education in the Effutu Municipality.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, a widely used method for analyzing qualitative data that focuses on identifying, analyzing, and reporting

patterns (themes) within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis allows for a detailed, flexible, and systematic approach to understanding the data, making it particularly suitable for exploring complex issues such as the barriers to educational inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality.

First, all the interviews were transcribed verbatim. Transcription is an essential step in qualitative research, as it converts the spoken word into written form, allowing for a more thorough analysis (Creswell, 2014). During the transcription process, care was taken to ensure that the responses were captured accurately, preserving the nuances of the participants' voices.

Once the data was transcribed, the researcher engaged in data immersion, which involved reading and rereading the transcripts to gain a deep understanding of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This step was crucial for the researcher to familiarize themselves with the content, ensuring that they were able to identify key themes and recurring patterns within the data.

Next, open coding was applied to the transcripts. In this process, the researcher systematically identified chunks of text or specific phrases that were relevant to the research questions (Saldana, 2016). The aim was to capture the meaning in the text and assign initial codes that summarized these meanings. For example, phrases such as "lack of resources," "negative attitudes," or "inadequate support" were coded as themes representing the barriers faced by deaf and hard of hearing children in education.

After the coding process, the researcher grouped the codes into broader themes that represented common ideas across the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For instance,

codes related to issues such as inadequate school facilities, lack of teacher training, and societal stigma were grouped under the theme "Structural Barriers to Education." Themes were developed iteratively as the researcher revisited the codes and ensured that each theme accurately represented the data.

Once initial themes were identified, the researcher reviewed and refined them by re-reading the transcripts and ensuring that the themes accurately captured the participants' responses. This step involved checking whether the themes made sense in the context of the research questions and whether they accurately represented the data across all interviews. At this stage, some themes were merged, while others were split, and unnecessary codes were discarded (Nowell et al., 2017).

After the final themes were refined, each theme was clearly defined and named to reflect its essence. This involved articulating what each theme represented and how it related to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For instance, a theme like "Community Support" might reflect the importance of local attitudes and the role of community leaders in advocating for deaf and hard of hearing children's education.

Finally, the themes and their corresponding data were presented in a structured report. The findings were discussed in relation to the research questions, and illustrative quotes from participants were used to support each theme. This stage of analysis involved interpreting the results within the broader context of the study's objectives and literature on educational inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children (Creswell, 2014).

Through thematic analysis, the data were systematically analyzed, and key themes emerged that provided valuable insights into the barriers to education for deaf and

hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality. This process allowed for a thorough understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives, while also ensuring the rigor and validity of the findings.

3.9 Ethical consideration

Ethical considerations were central to the research process to ensure the protection of participants' rights, confidentiality, and well-being. Ethical guidelines were strictly adhered to, following established research ethics standards, such as those outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA) and other research ethics frameworks (Creswell, 2014).

One of the primary ethical considerations was obtaining informed consent from all participants before any data collection took place. Each participant was fully informed about the purpose of the study, the nature of their involvement, the procedures involved, and any potential risks. They were also made aware that their participation was voluntary, and they could withdraw at any time without penalty. This ensured that participants made an informed decision about their participation (Bryman, 2016). Written consent was obtained from all participants, and for those unable to read, verbal consent was provided with a witness present to confirm their understanding and agreement to participate.

To protect the privacy of participants, confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process. Pseudonyms were used in the data collection, transcription, and analysis stages to ensure that the identity of the participants remained private. All data were stored securely and only accessible to the researcher, minimizing the risk of unauthorized access. Additionally, participants were informed

that their personal information and responses would be kept confidential and used solely for the purposes of this study (Creswell, 2014).

The study adhered to the principle of voluntary participation, where participants were assured that they were free to decide whether or not to participate, without any pressure or coercion. Furthermore, participants were made aware that they could withdraw from the study at any point without any negative consequences (Bryman, 2016). This was critical for ensuring that participants felt comfortable and not obligated to partake in the research.

The researcher was committed to treating all participants with respect and dignity. Special care was taken to create a nonjudgmental and supportive environment for participants, especially given that the study involved sensitive topics related to the challenges of educating deaf and hard of hearing children. The researcher was sensitive to the potential emotional responses that participants might have, particularly when discussing issues related to disability, stigma, and educational barriers. Participants were encouraged to speak openly, and their emotional well-being was prioritized throughout the data collection process (Patton, 2015).

The research was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines set by the university's ethics review board, which ensured that the study met ethical standards before data collection began. The board reviewed the research design, consent forms, and data protection strategies to ensure compliance with ethical standards for conducting research involving human participants (Creswell, 2014).

By adhering to these ethical considerations, the study maintained a high standard of integrity and ensured that participants were treated fairly, respectfully, and ethically

throughout the research process. The measures taken helped protect participants' rights, ensure the confidentiality of their information, and promote an ethical and responsible approach to conducting qualitative research.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a detailed account of the methodology employed in this study, highlighting the rationale for the qualitative case study design, which was selected to explore the barriers, perceptions, and educational experiences of deaf and hard of hearing children within the Effutu community. The qualitative approach enabled an in-depth examination of participants lived experiences, while the case study design provided a context-sensitive framework to investigate complex social and institutional factors affecting access, retention, and transition in education. The chapter outlined the study population, which included parents, teachers, school administrators, and community leaders, and justified the use of purposive sampling to select 20 information-rich participants across these groups. The use of semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection instrument allowed for flexible, detailed, and nuanced responses. Strategies to ensure trustworthiness, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, were described, along with rigorous data collection procedures and thematic analysis to systematically identify key patterns and themes. Finally, ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and secure data handling were thoroughly addressed. Overall, the chapter demonstrated how the methodology was carefully designed to produce valid, reliable, and contextually grounded findings that contribute to understanding and improving educational inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the barriers to educational continuity and inclusion for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu Municipality. It explores the challenges and opportunities faced by deaf and hard of hearing children in accessing and retaining education, examining key factors that influence their educational experiences. The chapter is organized into several sections, beginning with an overview of the demographic variables of the study participants, which include teachers, parents, school administrators, and community leaders. These demographic characteristics provide valuable context for understanding the broader issues and help identify patterns in the data. The chapter then discusses the results and analysis for each of the research questions, focusing on the barriers to school enrolment, the low transition rates from junior to senior high school, community perceptions, and strategies for improving access to and continuity in deaf and hard of hearing education. The findings are interpreted through a lens that combines both the qualitative responses from participants and relevant literature on inclusive education for deaf and hard of hearing children. Ultimately, this chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by deaf and hard of hearing children in Effutu Municipality, as well as practical recommendations for improving their educational outcomes.

4.1 Demographic of respondents

The study involved a total of 20 participants, equally distributed across four stakeholder groups: five parents of deaf and hard of hearing children, five teachers, five school administrators, and five community leaders. This balanced representation

ensured that multiple perspectives on the barriers and opportunities in deaf and hard of hearing education were captured.

Participants' ages ranged from 25 to 55 years, with the majority (40%) falling within the 26–35 age range, representing parents and educators actively engaged in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children. A smaller proportion (35%) were aged 36–45, often consisting of experienced teachers and community leaders, while the remaining 25% were between 46–55 years. The age distribution provided insights into both contemporary and historical perspectives on deaf and hard of hearing education within the community.

The gender distribution was relatively balanced, with 11 females (55%) and 9 males (45%). This balance reflects the involvement of both men and women in the education and advocacy of deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community.

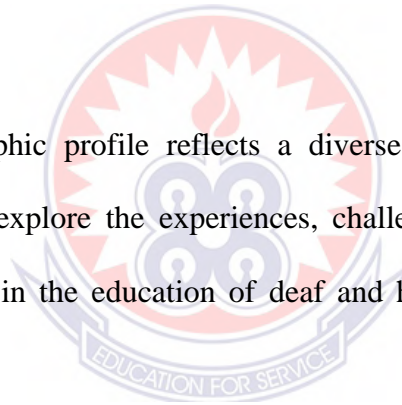
Participants also varied in educational background. Among the teachers and school administrators, most (60%) had tertiary education, often including specialized training related to deaf and hard of hearing education. Parents and community leaders had more varied education levels: 40% had completed secondary education, while 20% had primary education only. This diversity in education highlighted differences in awareness, advocacy capacity, and access to educational resources.

In terms of occupation, parents were primarily engaged in self-employment (50%), small-scale businesses, or public sector employment (30%), while 20% were unemployed. Teachers and administrators had between 2 and 15 years of professional experience, providing a mix of perspectives on both current and historical practices in inclusive education.

Regarding support for deaf and hard of hearing children, participants reported varied access to resources. Approximately 40% indicated that sign language interpreters and specialized teachers were available in schools, 35% reported limited access, and 25% noted availability of assistive technology, though not always effectively utilized. This disparity underscores differences in resource allocation across the Effutu Municipality.

Finally, participants indicated that awareness of deaf and hard of hearing education programs in the community was generally low. About half (50%) were somewhat aware of available programs, 30% had limited awareness, and 20% were highly aware. This suggests the need for increased community engagement and awareness initiatives.

Overall, the demographic profile reflects a diverse, information-rich sample that allowed the study to explore the experiences, challenges, and perspectives of key stakeholders involved in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community.



4.2 Research Question One

What are the barriers preventing deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community from enrolling and staying in school?

The education of deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community is often fraught with challenges that hinder their ability to enroll and remain in school. These barriers can be both structural and social, including insufficient educational facilities, a lack of specialized teaching staff, and societal attitudes that undermine the potential of deaf and hard of hearing children. Understanding these barriers is crucial for

creating an inclusive educational environment that supports the enrollment and retention of deaf and hard of hearing children.

4.2.1 Theme 1: Lack Access to Educational Resources

Participant 1: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child *"When my child first started school, we had a lot of difficulties because there weren't enough resources available for him. For example, the school didn't have a sign language interpreter, and the teaching materials were not tailored to meet the needs of a deaf and hard of hearing child. I had to buy special books and equipment myself, which was financially straining. It is hard to understand why the school doesn't provide the same resources that are necessary for him to succeed."*

Participant 2: Teacher of Deaf and hard of hearing Children *"We try our best to support deaf and hard of hearing children, but it's a constant struggle. We don't have enough sign language interpreters, and the few resources we have are outdated. Many of the materials in the classroom, such as textbooks and worksheets, are not visually accessible for deaf and hard of hearing children. We are forced to rely on a few resources we can find, but it is not enough. Our classrooms aren't fully equipped for the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children, which makes it difficult to teach them effectively."*

Participant 3: Community Leader *"The community does not seem to prioritize education for children with disabilities, especially the deaf and hard of hearing. Schools in this area are not*

well-equipped for special needs education. Often, families have to find their own resources, like paying for hearing aids or seeking extra support from private institutions. It's disheartening because we, as a community, don't have enough programs to support these children. The government and schools should provide more resources to make sure deaf and hard of hearing children have the same opportunities as other children."

Participant 4: Teacher in an Inclusive Classroom *"I have one deaf and hard of hearing child in my class, and although I am trained in inclusive education, the lack of adequate resources is a big challenge. I rely on my own skills and some online materials to support the child, but the school doesn't provide the technology, like captioned videos or hearing devices, that would make a real difference. The deaf and hard of hearing child in my class often feels left out during group activities because there's no sign language support."*

Participant 5: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child (Follow-Up Response) *"It was really difficult to enroll my child in school because the school didn't even have a basic understanding of how to accommodate her. She didn't have a sign language interpreter, and when we finally got one, they didn't know the local sign language well. It made me realize how much more the school needs to do. I have had to take matters into my own*

hands by hiring a private tutor who understands sign language to help her, but that's costly."

The theme "Access to Educational Resources" emerges strongly from the responses provided by the participants. The interviews highlight several key barriers related to the lack of appropriate resources for deaf and hard of hearing children, which significantly impacts their education. Below, I analyze and discuss these responses in detail, drawing from relevant literature to support the findings.

From the responses of both the parent (Participant 1) and the teacher (Participant 2), a clear lack of resources such as sign language interpreters, assistive technology (e.g., hearing aids, captioned videos), and tailored teaching materials emerges as a major barrier to the education of deaf and hard of hearing children. The parent specifically mentions the need to purchase books and materials out of their own pocket, indicating a significant financial burden on families.

Schirmer (2001) emphasizes that the lack of specialized resources, including sign language interpreters and adapted teaching materials, creates significant obstacles for the academic progress of deaf and hard of hearing children. Moreover, Marschark and Knoors (2003) argue that without these crucial resources, children with deaf and hard of hearing are at a substantial disadvantage in a mainstream educational environment. This underscores the importance of schools being properly equipped to support children with special needs.

The responses suggest that there is a systemic issue where schools lack the necessary resources, and as a result, parents are forced to take on the financial responsibility of supplementing their children's education. This scenario is not only financially

burdensome but also points to an equity issue where the educational system does not adequately support children with disabilities.

The parent's response (Participant 1) highlights that families are often left to bear the financial burden of ensuring their children receive the education they deserve. This is compounded by the community leader's comments (Participant 3), where they mention that families often pay for external resources, such as hearing aids, which should ideally be provided by the school system.

According to Daly and O'Reilly (2017), the financial burden placed on families for supplementary educational materials and services is a significant challenge. Lederberg et al. (2000) also point out that when families have to privately finance their children's education, it often results in unequal opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing children, especially in low-income communities.

The financial strain on families is a clear manifestation of the gap between what is needed and what is provided by schools and the government. This disparity perpetuates inequality and restricts access to quality education for deaf and hard of hearing children, making it harder for them to succeed academically.

The teacher's response (Participant 2) highlights another critical issue: the lack of training and support for teachers to effectively engage with deaf and hard of hearing children. Although the teacher has received training in inclusive education, the response reflects a mismatch between the teacher's expertise and the available resources, particularly in terms of classroom materials and sign language support.

Marschark (2003) asserts that well-trained teachers, proficient in sign language and inclusive teaching strategies, are essential for fostering the academic success of deaf

and hard of hearing children. However, Ainscow et al. (2006) point out that in many settings, the absence of specialized training for teachers often leads to inadequate teaching and poor outcomes for children with disabilities. This suggests that training alone is not sufficient; proper resources and support are also necessary.

The teacher's response indicates that while there may be efforts to train educators in inclusive practices, these are often insufficient without the necessary resources. This points to a need for a more systemic approach where teacher training is complemented by adequate material support and in-class assistance for deaf and hard of hearing children.

The community leader's response (Participant 3) suggests that the lack of institutional and community support for deaf and hard of hearing education is a major barrier. The community does not prioritize the education of deaf and hard of hearing children, and this is reflected in the inadequacy of the school system to provide necessary resources. The response also mentions the reliance on private institutions and external resources, which are often unaffordable for many families.

Karger and Stoesz (2014) highlight that the broader community's attitudes and priorities significantly influence the resources allocated to special education. When the community is not invested in inclusive education, it becomes difficult to advocate for systemic changes that can benefit children with disabilities. Olusanya et al. (2018) further argue that community-based interventions and public awareness are crucial for improving access to education for children with disabilities.

The community leader's response suggests a lack of awareness and priority at the local level regarding the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children. This underscores

the need for increased community engagement and advocacy to ensure that resources for deaf and hard of hearing education are better funded and integrated into the broader educational system.

The responses from the participants provide a comprehensive picture of the barriers to school enrollment and retention for deaf and hard of hearing children, particularly in relation to the theme "Access to Educational Resources." The lack of specialized resources—ranging from sign language interpreters and teaching materials to assistive technologies emerges as a key challenge. The financial strain placed on families, inadequate teacher training, and the community's lack of prioritization of deaf and hard of hearing education further compound these difficulties.

These findings are consistent with the existing literature, which stresses the importance of both material and human resources in supporting deaf and hard of hearing children's education. It is clear that addressing these barriers requires systemic changes, including better resource allocation, teacher training, and increased community involvement. In order to ensure educational equity, schools and governments must work collaboratively to provide the necessary resources and support for deaf and hard of hearing children.

4.2.2 Theme 2: Socioeconomic and Financial Barriers

Participant 1: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child *"The financial*

challenges we face are overwhelming. The school doesn't provide much for my child, and everything from hearing aids to special educational materials needs to be bought on our own. I cannot afford to provide all the necessary resources for her education, and sometimes, I feel like she's missing out. I

work multiple jobs just to make sure she has what she needs, but it's still not enough. Sometimes I wonder if it's worth all the sacrifice if the education system is not going to give her a fair chance."

Participant 2: Teacher of Deaf and hard of hearing Children *"It's heartbreaking to see children come to school without the necessary resources to fully participate. Some children don't have hearing aids, and some families can't afford the extra support they need, like tutoring or after-school services. When the family is struggling financially, they can't prioritize these expenses, and this directly impacts the child's learning experience. It's a vicious cycle where financial limitations limit access to quality education, and this affects the child's long-term academic success."*

Participant 3: Community Leader *"In this community, there's a serious lack of financial support for children with special needs, especially those who are deaf and hard of hearing. Most families here are already struggling to make ends meet, so paying for extra resources like hearing aids or special school fees is not something they can afford. I think the government and local authorities need to do more to subsidize the costs for families. It shouldn't be solely on the parents to provide for everything."*

Participant 4: Teacher in an Inclusive Classroom *"While I try to support my deaf and hard of hearing children in every way I can, the*

financial constraints of many families often limit their opportunities. Some parents cannot afford private sign language classes or tutoring to help their children catch up. The school has some resources, but they are not enough. When children miss out on learning due to these financial barriers, it becomes harder for them to catch up with their peers."

Participant 5: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child (Follow-Up

Response) *"It's very difficult to keep my child in school because of the costs involved. We don't have enough money to cover the cost of school fees, special materials, or the extra services needed to support my child's learning. I often feel guilty that I can't provide her with everything she needs to succeed academically. She's very bright, but financial limitations make me worry that she will fall behind."*

The theme "Socioeconomic and Financial Barriers" clearly emerges as a significant challenge for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community, as indicated by the interview responses. These responses highlight the financial struggles families face in securing necessary resources for their children's education, which directly affects school enrollment, retention, and academic success.

Both parents (Participants 1 and 5) and the teacher (Participant 2) highlight the financial strain families face in securing necessary resources for their deaf and hard of hearing children. Parents often need to cover costs for items such as hearing aids, educational materials, and specialized tutoring, which can be prohibitively expensive.

These financial burdens result in limited access to quality education for many children with deaf and hard of hearing.

Marschark (2003) notes that one of the major barriers to education for deaf and hard of hearing children, particularly in low-income areas, is the lack of access to essential resources like hearing aids and sign language support. Lederberg et al. (2000) emphasize that these financial challenges are exacerbated in families from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, where basic needs often take precedence over educational expenses.

The financial strain highlighted in these responses suggests that families in the Effutu community are likely to face significant educational inequalities due to their inability to afford the necessary resources for deaf and hard of hearing children. This could lead to long-term academic disadvantages for deaf and hard of hearing children and perpetuate the cycle of educational exclusion.

The community leader (Participant 3) discusses how the government and local authorities have not done enough to subsidize costs for families with deaf and hard of hearing children. As a result, many families struggle to meet the additional financial demands associated with special education needs, which significantly impacts school retention rates.

Karger and Stoesz (2014) highlight that in many developing regions, including areas like Effutu, government support for special education is often insufficient. Without government intervention in covering the costs of hearing aids, sign language interpreters, and other specialized resources, families are forced to rely on their own limited resources, further disadvantaging their children. Olusanya et al. (2018) further

argue that state-funded programs are essential for ensuring that children with disabilities can access an equitable education, but many governments fail to allocate the necessary funds for this purpose.

The community leader's response points to a significant gap in institutional support for deaf and hard of hearing children. The lack of government intervention places an undue financial burden on families, which can discourage parents from enrolling or keeping their children in school. To address this, increased public funding for special education services is necessary to relieve families of these financial pressures.

The teacher in an inclusive classroom (Participant 4) emphasizes how financial constraints limit the ability of children to access additional support, such as private sign language classes or tutoring. Without this extra support, children may struggle to catch up with their peers, which can lead to lower retention rates and disengagement from school.

Schirmer (2001) argues that without sufficient educational support, including supplementary tutoring and after-school programs, deaf and hard of hearing children often fall behind in their studies. This, in turn, affects their academic performance and retention rates. Marschark and Knoors (2003) similarly stress that when deaf and hard of hearing children are unable to receive the extra support they need due to financial barriers, it negatively impacts their academic progress and increases the likelihood of school dropout.

The teacher's response highlights a critical point: financial barriers not only impact immediate access to resources but also have long-term consequences on academic achievement and school retention. Without adequate support, deaf and hard of hearing

children are at risk of falling behind academically, which may lead to higher dropout rates.

The parent's follow-up response (Participant 5) conveys a sense of guilt and frustration about not being able to provide their child with the resources she needs. This feeling is likely shared by many other parents in the community, suggesting a broader sense of inequity in the educational system for children with deaf and hard of hearing.

Sutherland and Lacy (2008) discuss how the inability of families to provide necessary educational resources can lead to a sense of injustice and frustration. This inequity not only impacts the child's education but also affects the parent's emotional well-being. Daly and O'Reilly (2017) also highlight that when families are financially unable to provide their children with the support they need, it can lead to lower expectations and reduced opportunities for the child.

The parent's response underscores the emotional and psychological toll that financial barriers can take on families. The feeling of inadequacy experienced by parents may further hinder the educational engagement of both the child and the parent, perpetuating a cycle of educational disadvantage.

The responses from participants highlight the significant socioeconomic and financial barriers faced by deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community. These barriers include the inability of families to afford essential resources such as hearing aids, tutoring, and sign language services, as well as the lack of institutional and government support to subsidize these costs. The financial strain faced by families

results in educational inequalities, lower retention rates, and long-term academic disadvantages for deaf and hard of hearing children.

These findings align with the existing literature, which emphasizes the importance of financial support and government intervention to ensure that children with deaf and hard of hearing can access a quality education. It is evident that to improve educational access and retention for deaf and hard of hearing children, there needs to be greater investment in special education services, both at the government and school levels, to alleviate the financial burden on families.

4.2.3 Theme 3: Lack of Awareness and Stigma in the Community

Participant 1: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child

"One of the biggest challenges we face is the stigma attached to my child's disability. When I first enrolled her in school, some people questioned why I would send her to school at all, thinking she couldn't learn or succeed because she's deaf and hard of hearing. There's a lot of ignorance in the community about what deaf and hard of hearing children are capable of. It's heartbreaking, and it adds to the difficulty of keeping her in school because even some teachers didn't know how to help her. The community needs more awareness about disability rights and what these children are able to achieve with the right support."

Participant 2: Teacher of Deaf and hard of hearing Children

"In the classroom, there's a lot of misconceptions about deaf and hard of hearing children. Some of the other children don't understand why they need to make accommodations for their

deaf and hard of hearing peers, and some even make fun of them because they don't speak in the same way. The community at large doesn't seem to recognize the potential of deaf and hard of hearing children, which makes it harder to foster an inclusive environment. I've had parents express reluctance about having their children interact with deaf and hard of hearing children because of fear or misunderstanding, and I feel that the community lacks sufficient education on the subject."

Participant 3: Community Leader *"There's a lot of fear and misunderstanding surrounding disabilities in our community. When it comes to deaf and hard of hearingness, many people believe that a deaf and hard of hearing child is incapable of learning or living a productive life. This stigma discourages parents from sending their children to school or even acknowledging that they need help. The community needs to embrace the idea of inclusion, but that's going to require a significant shift in attitudes and more awareness about disabilities. Until that happens, I fear many children will be left behind."*

Participant 4: Teacher in an Inclusive Classroom *"The stigma surrounding deaf and hard of hearingness is still very prevalent in the community. Many people view disabilities as something to be ashamed of, and there is a strong belief that children with disabilities will not succeed in school. Even within the school system, some teachers have little experience*

with inclusive education and don't know how to interact with deaf and hard of hearing children. This lack of understanding from both the community and the school makes it difficult for deaf and hard of hearing children to thrive."

Participant 5: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child (Follow-Up

Response) *"I feel isolated because there are few people in the community who understand my child's needs. When I talk to other parents, some of them even suggest that I should keep her at home because they believe school isn't for her. It's difficult because I know she has the potential to learn and succeed, but the community doesn't support her. The stigma makes me feel like I'm the only one advocating for her, and it's exhausting."*

The theme "Lack of Awareness and Stigma in the Community" is strongly evident from the responses of the participants. The interviewees describe how pervasive stigma, misconceptions, and a general lack of understanding about deaf and hard of hearingness create significant barriers to both school enrollment and retention for deaf and hard of hearing children. Below is an analysis and discussion of these responses, supported by relevant literature.

Several parents (Participant 1 and Participant 5) and the teacher (Participant 2) highlighted how stigma and negative societal attitudes about deaf and hard of hearingness present major obstacles. The community's lack of understanding about the abilities of deaf and hard of hearing children leads to misconceptions, such as the belief that deaf and hard of hearing children are incapable of learning or achieving

success. This stigma is not only external but also internalized by families, making it difficult for them to advocate for their children's education.

Olusanya et al. (2018) emphasize that societal attitudes towards disabilities, including deaf and hard of hearingness, are often shaped by myths and misunderstandings. O'Toole and Hadadian (2009) argue that these negative perceptions, coupled with stigma, can prevent deaf and hard of hearing children from accessing educational opportunities, as families may feel isolated or discouraged from pursuing schooling options for their children.

The stigma surrounding deaf and hard of hearingness in the Effutu community is a significant barrier. The internalized shame and misconceptions about deaf and hard of hearingness make it difficult for parents to enroll their children in school and advocate for their rights. As noted in the responses, the lack of awareness often leads to exclusionary practices, even in educational settings, which reinforces the idea that deaf and hard of hearing children are somehow inferior or unable to succeed academically.

The teacher in an inclusive classroom (Participant 4) and community leader (Participant 3) notes that there is a general lack of awareness in the community and even within the school system about how to properly include and support deaf and hard of hearing children. Teachers are often unprepared to work with deaf and hard of hearing children, and the community as a whole lacks education on how to interact with children with disabilities.

Marschark and Knoors (2003) highlight that a lack of knowledge and training in inclusive education is a significant barrier to the success of deaf and hard of hearing

children. Schools often lack the necessary resources and expertise to address the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children, which leads to feelings of alienation and exclusion. Gabel (2005) suggests that community-based education and awareness programs are essential for reducing stigma and fostering more inclusive environments for children with disabilities.

The lack of awareness in both schools and the broader community indicates a need for targeted education and awareness campaigns. Schools and teachers must receive better training in inclusive education practices, and the community at large needs to be educated about the capabilities of deaf and hard of hearing children. Without this foundational shift in understanding, it will be difficult to create an inclusive educational environment for deaf and hard of hearing children.

The community leader (Participant 3) and parent (Participant 5) mention that some parents have fears about enrolling their children in school due to misconceptions about deaf and hard of hearingness. The stigma surrounding disabilities often leads to reluctance from parents to pursue education for their children, as they fear their children will not succeed or be treated poorly.

Pijl and Frissen (2009) argue that parents often face the challenge of societal stigma, which can lead to isolation and a lack of support in advocating for their child's education. Bakhshi et al. (2011) note that fear and misunderstanding often prevent parents from seeking out educational opportunities for their children with disabilities, as they may be uncertain about the support systems in place.

Parents in the Effutu community may be hesitant to send their children to school due to fear of discrimination or failure. This reluctance can be alleviated through

community awareness programs, showing parents that their children can succeed with the proper resources and support. Parents who are educated about their child's rights and potential are more likely to engage in their child's education and fight against stigma.

The responses from the community leader (Participant 3) suggest that addressing the stigma around deaf and hard of hearingness requires a community-wide shift in attitudes toward inclusion. The community must adopt a more positive view of disabilities and start seeing them as part of the diverse human experience, rather than something to be feared or misunderstood.

Ainscow et al. (2006) stress that fostering inclusive education requires systemic changes not only within schools but also in the broader community. Janssen and Pijl (2007) argue that raising awareness about disabilities and creating supportive, inclusive environments at the community level are crucial for improving educational outcomes for children with disabilities.

The need for a community-wide shift is clear. Without addressing the stigma and increasing understanding of disabilities, including deaf and hard of hearingness, it will be difficult to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children have the same educational opportunities as their hearing peers. A community-wide approach involving awareness campaigns, school training programs, and family support initiatives could help to reduce stigma and improve the educational inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children.

The theme "Lack of Awareness and Stigma in the Community" presents a significant barrier to school enrollment and retention for deaf and hard of hearing children in the

Effutu community. The stigma surrounding deaf and hard of hearingness, misconceptions about the abilities of deaf and hard of hearing children, and the general lack of awareness in both the community and schools make it difficult for families to pursue education for their children. The lack of proper support, training for teachers, and fear among parents due to societal misunderstanding further exacerbate the situation.

The findings suggest that addressing this barrier requires a multifaceted approach, including community education and awareness programs, teacher training in inclusive education, and better parental support. Only through shifting community attitudes and increasing understanding can we ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children are provided with equal opportunities for education and growth.

4.3 Research Question Two

What are the factors contributing to the low transition rate of deaf and hard of hearing children from junior high school to senior high school in the Effutu community?

Despite efforts to improve education for deaf and hard of hearing children, the transition from junior high to senior high school remains a significant challenge. This research question seeks to identify the factors that contribute to the low transition rate for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community, including the availability of support systems, financial constraints, and societal attitudes that may limit their opportunities for further education.

4.3.1 Theme 1: Perception of Deaf and hard of hearing Children's Abilities

Participant 1: Teacher of Deaf and hard of hearing Children *"In my*

experience, some teachers and even parents have a very limited

view of what deaf and hard of hearing children can do. There's

a perception that because they can't hear, they can't learn in the same way or achieve at the same level as hearing children. This is a misconception. Many deaf and hard of hearing children are capable of excelling academically, but they need the right resources and support. When people fail to see this potential, it often leads to lower expectations, which limits the opportunities offered to these children."

Participant 2: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child *"When I first told people about my child's deaf and hard of hearingness, many of them said things like, 'Why bother with school? She won't be able to succeed.' These perceptions are not just in the community; they're also held by some teachers. It's frustrating because I know my daughter has so much potential, but these attitudes often make it harder for her to get the help she needs. The community needs to recognize that deaf and hard of hearing children can succeed and shouldn't be underestimated based on their hearing impairment."*

Participant 3: Community Leader *"There is still a belief in the community that deaf and hard of hearing children are less capable than hearing children. People tend to focus on the disability instead of the abilities. For example, many think that a deaf and hard of hearing child can't learn a language or that they're incapable of achieving high academic standards. This perception is deeply ingrained in the community, and it affects how families of deaf and hard of hearing children are supported. We need to*

change the narrative and start focusing more on what these children can do rather than what they can't."

The theme "Perception of Deaf and hard of hearing Children's Abilities" clearly reflects the low expectations many people in the community have about deaf and hard of hearing children's potential. This negative perception can have a significant impact on the opportunities offered to these children in education.

The responses from the teacher (Participant 1) and parent (Participant 2) show that there are widespread stereotypes about deaf and hard of hearing children. These perceptions of incapacity can result in underestimation of deaf and hard of hearing children's abilities, leading to fewer opportunities, fewer educational resources, and a lack of motivation for children. Ainscow et al. (2006) highlight that societal stereotypes often lead to lower expectations for children with disabilities, which negatively affects their educational outcomes.

Addressing these negative perceptions is crucial for improving the educational opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing children. Awareness campaigns and training for both educators and the broader community can help shift the focus from what deaf and hard of hearing children cannot do to what they can accomplish with the right support.

The community leader (Participant 3) echoes the sentiment that the community's perception influences the educational environment. When children are constantly faced with low expectations from teachers and peers, their motivation to succeed can diminish. Gabel (2005) discusses how limited societal views of disabilities can directly affect the academic aspirations of children with disabilities, causing them to feel excluded or incapable of success.

Changing the perception of deaf and hard of hearing children's abilities is essential to ensure they receive the necessary support, motivation, and encouragement to pursue their academic goals. Creating an inclusive school culture that challenges stereotypes will benefit not only deaf and hard of hearing children but the community as a whole.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Inclusion and Support in Schools

Participant 4: Teacher in an Inclusive Classroom *"There's still a lot of*

work to be done when it comes to inclusive education for deaf and hard of hearing children. While we have made strides in some areas, the level of support for deaf and hard of hearing children is still inconsistent. Some schools have the resources, like interpreters or special education teachers, but others don't. This uneven provision of services means that some deaf and hard of hearing children get the support they need, while others do not. There needs to be a more systematic approach to ensure that every school has the resources and training to include deaf and hard of hearing children."

Participant 5: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child *"I've been*

fortunate that my daughter's school has been supportive and inclusive, but I know that not all schools are like that. Some schools simply do not have the understanding or resources to support deaf and hard of hearing children. As a parent, it's very frustrating to think that my child might not receive the same level of education just because of the school's limitations. The government and schools need to provide better resources

for inclusion, so that deaf and hard of hearing children have equal access to education."

Participant 6: Community Leader *"In our community, there's a strong desire for inclusion, but the reality is that schools are not always equipped to handle the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children. Many schools lack the necessary infrastructure, such as sign language interpreters or specialized teaching methods. It's important that we raise awareness about inclusive education, not just in theory but in practice, to make sure that all children, regardless of their hearing ability, can receive a proper education."*

The theme "Inclusion and Support in Schools" is strongly present in the responses, with many participants expressing concerns about the inconsistency of inclusive education practices. The lack of resources and specialized support in schools is a recurring issue.

The responses from the teacher (Participant 4) and parent (Participant 5) demonstrate that the availability of resources, such as interpreters, special education teachers, and inclusive teaching methods, varies from school to school. Marschark and Knoors (2003) emphasize that inclusion in schools requires both systemic changes in curriculum and an increased investment in resources to meet the diverse needs of children with disabilities, including those who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Ensuring consistent and adequate resources across all schools is essential for fostering inclusion. Policy changes at the governmental level could help standardize the

resources available for deaf and hard of hearing children in schools, ensuring they have the necessary tools and support to succeed academically.

The community leader (Participant 6) highlights the importance of not just theoretical inclusion but practical implementation in schools. Schirmer (2001) argues that successful inclusive education requires ongoing teacher training, awareness, and collaboration among school staff. Teachers must be equipped with the knowledge and skills to support the diverse needs of deaf and hard of hearing children. Providing professional development opportunities for teachers and school staff is critical. Schools must be equipped not only with the physical resources but also with the knowledge and skills to create a truly inclusive learning environment for deaf and hard of hearing children.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Community Attitudes Toward Education for Deaf and hard of hearing Children

Participant 7: Community Leader *"In the community, there's still a belief that deaf and hard of hearing children are better off staying at home. Some people think that education is a waste of time because they believe that deaf and hard of hearing children won't be able to do well in life. This perception discourages many parents from enrolling their children in school, and it makes it harder for those who do enroll their children to feel supported."*

Participant 8: Teacher of Deaf and hard of hearing Children *"The community attitudes toward education for deaf and hard of hearing children can be discouraging. I've met parents who*

are reluctant to send their children to school because they fear their children will be ridiculed or fail. They might hear negative comments from others in the community, which further isolates them and discourages them from seeking out educational opportunities. There's a need for a cultural shift in how we view the abilities of deaf and hard of hearing children."

Participant 9: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child *"I've had people tell me that my child should just stay home because she won't be able to achieve much. This kind of attitude is very damaging, not just to my child but to other deaf and hard of hearing children as well. Parents and the community need to be more accepting of children with disabilities and support their education rather than trying to hide them away."*

The theme "Community Attitudes Toward Education for Deaf and hard of hearing Children" reveals the deep-seated misconceptions and negative attitudes that exist within the community regarding the value of education for deaf and hard of hearing children. These attitudes contribute to isolation and a lack of support for deaf and hard of hearing children's education.

The responses from the community member (Participant 7) and parent (Participant 9) demonstrate the prevalent stigma surrounding deaf and hard of hearingness and the tendency to underestimate deaf and hard of hearing children's potential. Olusanya et al. (2018) highlight that negative cultural attitudes and low societal expectations are significant barriers to educational access and success for children with disabilities. Overcoming these cultural barriers requires comprehensive

awareness programs that challenge stereotypes about deaf and hard of hearing children and demonstrate the potential for success with the right support.

The teacher (Participant 8) points out that the negative attitudes from the community can further isolate deaf and hard of hearing children and their families. Pijl and Frissen (2009) argue that when families face discrimination or lack community support, it becomes more difficult for children to receive an education. It is essential to create community-based programs that not only raise awareness about the abilities of deaf and hard of hearing children but also foster greater social inclusion and support for their education. These initiatives can reduce the isolation faced by deaf and hard of hearing children and their families.

The responses from the interviews indicate that there are significant challenges related to perceptions of deaf and hard of hearing children's abilities, inclusion and support in schools, and community attitudes. There is a strong need for cultural change in how deaf and hard of hearing children are perceived and supported, both in schools and in the wider community. These challenges can be addressed through targeted education programs, training for educators, and public awareness campaigns to change societal attitudes toward disabilities and increase support for inclusive education.

4.4 Research Question Three

How do schools and the community perceive the education of deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community?

Perceptions of the education and potential of deaf and hard of hearing children play a crucial role in shaping their educational experiences. This research question explores how schools and the broader community view the education of deaf and hard of

hearing children in the Effutu community, with a focus on attitudes, expectations, and the level of support provided. These perceptions often influence the quality and inclusivity of education offered to deaf and hard of hearing children.

4.4.1 Theme 1: Lack of Educational Resources and Support at Senior High Level
Participant 1: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child *"My child*

completed junior high school with the help of some supportive teachers, but when we tried to transition to senior high school, we faced many challenges. There weren't any schools nearby that were equipped to support deaf and hard of hearing children, and the few available resources for special education at the senior high level were not adequate. The senior high school we wanted to enroll her in didn't have a sign language interpreter, and there were no programs to support deaf and hard of hearing children. Without these services, I felt like my child would not be able to succeed, so we decided to keep her home rather than risk her failure in a school that wasn't prepared."

Participant 2: Teacher of Deaf and hard of hearing Children *"One*

major issue I see with transitions is the lack of resources at the senior high school level. In junior high school, we have special education services, but once children move up, there are fewer options. Senior high schools lack specialized teachers who are trained to work with deaf and hard of hearing children, and often, the curriculum doesn't accommodate their needs. There's a lack of sign language interpreters, and there is little to no extra

support provided, which makes it difficult for deaf and hard of hearing children to keep up with their hearing peers."

Participant 3: Community Leader *"The transition from junior to senior high school for deaf and hard of hearing children is really tough in our community. It's not just about the children; it's about the lack of proper infrastructure and trained staff in the senior high schools. Without resources like sign language interpreters, tutoring, and other support systems, deaf and hard of hearing children simply cannot thrive. The community lacks the capacity to fully support deaf and hard of hearing children at the senior high school level, which is why many families are reluctant to send their children to those schools."*

The theme "Lack of Educational Resources and Support at Senior High Level" was emphasized by participants across different roles in the education system, and it is clear that a lack of sufficient resources is a significant barrier to the transition of deaf and hard of hearing children from junior high to senior high school.

The responses of parents (Participant 1) and teachers (Participant 2) point to the absence of adequate infrastructure and support services at the senior high school level. At the junior high school level, there are generally more resources tailored to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children, but these services are not consistently available at the senior high school level. Marschark and Knoors (2003) stress that the absence of specialized resources, such as sign language interpreters, makes it impossible for deaf and hard of hearing children to engage fully with the curriculum in mainstream education settings.

The lack of educational support at the senior high school level is a major barrier to the transition of deaf and hard of hearing children. Without access to specialized resources, the risk of academic failure increases, which contributes to the low transition rate.

The responses from the teacher (Participant 2) and community leader (Participant 3) highlight the need for trained professionals who understand the specific needs of deaf and hard of hearing children. Inadequate teacher training in inclusive education is a major challenge, and deaf and hard of hearing children often do not receive the individualized attention they need in mainstream classrooms at the senior high level. Schirmer (2001) points out that the shortage of teachers with expertise in deaf and hard of hearing education and the lack of resources for continued professional development led to significant gaps in support for deaf and hard of hearing children as they progress in their education.

Teacher preparation and ongoing professional development in inclusive education must be prioritized at the senior high school level. The absence of skilled teachers hinders the successful integration of deaf and hard of hearing children into higher levels of education.

4.4.2 Theme 2: Socioeconomic Barriers and Financial Constraints

Participant 4: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child *"When my*

child completed junior high school, I was hopeful that she would continue to senior high school. But the cost of education at the senior level is too high for us. The school fees, the cost of learning materials, and the extra fees for services like sign language interpretation are more than I can afford. I want her

to continue her education, but I just can't pay for everything. I had to make the painful decision to keep her home because the financial burden was too great."

Participant 5: Teacher of Deaf and hard of hearing Children *"For many families, the cost of education beyond junior high school is a significant obstacle. Even if there are schools that accept deaf and hard of hearing children, the additional costs of specialized services, like interpreters or transportation, are simply unaffordable. I've seen many children drop out at the transition point because their families cannot bear the financial strain. It's really discouraging to see bright children with potential not able to continue due to financial reasons."*

Participant 6: Community Leader *"One of the biggest factors I see in low transition rates is the economic burden on families. While some families might struggle with general school fees, for families with deaf and hard of hearing children, the additional costs like those for assistive technology, interpreters, and other accommodations make continuing education impossible. The lack of financial aid programs for families in our community means that many children are left with no choice but to stop their education after junior high school."*

The theme "Socioeconomic Barriers and Financial Constraints" is a significant factor affecting the transition rate from junior high to senior high school for deaf and hard of hearing children, as articulated by the responses from parents (Participant 4) and

teachers (Participant 5). The additional financial burden of specialized services and school fees at the senior high level is often too much for many families to bear.

The high costs associated with education at the senior high level such as school fees, learning materials, and specialized support like interpreters are prohibitive for many families. Marschark (2003) notes that the costs associated with special education services, including transportation and adaptive technology, are often a significant barrier for families, particularly in low-income communities.

Socioeconomic factors strongly contribute to the low transition rate. Financial aid programs or subsidies for families with children who have disabilities would be critical in supporting continued education beyond junior high school.

The responses from community leaders (Participant 6) underscore the absence of sufficient governmental support or scholarships for deaf and hard of hearing children. Olusanya et al. (2018) argue that lack of financial aid for children with disabilities further exacerbates educational inequalities, as these children are often left to navigate the financial challenges on their own.

Financial barriers could be alleviated through targeted government policies and the introduction of subsidies or scholarships that cover the costs of additional services required for deaf and hard of hearing children.

4.4.3 Theme 3: Lack of Career Guidance and Motivation

Participant 7: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child *"My child was*

always very motivated to study, but when it came to choosing what to do after junior high school, there was no one to help guide her. There were no career counselors or advisors who

could understand her needs. No one explained what options she had for continuing her education, and without that guidance, she felt uncertain about what to do next. She started to lose confidence in her future, and eventually, she just gave up on going to senior high school."

Participant 8: Teacher of Deaf and hard of hearing Children *"One thing that stands out when we look at the transition rate from junior high to senior high is the lack of career guidance for deaf and hard of hearing children. Many of them don't have a clear understanding of the opportunities available to them. There are also limited career paths that are designed with their abilities in mind, so they often feel demotivated and uncertain about their future. Without career counseling and support for navigating future educational opportunities, many children lose interest in continuing their education."*

Participant 9: Community Leader *"There's a need for better career guidance for deaf and hard of hearing children in our community. Many parents aren't aware of the different career opportunities for their children with disabilities, and so they don't encourage them to continue schooling. When there's no one to guide these children and provide them with options for further education, they often feel like they have no future. This lack of motivation and clear direction makes it hard for them to see the value of continuing their education."*

The theme "Lack of Career Guidance and Motivation" was highlighted as a key factor in the low transition rates from junior high to senior high school. The responses suggest that deaf and hard of hearing children are often not provided with the necessary guidance to make informed decisions about their future educational paths.

The parent (Participant 7) and teacher (Participant 8) responses point out that deaf and hard of hearing children lack adequate career guidance and counseling, which leaves them uncertain about their future. Gabel (2005) notes that many children with disabilities, including those who are deaf and hard of hearing, do not have access to career counseling tailored to their needs. Without guidance, children may not see the value in continuing their education.

Career guidance programs specifically designed for deaf and hard of hearing children are essential. Counseling services need to be offered at junior high schools to help children understand the opportunities available at the senior high level and beyond.

The community leader (Participant 9) highlights how the lack of awareness about career paths for deaf and hard of hearing children further discourages their motivation to pursue senior high education. Pijl and Frissen (2009) suggest that a lack of information on career options and future prospects for disabled children contributes to lower retention rates and transitions.

4.5 Research Question Four

What strategies can be implemented to improve access to education and ensure continuity for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community?

Improving access to and continuity in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community requires targeted strategies that address the unique

needs of these children. This research question aims to identify practical recommendations for enhancing educational access and retention, focusing on infrastructural improvements, community involvement, and policy interventions that can provide deaf and hard of hearing children with the necessary resources and support to succeed in their education.

4.5.1 Theme 1: Need for Improved Educational Infrastructure

Participant 1: Teacher of Deaf and hard of hearing Children *"One of the*

biggest obstacles to improving access to education for deaf and hard of hearing children in this community is the lack of infrastructure. We simply don't have enough specialized classrooms, resources like hearing aids, or even sign language interpreters in the schools. To improve access and continuity, the government and local authorities must invest in creating spaces that cater specifically to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children. We need properly equipped classrooms with technology that can support their learning, as well as staff who are trained in deaf and hard of hearing education."

Participant 2: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child *"My child*

often struggles in school because the classrooms are not designed with her needs in mind. There is no proper acoustic treatment, and even the teachers are not always equipped to use sign language. Improving school infrastructure is key to making education more accessible for children like mine. If there were schools with better facilities such as sign language interpreters and classrooms tailored to the needs of deaf and hard of

hearing children it would make a huge difference in ensuring that my daughter continues her education."

Participant 3: Community Leader *"In this community, schools do not have the infrastructure to properly include deaf and hard of hearing children. The lack of specialized educational tools, like visual learning aids or assistive technology, means that children with deaf and hard of hearing don't receive the full education they deserve. The government must prioritize building schools with accessible infrastructure and ensuring that teachers are adequately trained to cater to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing children."*

The theme "Need for Improved Educational Infrastructure" underscores a critical issue that participants identify as a barrier to the access and continuity of deaf and hard of hearing education. Both the teacher (Participant 1) and the parent (Participant 2) highlight the inadequacy of school facilities and resources in supporting deaf and hard of hearing children' learning.

The responses from both the teacher and the parent show that classrooms are not equipped to provide an optimal learning environment for deaf and hard of hearing children. Marschark and Knoors (2003) argue that specialized infrastructure such as soundproof classrooms, adaptive technologies, and sign language resources is essential for ensuring that deaf and hard of hearing children have equal opportunities to succeed academically.

To improve access and continuity in education for deaf and hard of hearing children, the physical environment in schools needs significant investment. This includes

equipping schools with the necessary tools, such as hearing assistive devices, visual aids, and trained personnel who can support the specific needs of deaf and hard of hearing children.

The community leader (Participant 3) pointed out that infrastructure is not only about physical resources but also involves human resources trained educators who are capable of teaching deaf and hard of hearing children effectively. Schirmer (2001) highlights that teacher training is essential to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children can fully participate in the educational process, especially in environments that are not specially designed for them.

For meaningful improvement, there must be a dual focus on both upgrading physical infrastructure and providing ongoing professional development for teachers to effectively support deaf and hard of hearing children.

4.5.2 Theme 2: Community Awareness and Engagement

Participant 4: Teacher of Deaf and hard of hearing Children *"In our community, there's a lack of awareness about the potential of deaf and hard of hearing children. People don't always understand how important it is to have an inclusive approach to education for these children. It's not enough to just provide educational resources; we also need to educate the community on the importance of inclusion. We need to show that deaf and hard of hearing children can excel in education just like hearing children if given the proper support. I would recommend community outreach programs and workshops to engage people and raise awareness."*

Participant 5: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child *"Sometimes, the community treats deaf and hard of hearing children as though they don't need education. There's a general lack of understanding about how important it is for these children to be included in mainstream society. To improve access and continuity, we need to raise awareness about the value of educating deaf and hard of hearing children. The community should be made aware that inclusion is not just about education it's about giving these children a chance to succeed in life. Awareness programs can help shift negative perceptions."*

Participant 6: Community Leader *"There are still many people in the community who think that deaf and hard of hearing children are better off staying at home or that they are incapable of succeeding in school. We need to change this mindset through community programs and education. By organizing workshops, seminars, and community meetings, we can increase awareness and promote the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children in regular schools. The more people understand the capabilities of deaf and hard of hearing children, the more they will support their educational journey."*

The theme "Community Awareness and Engagement" is critical for improving access and continuity in deaf and hard of hearing education. Both the teacher (Participant 4) and the parent (Participant 5) express concerns about the limited understanding and acceptance of deaf and hard of hearing children in the community.

As pointed out by the teacher (Participant 4), the lack of community awareness about the abilities of deaf and hard of hearing children can result in exclusionary practices. Ainscow et al. (2006) emphasize that raising awareness in communities helps change perceptions and fosters a more inclusive environment for children with disabilities. If people recognize the potential of deaf and hard of hearing children, they are more likely to support inclusive educational practices.

To improve educational access for deaf and hard of hearing children, community engagement programs are crucial. These initiatives should aim to change misconceptions, reduce stigma, and promote the value of inclusive education.

The community leader (Participant 6) advocates for collective responsibility in supporting the education of deaf and hard of hearing children. Pijl and Frissen (2009) assert that when the broader community is educated about the benefits of inclusion, they are more likely to provide support and resources for deaf and hard of hearing children. Schools should work closely with community organizations to create awareness and foster inclusivity. Effective community engagement programs should involve local stakeholders' teachers, parents, leaders, and activists to work collaboratively in raising awareness and advocating for inclusive education.

4.5.3 Theme 3: Financial Support and Policy Implementation

Participant 7: Parent of a Deaf and hard of hearing Child *"One of the*

biggest barriers to my child's education is the cost. Even if we had the resources in schools, I can't afford all the extra expenses like paying for an interpreter or buying special learning materials. To improve access, there should be a fund or scholarship program to help parents like me who are

struggling financially. Policies that offer financial support for education would really make a difference in ensuring that deaf and hard of hearing children can continue their education."

Participant 8: Teacher in an Inclusive School *"The government needs to implement more policies that support the inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children in schools. These policies should focus on providing financial support for schools to cover the costs of special education services, such as interpreters, specialized equipment, and staff training. Without such policies in place, it's difficult for schools to provide the kind of education that deaf and hard of hearing children need."*

Participant 9: Community Leader *"In many cases, the lack of financial support prevents deaf and hard of hearing children from continuing their education. Schools are not able to provide the necessary resources without funding, and parents often can't afford the additional costs. There should be clear policies that allocate funds for special education services, making it easier for schools and families to support the education of deaf and hard of hearing children. Without the right funding and policy changes, progress will be slow."*

The theme "Financial Support and Policy Implementation" emerges as a key area for improving the access and continuity of education for deaf and hard of hearing children. The responses from the parent (Participant 7), teacher (Participant 8), and community leader (Participant 9) emphasize the need for financial policies and resources to support deaf and hard of hearing education.

The responses indicate that the financial strain on families and schools is a significant barrier. Marschark (2003) discusses how the additional costs of special education, such as hiring interpreters and providing assistive technology, often place an insurmountable burden on families. Without financial support, these resources cannot be provided, leading to a discontinuity in education.

Financial support is crucial for the sustainability of deaf and hard of hearing education programs. Implementing government policies that allocate funding for specialized services can ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children have access to the resources they need for a successful education.

The teacher (Participant 8) stresses the importance of policy to ensure that schools can offer the necessary support for deaf and hard of hearing children. Schirmer (2001) argues that policies must address the systemic barriers that prevent the full inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing children in regular schools. This includes ensuring that schools are adequately funded and that financial aid is available to families.

Strong policy frameworks that prioritize financial support for special education services are essential for improving access to education for deaf and hard of hearing children. Such policies would reduce the burden on families and ensure that schools can provide the necessary services.

The responses clearly highlight several critical strategies for improving access and continuity in education for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community.

CHAPTER FIVE

KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

The chapter is made up of the key findings, the conclusions and the recommendation of the study.

5.1 Key findings

1. The barriers to school enrollment and retention for deaf and hard of hearing children in the Effutu community include inadequate educational infrastructure, a lack of trained teachers, and pervasive negative societal attitudes towards the potential of deaf and hard of hearing children. These barriers often discourage both parents and educators from fully supporting the education of deaf and hard of hearing children, resulting in lower enrolment rates and higher dropout rates.
2. Factors contributing to the low transition rate from junior high to senior high for deaf and hard of hearing children include the absence of support systems in senior high schools, a lack of specialized education programs, and financial constraints. Additionally, many families perceive that deaf and hard of hearing children will not succeed in higher education due to existing societal attitudes and limited educational support at the secondary level.
3. The perception of deaf and hard of hearing children's educational potential in the Effutu community is largely negative, with many people, including educators and community members, believing that deaf and hard of hearing children cannot achieve the same academic success as hearing children. This leads to lower expectations and a lack of commitment to providing adequate support for deaf and hard of hearing children.

4. Key strategies to improve access and continuity in deaf and hard of hearing education include upgrading educational infrastructure, increasing community awareness, and implementing financial support mechanisms. The need for trained educators, specialized resources, and inclusive school policies was also identified as essential for ensuring the continued education of deaf and hard of hearing children.

5.2 Conclusion

The lack of appropriate facilities, such as specialized classrooms and teaching aids, combined with insufficient training for educators and negative societal perceptions, prevents deaf and hard of hearing children from accessing quality education in the Effutu community. These challenges undermine the retention and academic success of deaf and hard of hearing children.

Also, the transition from junior high to senior high school is hindered by inadequate support structures, financial difficulties, and low expectations from both the community and educational institutions. This results in a lack of opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing children to continue their education beyond junior high school.

Furthermore, negative perceptions and stereotypes about the abilities of deaf and hard of hearing children significantly hinder their educational progress. The lack of belief in their potential results in inadequate support, limited opportunities, and social exclusion.

Finally, improving access and continuity in deaf and hard of hearing education in the Effutu community requires a multifaceted approach that involves enhancing physical infrastructure, fostering community engagement, and addressing financial barriers.

These strategies will ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children have equal opportunities to succeed academically and socially.

5.3 Recommendation

Based on the findings, it is recommended;

1. there should be increased investment in the physical infrastructure of schools, including specialized classrooms, assistive technology, and teaching materials. Additionally, comprehensive training programs for teachers, alongside awareness campaigns to challenge negative attitudes, are essential to create an inclusive and supportive environment for deaf and hard of hearing children.
2. to improve transition rates, it is crucial to implement dedicated support systems at the senior high level, such as sign language interpreters and specialized counselors. Additionally, financial support mechanisms, such as scholarships or government funding for deaf and hard of hearing children, should be established to alleviate economic barriers to education.
3. community-wide awareness programs should be implemented to educate the public about the capabilities of deaf and hard of hearing children. Additionally, teachers should receive specialized training in deaf and hard of hearing education, and positive role models from the deaf and hard of hearing community should be promoted to inspire both children and adults.
4. the government and local authorities invest in improving school infrastructure, such as building specialized classrooms and providing assistive technology. Additionally, there should be community awareness campaigns to shift negative perceptions, along with the establishment of funding mechanisms to support families and schools in providing inclusive education for deaf and hard of hearing children.

5.4 Suggestions for further Studies

Future studies should focus on examining the effectiveness of inclusive education policies and support systems available to deaf and hard of hearing children at the senior high school level in Ghana. Such research could assess how the provision of sign language interpreters, trained teachers, assistive technologies, and specialized counseling services influences school retention, academic performance, and successful transition from junior high to senior high school. This would provide evidence-based insights for improving secondary education support structures for deaf and hard of hearing learners.

Further research is also needed to explore the lived experiences and perspectives of deaf and hard of hearing children themselves. Studies that focus on their social, emotional, and psychological experiences within school environments would offer a deeper understanding of how peer relationships, teacher attitudes, and school culture influence motivation, self-esteem, and educational continuity. Including the voices of deaf and hard of hearing learners would enrich existing literature and promote learner-centered policy development.

In addition, comparative studies across different municipalities or regions in Ghana are recommended to determine whether the challenges identified in the Effutu Municipality are localized or reflective of broader national trends. Such studies would help identify regional disparities in infrastructure, teacher preparedness, and societal attitudes, thereby informing national strategies for inclusive education and equitable resource allocation.

Longitudinal research is further suggested to track the educational progression of deaf and hard of hearing children from basic education through senior high school and

beyond. This approach would provide comprehensive data on dropout rates, transition barriers, and long-term educational outcomes, enabling policymakers and educators to design timely and sustainable interventions.

Finally, future studies should investigate the role of parental attitudes, socio-economic conditions, and family support systems in influencing school enrolment, retention, and transition of deaf and hard of hearing children. Research in this area would help identify effective family- and community-based interventions that can strengthen educational continuity and improve academic success for deaf and hard of hearing learners.



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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Barriers to Educational Continuity and Inclusion for Deaf Children in the Effutu Municipality

Section 1: Demographic Information

1. Can you tell me about your role in the community or school system?

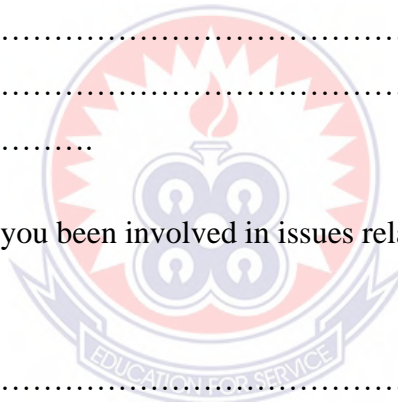
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2. What is your level of experience or interaction with deaf children?

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3. How long have you been involved in issues related to education in the Effutu Municipality

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Section 2: Barriers to School Enrolment and Retention

1. What do you think are the primary reasons why some deaf children in the Effutu community do not enroll in school?

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2. Are there any cultural, financial, or infrastructural challenges that make it difficult for deaf children to stay in school?

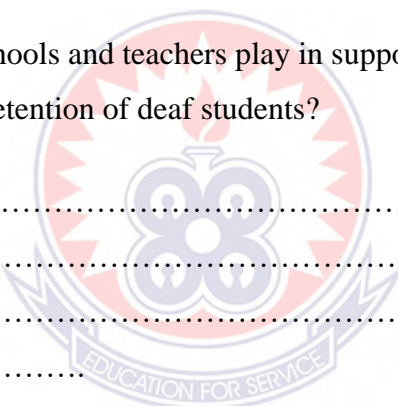
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3. How do families of deaf children view their education?

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4. What role do schools and teachers play in supporting or hindering the enrolment and retention of deaf students?

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Section 3: Low Transition Rates from Junior High to Senior High School

1. In your opinion, what factors make it difficult for deaf children to transition from junior high school to senior high school?

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2. Are there any specific academic, social, or systemic barriers that deaf students face during this transition?

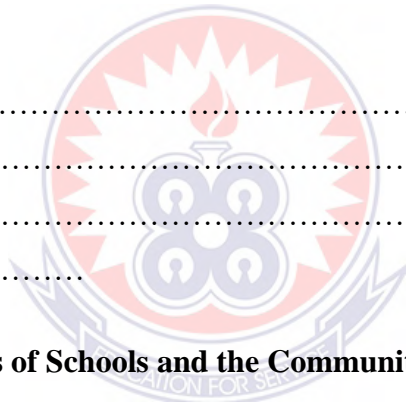
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3. What support systems (e.g., scholarships, mentorship, or resources) exist to facilitate the transition of deaf children to higher levels of education?

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4. How does the curriculum or teaching style impact the progression of deaf students?

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Section 4: Perceptions of Schools and the Community

1. How do schools in the Effutu community perceive the inclusion of deaf children in education?

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2. What attitudes do teachers and school administrators display toward teaching deaf children?

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3. How does the broader community view the importance of education for deaf children?

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4. Are there any misconceptions or biases about deaf children's ability to succeed in education?

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Section 5: Strategies for Improvement

1. What do you think should be done to ensure that deaf children in the Effutu community have access to quality education?

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2. What role should the government, NGOs, and community organizations play in improving educational opportunities for deaf children?

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3. Are there specific policies, resources, or practices that you believe would address the barriers faced by deaf children?

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4. How can the collaboration between schools, families, and the community be enhanced to support deaf education?

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Section 6: Closing Questions

1. Is there anything else you would like to share about the education of deaf children in the Effutu Municipality?

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2. Are there other individuals or stakeholders you think I should speak to for more insights on this topic?

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