Accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities: a case of two selected areas in Ghana

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all children with disabilities in Ghana

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DECLARATION

I declare that the excerpt for reference to the work, which i have duly cited, this thesis is my original research and that it has neither in whole nor in part been previously presented for another degree elsewhere.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADP……… ………Accelerated Development Plan

BPEMs…………….Budget and Expenditure Management System

DACF……………..District Assembly Common Fund

FCUBE……………Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education

EFA………………..Education For All

ESP………………...Education Strategy Plan

GFD………………..Ghana Federation of Disability

GETFUND………...Ghana Education Trust Fund

GoG………………..Government of Ghana

PIPs……………….Public Investment Programs

PTR……………….People Teacher Ratio

JHS……………….....Junior High School

IGF……………….Internally Generated Fund

MDGs…………….Millennium Development Goals

NCTE…………….National Council for Tertiary Education

PWDs……………....Persons With Disabilities

SHS………………..Senior High School

SpED…………….Special Education Division

TLM……………….Teaching and Learning Materials

UNESCO………….United Nations Education and Scientific Organisation

VAT………………..Value Added Tax

WHO………………World Health Organisation

ECDC……………...Early Childhood Development Centre

EASPD……………European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities

ABSTRACT

This study investigated accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities in two selected districts in Ghana (Ga East and New Juabeng respectively). A total of two hundred and eighteen respondents were involved and the study employed mixed methods, that is combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods were relied on and simple random and purposive samplings techniques were used in selecting participants. Analysis of data showed evidence of acceptance of children with disabilities into the mainstream schools but there are factors that posed challenges for complete practice of inclusive education. These factors include stigmatisation, discrimination and cultural beliefs, teacher's competence and attitudes, parental involvement, unavailability of resources and inadequate policies. These factors were found to be barriers that influence accessibility to education for children with disabilities. Discussions of the study attempted to demonstrate children with disabilities get access to inclusive education as a result of general education policy such as FCUBE policy, but nevertheless there are challenges. As a result of these challenges children with disabilities are not benefit from education. Understanding and following the discussions it was concluded that the factors identified in the study as barriers to accessibility to education for children with disabilities need to be addressed for successful inclusive education practice.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 General Overview

The importance of education in the total development of children cannot be overemphasised. Education may help individuals to develop skills, improve their social status and gain access to networks that could lead to enhanced social outcomes, independently from the effect of education on income (OECD, 2010). Also education makes the world a better place to live. Globally, children with disabilities experience marginalisation within the educational system and also traditionally experience varying forms of discrimination from mainstream society. Children with disabilities have remained relatively invisible in most governments efforts to achieve universal access to primary education, (UNESCO, 2012). As a result of all these, many children with disabilities are not reaping the full benefits of education. Internationally, a growing focus has been placed on inclusion as the key strategy for promoting the right to education, including children with disabilities. Thus, global trends in special education have shifted from the institutionalisation of children with disabilities in special schools towards inclusive approaches that enable children to access mainstream educational programs in the communities where they live (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010; Hutchinson & Martin, 2012). Governments owe it to their citizens to make the necessary investment in education in order to provide the best standard possible, (Porter, 2011). It is well documented that disability presents certain challenges that influence the learning modes of persons, especially, children. However, available data do not support the fact that persons with difficulties including children are "non educable" (Culham &Nuid, 2003; Reiter &Vitani, 2007; Maul & Singer, 2009; Porter & Smith, 2011). Thus, all children are capable of

learning and becoming recipient of quality education if the right atmosphere of inclusion and acceptance are created, (Mittler, et al., 2002).

It is in view of the importance attached to education for all children including children with disabilities that, United Nations and other organisations are advocating for inclusive education. For instance, the rights of children were envisaged in the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC, 1989) reaffirmed through the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Art.24, UNCRPD, 2006). The CRC remains a landmark document which comprehensively covers education, civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights of children. It takes due consideration of the rights, development, protection and participation needs of children. Ghana ratified the international Convention on Children's Rights in February 1990 thereby committing herself to protecting and promoting the rights of all children. The country submitted its initial report in 1995 to Geneva on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The second periodic report on implementation, which was due in 1997, was completed and signed in January 2004 by the Minister in charge of the Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs. That report covers the period of 1997-2003. The CRC was the first convention signed by Ghana that clearly uphold the importance of education of all children with disabilities and maintain that they must not be excluded from the general educational system.

The right to education is universal and it is covered in several declarations. These declarations include the "Education for All" (1990), the World Summit for Children in 1990, the Standard Rules in the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disability (1993), the UNESCO Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (1994), the Dakar Framework for Action (2000), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, 2000) and many more. All these declarations were promising enactments. Central to these declarations, rules and resolutions is the

concept of inclusive education. The goal of inclusive education can only be achieved when all signature states act upon their obligation to establish or reform public education systems to become accessible to, and supported to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The concept of access to education has evolved from a mere privilege to a right for all children, and expectations have been raised. Therefore the "Salamanca Statement" is one of the most important statements and a leading principle in advocating for inclusive education for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). The 1994 Special Needs Education conference in Salamanca, Spain led to a policy statement that proposed the development of schools with an inclusive orientation was the most effective means of preventing and eliminating discriminatory attitudes, providing education for majority of children and ultimately improving the cost effectiveness of the entire educational system (UNESCO, 1994). The Salamanca statement and its accompanying framework bring to the attention of the global community, the situation of the people with disabilities. The statement reaffirms the right to education of every individual, as enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and reinforced by article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006. The UNCRPD states the right to inclusive education as one of the main elements of human rights for persons with disabilities. The Article 24 of the UNCRPD states that:

> *"States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an **inclusive education** system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to the full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity, the development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and*

creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential, enabling

persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society."

This statement sets forth the challenge to provide public education to all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions. Thus the statement advocates and promotes access to mainstream schooling and a child friendly environment capable of accommodating children with special education needs and disabilities. Furthermore, it supported inclusive education practices as the most effective way of reducing or eliminating discriminatory practices and providing effective education to the majority of children. In the field of education, this is reflected in bringing about a genuine equalisation of opportunity. It assumes human differences are normal and that learning must be adapted to the needs of the child, rather than the child fitted to the process. Basically the principle of inclusive schooling is that, all children should learn together, where possible, and that ordinary schools must recognise and respond to the diverse needs of their students, while also having a continuum of support and services to match these needs.

Traditionally, inclusive education is seen to be developing from the human rights perspective which upholds and supports human diversities regarding disabilities. Inclusive education is based on the principle of "one school for all" and involves structural changes concerning organisation of schools, curriculum, teaching and learning, (Manifesto on Inclusive education, EASPD 2009). The need for progress on inclusive education is crucial, especially given the context of international targets such as the Millennium Development Goal 2 (MDG, 2), promoting universal primary education and the goal of Education for All (EFA) by 2015. It appeared that, rights of children were seriously being considered by the governments and the international community' (International Save the Children Alliance 2001).

Moreover, most national and international development goals refer to the rights of persons with disabilities to have equal educational opportunities with their peers. In reality, enrolment rates and educational attainment of disabled children remain far lower than those of their non-disabled peers. The school enrolment rate for children with disabilities is estimated to be just one to three percent in developing countries (UNESCO, 2000). Thus 98% of disabled children in developing countries do not attend school (UNESCO, 2000). Again UNESCO's, Global Monitoring Report on Education for All (EFA, 2007), estimated that world-wide 77 million children (aged 6 - 11 years) do not attend school and approximately one-third who are out of school, are disabled children. The other two-thirds are said to be children from poor families who live in poor households and whose mothers have no education. Elwan (1999) noted, among these children, those who acquire education often receive inferior treatment, have low expectations of themselves, experience low expectations from their significant others and fail to get the support they need to participate equally.

Likewise disabled female children are less likely to attend school in comparison with disabled male children. Literacy rates for disabled girls are as low as 3% globally, (Rossou, 2005). Again, according to Rossou cultural bias against women encourage rigid gender roles leading to preferential treatment and allocation of resources and opportunities to male children at the expense of their sisters. In Ghana, there is much stronger network and institutional experience of Ghana Education Service (GES) and Ministry Of Education (MOE) in addressing girls' education challenges, but the Girls' Education Unit remains highly underfunded (SNV, 2009). That is, there is poor coordination among actors working on girls' education issues across Ghana, which is restricting the potential outcomes in this subsector (SNV, 2009). More so the widespread pattern of patriarchal systems of social organisation, customary early marriage and the incidence of early

pregnancy (in or out of marriage), and a general low regard for the value of female education, combine to adversely affect the participation of girls and women in formal education (Casely-Hayford, 2007; Kane, 2004; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Brock and Cammish, 1997).

Further, due to different definitions of disability and poor data on persons with disabilities there is no single current figure on the prevalence of disability making global estimates of disability prevalence and incidence vary widely. For example, the UN disability compendium (DISTAT) notes that disability rates are not comparable across the world because of difference in survey designs, definitions, concepts and methods. A classic definition of disability commonly used in censuses, which are functional limitation due to impairment, indicated that the prevalence of moderate or severe disability in the ages 5-14 is in the region of 2-3%. Statistics on the number of individuals with disabilities is difficult to estimate in the developing nations, but it is estimated to be between 3% and 10% of the population, according to Coleridge (1993) and Rioux (1998). The United Nations (UN) estimates often involve a rate of 10% while the United Nations Developments Program (UNDP) estimates a more conservative 5% global average. In Ghana, no accurate national survey has been carried out to determine the disability rate in the country; therefore Ghana measures its percentage of disabled population on the UN's 10% based on rate and UNDP's 5% global average. Based on these, and with a current population of 23million, Ghana has an estimated total disabled population of 1.15-2.3million. The World Bank acknowledges that there are currently 115million school aged children out of school. Out of 115million, 40million (over 1/3) are estimated to have disability most of which are not visible or easy to diagnose (Lawrence, 2004). Largely unrecognisable, those with intellectual disability make up an estimated 1-3% according to UN figures (Inclusion International, 2005). Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) survey results (2006) indicate that 16% of children between the ages of 2-9 have at least one

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disability. Assessment figures reported by Ghana's Ministry of Education states that there is very limited information about the incidence of children with special needs around the country (MoE, 2008, PP.55).

In addition, it is estimated that 5% of the Ghanaian population has a disability but social stigma is responsible for the under-reporting of the prevalence, especially in rural areas (Annor, 2002). It is also worth noting that in Ghana about 53% of women with disability are with no education compared with 37.3% of males with disability. Even when Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) manage to enter the formal education system they hardly manage through primary education. About 17.5% of PWDs had primary education compared to 25% of the total population. This situation is disturbing indeed because illiteracy and ignorance among the disabled population is too high to countenance as a developing nation which needs acceleration in human resource development. This condition could be blamed on lack of advocacy and lobbying on the part of organisations and pressure groups, (Ocloo.M, & Dogbe. D.S., Gadabui.G.Y, 2000).

Besides in 2012 Ghana ratified the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Inclusive in this convention is Article 24 which states that, persons with disabilities have a right to education which they should be able to exercise on the basis of equal opportunity and there should be inclusive education at all levels and lifelong learning. Article 24 helps to understand the current inclusive education practice in countries. It means, they should not be excluded from regular schools or other regular educational institutions on the basis of disability and should get the support they require. That is, a system must be provided in which persons with disabilities can access education at all levels on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live.

More so in Ghana the above mentioned declarations, rules and resolutions have been absorbed into national laws. Thus Ghana's policy on inclusive education has been influenced by a number of these international laws, treaties, policies and conventions. As a result the main national legislative instruments which have promoted the adoption of Inclusive Education policies in the past years include the following:

- **Article 25(a) of the 1992 constitution states**: *"All persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities and with the view to achieving the full realization of this right, basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all.' Also provides for the protection of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) from discrimination and abusive treatment (Article 29), mandates the legislature to enact appropriate laws (Article 37) and requires access to Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) (Article 38)*

- **The Children's Act (560)** of **1998** also enjoins the government to promote the physical, mental and social well-being of every child.

- **National Disability Policy, June 2000:** this is one of the legislations which guarantee security to specific rights of PWDs. This policy was largely in response to the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for PWDs (UN, 1993). It legislates PWDs' rights as regards to education, transportation, community acceptance, housing and employment (MoESW, 2000).

- **Government of Ghana's Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2003-2015:** the ESP echoes the Ghanaian government's dedication to EFA and dictates that all schools within Ghana provide inclusive environments for children with 'non-severe' disabilities by the year 2015. (Republic of Ghana, 2003a, 2003b)

- **Special Educational Needs Policy Framework (2005):** Based on key policy objectives indicated in the ESP, this framework addresses the challenges of marginalisation, segregation and inequality that have previously constituted barriers to the education of students with disabilities. (GES SpEd, 2005).

- **Persons with Disability Act, June 2006:** this constitutional Act fulfills the Ghanaian constitutional requirements and incorporates suggestions from ratified human rights conventions. (Republic of Ghana, June 2006)

- **The Disability Act (715) of 2006:** provides for the establishment of Special Educational schools for children with severe special needs education. Parents and guardians/care givers are to enroll such children in schools depending on their level of disability; however, there should be no barrier to their admission.

- **The Education Act (778)** of **2007:** Provide for inclusive education at all district levels (Article 5). It also makes two years kindergarten part of basic education, extending basic education to 11 years.

These international conventions, national legal frameworks and government commitments have served as policy drivers to ensure universal access to quality education and opportunities to enable all children to participate meaningfully in socio-economic development of their communities (ESP 2010–2020). In spite of the international and national actions, there has been less effort to promote education for children with disabilities. Again it appears that children with disabilities experience diverse forms of discrimination in society which affect their rights to education. That is they are not provided equal access to education by the state, consequently, they are denied equal opportunities to primary education as well as other educational institutions. That is they are not

provided equal access to education by the state, consequently, they are denied equal opportunities to primary education as well as other educational institutions.

Given the presentation in the background to the study, this paper is set within the context of the Article 24 of the UN Convention on Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities because it requires the development of an inclusive education system, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that seek to ensure free access to education for all children globally by 2015, Ghana's 1992 Constitution which guarantees universal primary education for all Ghanaian children including children with disabilities, who may have diverse educational needs, the Salamanca Statement, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) and Ghana Disability Act (715). All of these legal frameworks are based on international human rights agreements, which support the development of an education system that recognises a wide range of diverse needs and ensures a wide range of appropriate responses (UNESCO, 2005). These frameworks articulate the goals of equity and the rights of all learners to equal access to educational opportunities.

In addition, it must be acknowledge that, Ghana can learn from the western model of inclusive education for children with disabilities but inappropriate modeling cannot work for a developing country like Ghana. For example, Ainscow (1998, pp.3) stated that "schooling is so closely tied into local conditions and cultures that the importation of practices from elsewhere is fraught with difficulties". As a result, a Ghanaian model of inclusive education practice should be developed to help these groups of children experience quality education. Therefore focus should be given to the challenges faced within the national and local context, some of which may include social aspect, material and human resources, policies and many more to help practice successful inclusive education.

1.1 Problem Statement and Objectives of the study

Education is fundamental to the development of individuals and societies and ensuring the right to education for persons with disabilities should not be overlooked. Inequality and discrimination in education are major concerns and need to be addressed. For instance the social inclusion of children with disabilities can only begin and be realised when accessibility to inclusive education for them is ensured. Historically, from the onset, the needs of children with disabilities were barely acknowledged. Thus they have been treated differently in need of very special protection compared to children without disabilities whom society beliefs they conform to societal norms. The limitations on the educational opportunities available to children with disabilities are one of the considerations underpinning the United Nations' Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 1993). This is due to the fact that, children with disabilities form a significant proportion of the out-of-school population and most marginalised within the educational system and the larger society. They experience discrimination, exclusion and segregation from the mainstream, and have always been the last to be offered access to education. Thus their right to access education is very often violated and denied.

"Education for All" programs from UNICEF, UNESCO and the World Bank have had some positive results for non-disabled children. School enrollment and literacy rates have risen in almost all countries to date; however the same cannot be said for children with disabilities. Despite the numerous meetings, declarations and encouraging developments that have followed over the years, progress has certainly not matched intent, (International Council for Education of People with visual Impairment, ICEVI, 2006). For example, UNESCO (2008) reports that, exclusion from education is particularly more serious among persons with disabilities, of whom approximately 97 per cent do not have the basic reading and writing skills. It further states that, most children with

disabilities in developing countries are not attending school, and there is no inclusion of those with physical, emotional or learning impairments within the education system. According to World Report (2011) on disability, approximately one billion people in the world are living with a disability which is 15%, with at least 1 in 10 being children and 80% living in developing countries. It is estimated that 93 million of these are children or 1 in 20 of those aged up to 14 years of age living with a moderate or severe disability. Global statistics on the number of out-of-school or excluded children vary with the source, but evidence suggest that the number is increasing.

Ghana has pursued various policies to ensure universal basic education since independence notably the Accelerated Education Development Plan of 1951 and the Education Act of 1961 (Act 87), which made basic education free and compulsory for all children (Akyeampong, 2010). Again, Ghana has signed many UN Conventions; established legislations that reflect change towards inclusive education and have created a basic policy framework. More so, there are few existing strategies and programs developed to meet the needs of these groups of children who are mostly vulnerable to educational services and other forms of exploitation in the general society. Further, with growing awareness on its crucial importance for social and economic development in the past years, education has become a major political issue in Ghana as in many other parts of the world. This indicate that, there is an advocacy for the inclusion which can be said to be a laudable move in Ghana to reduce exclusion in education, and to strengthen institutional capacity for the inclusion of children with disabilities in schools and mainstream society.

In spite of the efforts to make education accessible in Ghana, studies on children with special needs in Ghana suggest that a large proportion of out-of-school children falls into this category (CREATE, 2010a; Thurman, 2003; Annor, 2002 cited in MOE, 2008). That is access to education has become an increasingly important issue for children with disabilities. Inaccessibility

to education for children with disabilities may be as a result of a number of reasons which may include, sociocultural values, limited policies, lack of teachers' competencies and many more. For example a large body of literature in Ghana demonstrates how sociocultural values acts as a major barrier to school enrolment, retention and completion, in particular, for girls, children with disabilities, orphans and other vulnerable children (Associates for Change, 2011; UNESCO, 2010; Kane, 2004). Also existing literature in Ghana reveals that negative perceptions, cultural patterns and practices at household and community level continue to prevent children from participating in school (Korboe et al., 2011; Odonkor, 2007; Casely-Hayford, 2005). That is, society's negative attitude towards educating children with disabilities and their inability to see the value of education for a child with disabilities has impacted on inclusive education. Also, in line with sociocultural values Iddrissu et al. (2010) noted that, a high degree of stigmatisation continues to be associated with disability in Ghanaian communities, often resulting in children being hidden in the home or prevented from attending school. These perceptions often limit the number of children with disabilities attending school and act as a barrier in schools where teachers and head teachers do not promote inclusive education.

Second education policies are limited, in the sense that, Education Strategic plan (ESP) appraisal report points out that, key policy processes which have been identified to target out-of-school children have neither been fully implemented nor costed in order to ensure their execution. For instance, special needs programs, the Complementary Basic Education (CBE) Policy, which was formulated in 2007, the early childhood development programme; the girls' education programme was not fully costed into the new Education Strategic Plan (2010-2020) to ensure their full implementation (UNICEF, GHANA, 2012). Each of these spheres of operation within the

MOE and GES has a direct impact on addressing the out of school challenge in Ghana and assisting those at risk of exclusion.

Third, studies in Ghana have found that teacher factors often play a major role in children's entry and retention in school both directly and indirectly (USAID, 2004). Studies by Associates for Change on inclusive education in Ghana suggest that, the presence of a trained and/or non-trained teacher, who is regular in attendance, is a key to parental commitment and interest in sending a child to school (Associate for Change, 2011). Again, World Bank (2011a) study, found that Greater Accra, Ashanti, and Eastern Regions of Ghana have teacher excesses while the three northern regions and the Western Regions have severe deficits in teacher supply, especially trained teachers. District Education Offices in the regions with significant trained teacher shortages fill the vacancies with untrained "pupil teachers" and National Youth Employment Personnel (NYEP). It suggest that, the teacher is an intrinsic part of education quality, and low achievement rates in the education system has been largely blamed on teacher availability, competence and performance. Teacher deployment and performance has a strong bearing on exclusion in the education system (UNICEF, 2012). For example, Participatory Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment (PPVA) study by (Korboe et al, 2010) found that the availability of qualified trained teachers give parents confidence in the school and encourage them to continue investing in their child's education. Thus it can be said that, teachers incompetencies has seriously affected teacher performance and learning outcomes of children especially children with disabilities.

In view of the above stated problem, in reality, it appears that, there is a negative perception of children with disabilities in Ghana, with levels of stigmatisation and discrimination associated with disabilities. Besides, the general conditions in the public education sector are far from complying with acceptable standards. These suggest that, there is a significant barrier to

accessibility to education for children with disabilities as a result of low value placed on their capacity and potentials. However much more efforts is needed to protect the rights of children with disabilities and to fully participate in education.

Therefore the above stated problem, motivated this research to contribute to the development of social awareness with respect to equal participation of children with disabilities in education in Ghana. As a result, the main objective of the study seeks to explore further the barriers hindering children with disabilities from accessing inclusive education in Eastern and Greater Accra regions in Ghana. Specifically, the study focused on the following to achieve the main objectives:

A. To find out the level of professional competence (qualification) and attitudes of teacher's

B. To find out effect of parental involvement in their child with disability's education

C. To find out the social barriers such as stigmatisation and discrimination and their effects on educating disabled children.

D. To find out the availability of material resources such as physical accessibility, teaching learning material, facilities and many more for educating children with disabilities

E. To find out the effects of cultural beliefs on educating children with disabilities,

F. To assess the policy environment of educating children with disabilities.

1.2 Purpose of study

This study emerged as a result of genuine problem facing children with disabilities all over the world, particularly having access to education in Ghana. Thus the study presents an overview of the situation of children with disabilities and the provision of inclusive education as a welfare service in Ghana. It is believed that children with disabilities are less likely to have access and to complete basic primary education than their non-disabled counterparts. In spite of the fact that

education is regarded as the right of disabled children, and there has been some significant policy development towards inclusive education in Ghana. Access to and participation in inclusive education without discrimination and stigmatisation is questionable and needs to be addressed. Also denied access to education defeats the perceived purpose of educating children with disabilities by preparing them to adjust and participate in their socio cultural environment. Again lack of basic education makes them more vulnerable and excluded from society due to inadequate knowledge and skills to enhance their human capital formation. Therefore the purpose of this study is to provide comprehensive discussions in understanding the practice of inclusive education in Ghana.

1.3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical implication of this study lies between theories of social model of disability (Mike Oliver, 1990), theory of human capital formation, (Schultz, 1961 & Becker, 1964) and Bronfenbrenners' (1989) ecosystem of inclusive education. These theories have been chosen to lay emphasis on the situation and its accompanied consequences should these children be denied access to education.

First, social model of disability was developed in the 1970s by activists in the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS), it was given academic credibility through the works of Vic Finkelstein (1980, 1981), Colin Barnes (1991) and particularly Mike Oliver (1990, 1996). The social model sees disability as the result of the interaction between people living with impairments and an environment filled with physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers. It carries the implication that, the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment must change to enable people living with impairments to participate in society on an equal basis with others.

The principle of inclusive education is based on the social model which perceives the current education system and schools as discriminatory and inadequate. It requires schools to adapt to meet the individual needs of all learners whose exclusion from mainstream education may have been the results of disability. The social model of disability has greatly influenced the area of disability as well as educational perspectives on inclusion. Inclusive education document requires all nations who signed up to the convention to adapt to meet the needs of all learners of diverse needs in mainstream education system. Hence inclusive education is a process for increasing participation and reducing exclusion in a way that effectively responds to the diverse needs of individual learners. The Social model of disability sees the problems facing disabled people as a result of society's barriers rather than the person's medical conditions reference. It argues for the full inclusion of disabled people in educational institutions, the larger societal institutions and for their complete acceptance as citizens with equal rights, entitlements and responsibilities. The social model also regards disability as all the things that impose restrictions on disabled people ranging from individual prejudice to institutional discrimination, from inaccessible buildings to unusable transportation systems, from segregated education to exclusion from work and many more. The consequences of the failure to make the environment less restrictive do not simply and randomly fall on individuals but systematically upon disabled people as a group who experience these failures of discriminatory institutions throughout society. It recognises the solution as to rid the society of these barriers, rather than relying on curing all people who have impairments, which is not possible.

Mike Oliver (1999), argued that people with disabilities are viewed as "unfortunate'', "useless'', different, oppressed and sick". He further explained that persons with disabilities are viewed as unfortunate because they are unable to enjoy material and social benefits of modern

society, and useless because they are unable to contribute to the economic good of the community. This analysis led to the view that disabled individuals encountered prejudice which expresses itself in discrimination and oppression. Thus the social model explains the cycle of impairment and poverty seen around the world that, once an individual becomes impaired, he becomes socially excluded from society. Children with disabilities are often excluded from a country's education system because it lacks the ability to accommodate them or because they are actively discriminated against due to stigma attached to their disability. Again, he argued that the education system has failed disabled pupils/ students by not equipping them to exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens. In a similar vein, the special education system has functioned to exclude them from both the education process and wider social life. Also to the social view, Ainscow (2004) recognises that any child can experience difficulty in school, but that these difficulties can be a stimulus for improvement of the school learning environment.

Social model of disability on the other hand is disadvantaged in that it failed to recognised the importance of impairment. That is the model ignores or is unable to deal adequately with the subjective experiences of the pain of both of impairment and disability. According to Oliver (1996), this is based on a conceptual misunderstanding because the social model is not about the personal experience of impairment but the collective conceptual experience of disablement. The environment is portrayed as necessary cause, even if not sufficient, and as the predominant factor in all trait-related disadvantages. Thus it captured the social setting alone as sufficient cause of barrier to persons with disabilities.

In spite of the limitation of the social model of disability, it is important to this study because, it helps the researcher to understand and examine the social and economic forces that for many years have marginalised and oppressed children with disabilities. The model is useful in

providing insight and understanding to education trainees and academicians to lobby the government in adapting to policies in the areas of social, political and economics to be responsive to the needs and aspirations of children with disabilities. Also the model offers a critical understanding of the reasons why discrimination occurs in the society. Lastly, the study embraced this model because it provides an alternative to the medical model of disability which rejects the patient as defective by situating disability exclusively in the individual

In addition, a model which is closely related to the social model is the human rights based model to disabilities. The human rights based approach argues that every person is entitled to the means necessary to develop and express his or her own individual talents. It makes societies acknowledge the value of all persons based on inherent human worth, rather than basing value on an individual's measured functional ability to contribute to society. The rights based approach of viewing persons with disabilities is also in line with the UNCRPD declaration. For instance UNCRPD marks a shift from viewing persons with disabilities primarily as recipients of charity, medical treatment, special services and social protection towards recognising them as 'right holders' and active members of society. It defines disability as evolving concept resulting from between impairments and attitudinal and environment barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in the society on equal basis with others'', (CRPD, Preamble). Also, the Salamanca statement and framework for Action support the right discourse with focus on establishing inclusive schools and states that 'schools should accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, linguistic, or other conditions" (UNESCO, 1994:6). Thus the rights based approach prohibits any act of discrimination and promotes equal treatment for every person. That is every child has the right to education on the basis of equality of opportunity. For example children with disabilities are particularly at risk of being marginalised or discriminated against in

the realisation of their rights. These rights highlight the effects of social exclusion and ensure the need of protection for all marginalised groups such as persons with disabilities. It places responsibility for addressing the issue of disabilities by ensuring that appropriate legislation is designed and implemented at all levels in the society by policy makers. Despite, the right based model is disadvantaged, in that, there is the issue of the right to choose the kind of school the child should attend is questionable. Thus many who argue that all children have a right to be educated in a mainstream school would advocate for the closure of all special school. If this were to occur, it suggest that, parents wish to hold on to their right to choose, as many continue to press for a special school place for their child whiles others choose more inclusive provision, (Peter Farrell, 2000).

From the above understanding of both social and the human rights based model of disability, one can conclude that educational difficulties experienced by disabled children in the classroom are not necessarily caused by their individual disabilities, but are rather the result of poorly-structured education systems not equipped to meet the needs of a diverse pupils/student population. Again, the barriers experienced by children with disabilities in society are not necessarily caused by their disabilities only, but rather the result of living in a society that is designed by and for non-disabled children. Besides the rights to inclusive education is of great importance to children with disabilities since it avoids discrimination and exclusion and reinforce rights and protection for all persons.

Another important theory to the study is poverty theory of human capital; the theory was pioneered by a group of University of Chicago economists including most prominently Gary Becker and Theodore Schultz in the 1960s, (Becker, 1993; Schultz, 1963). The theory is used because it is directly connected to the study that is the inability of the differently able to access

education is a function of poverty. The theory postulates that people who obtain large skills and experienced through education and training are going to be worthy more on the labour market than those who have not invested in these things. The theory again stresses the significance of education and training as the key to participation in a new global economy. For instance educating a child with disabilities would enhance his or her human capital formation leading to better employment opportunities and poverty alleviation and perhaps elimination. It is believed that most good jobs required high levels of education, preferably a college degree, but the poor cannot afford to send their children to school, and scholarships go to the best performing but needy students. Children of the poor most often do not perform well in school, largely because of low expectation for them among teachers and administrators. That is to say that the child with disabilities would not get access to education due to poverty or to be identified as brilliant but needy to access scholarships due to the negative perceptions on the part of teachers. Moreover, based on the works of Schultz (1971), Sakamota & Powers (1995), Psachoropoulous & Woodhull (1997), human capital rests on the assumption that formal education is highly instrumental and even necessary to improve the production capacity of population. This means that an educated population is a productive population. The poor sees education as the best means of escaping poverty, therefore it is better to provide more education to low income groups of society to reduce poverty.

Thus, from the understanding of the human capital point of view, education is recognised as a means to develop human capital formation, to improve economic performance and to enhance people's capabilities and choices. It can be said that education offers the opportunity for upward progression among individuals especially the poor. Exclusion from education can result in staggering loss of freedom and productivity on the labour market. Lack of adequate education remains the key risk factor for poverty and exclusion for all children, disabled and non-disabled.

For children with disabilities, however, the risk of poverty due to lack of education may be even higher compared to children without disabilities. Children with disabilities who are excluded from education are certain to be long term, lifelong poor. They almost inevitably become an economic burden on society and on their families. Lack of education leads to limited employment choices or no employment choices, which in turn leads to poverty. Poverty leads to living in unsanitary, crowded conditions that can either lead to an exasperation of an existing impairment or an increased chance of disability amongst those living with the impaired person. The vicious cycle then starts all over again. That is, these children are destined to continue living in poverty and potentially transmitting poverty and disability on to their children. Therefore, human capital theory emphasises the need for policy makers to allocate significant resources to the expansion of the educational system. Some governments may be reluctant to invest in education, but the positive return from this investment will significantly outweigh the cost. Thus if governments see education as the rights of every child they would find resources needed to provide quality education for all children.

Human capital theory of education rightly makes important assertions concerning the acquisition of skills and knowledge through education by enhancing person's income generating capabilities. This can be important for people who are poor to acquire knowledge and skills through education to improve on their standard of living. Human capital theory has limitation, notwithstanding it theoretical explanation to this study and these restrictions have been stressed to acknowledge other importance of education than it been an economic advantage to people. The theory first points out the only benefits from education are an increased productivity and higher wages. This implies that, the theory points out that people only work for economic reasons rejecting other reasons and dimensions. Again the theory portrays that skills and knowledge

acquired which cannot help in the economic development of human beings may be valueless. Human capital conceptualises the world through the discipline lenses of contemporary mainstream economics which blocks the cultural, social and non-material dimensions of life, (Davis, 2003; Fine, 2002; Folbre, 1994). Besides in relating human capital theory to Human rights based approach to education, right based approach views education as fundamental human rights to every person to access despite, the fact that, it may not yield returns in terms of human capital views. That is human beings are viewed as elements of production and growth and those whose economic productivity are not able to benefit enough from education such as children with disabilities, do not get access to education like their non-disabled counterparts who are expected to have economic gains and returns. In spite of these limitations the study relied on the human capital theory to bring out the relevance of education to enhance human capital formation of persons with disabilities by reducing or eliminating poverty. This helps to break the cyclical experience of poverty in families.

Further support of theory to this study can be found in the work of Urie Brofenbrenner's ecology of human growth. Using Bronfenbrenner's (1989) model to explain the education of children with disabilities in the context of an ideal inclusive education, figure 1 below represents the interactions likely to occur within a child's ecosystem. That is to address the contextual and critical understanding of inclusive education, Bronfenbrenner's (1989, 1992) ecosystem framework has been adopted. It explains the systemic influences on child development. Children with disabilities, at the centre of inclusive education, can be seen within the ecological model, described in figure 1 below**.**

Figure 1: Brofenbrenner ecological system of inclusive education
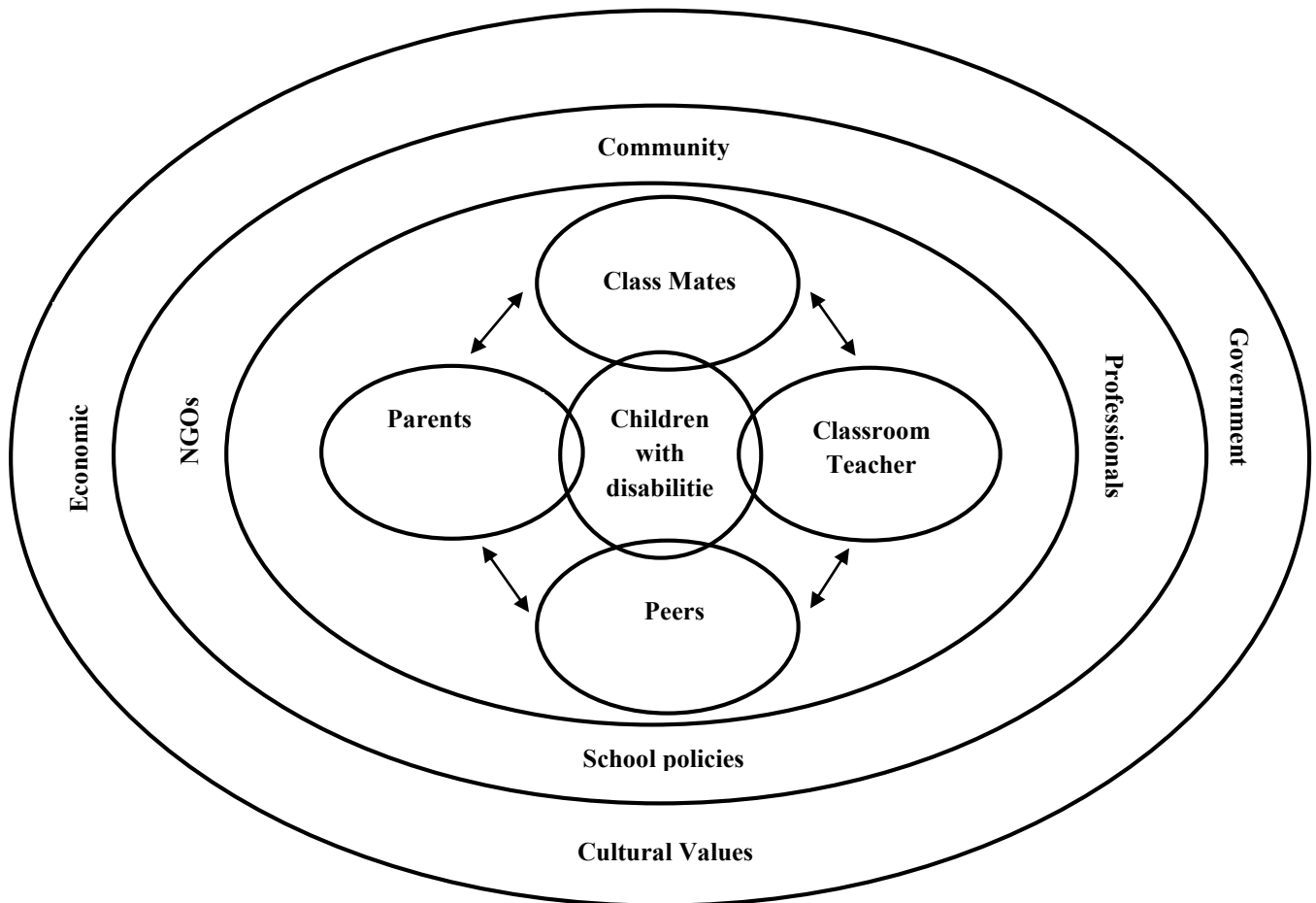
Elements within the various systems potentially influence the self-efficacy and educational outcomes of children with disabilities. Bronfenbrenner argues that various immediate and d_stance forces affect an individual's development. These can be distinguished as five systems which he terms, microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems in which the first four interact with or are linked together in a system of nested, interdependent, dynamic structures ranging from the proximal, consisting of immediate face-to-face settings, to the most distal, comprising broader social contexts such as classes and culture (Bronfenbrenner 1993). He believes that development involves a reciprocal and dynamic relationship between all these five systems, in which each developing person is significantly affected by interactions between a

number of overlapping systems. Bronfenbrenner's framework allows an exploration of inclusive education as being about the development of systems such as mainstream education system, and the development of individuals, for instance attitudes of teachers within these systems. By identifying the different factors operative within and between these systems, it facilitates a better understanding of inclusive education. This allows one to explore the development of inclusive education as constructed and constrained by factors operating at different levels, and how practices are shaped by the interactive influence of individuals and their social settings.

In figure 1 above, children with disabilities have been placed at the core of the ecological system above to be seen as priority group because they are to be seen as the most important of the study and are going to be beneficial to the outcome of the study. Moreover in spite of efforts worldwide to ensure quality and equity education for all learners through inclusive education, there are many learners, especially children with disabilities who experience various forms of barriers to learning, excluding them from educational opportunities in mainstream schools. It also portrays the basic principle of inclusive education where all children learn together, irrespective of their background. Thus the education of children with special needs in the mainstream is now a key policy priority and the main subject of discussion for many countries. Therefore it is the responsibility of the school system to make the education needs of children with disabilities one of their main objectives. For example changing the school system to accommodate children with learning needs will enable all students and pupils to participate fully in the regular school system.

In addition, within the ecosystem, there are other systems in operation, such as mesosystem, these includes classroom teacher, classmate, peers and parents. These systems directly affect the child and are within the child's immediate environment characterised by direct relationships and interactions. For instance the teacher in the classroom plays a very important role

in the school system, since he/she is one of the key persons who can help with inclusion practices. The self-esteem of the teacher is one of the most important variables in the perception of self-efficacy, meaning that if the teacher perceives him/herself as low or high esteem it can determine how he/she and/or other teachers perceive themselves as performance oriented irrespective of the situation in which they find themselves, this influences inclusive education. Also, the attitude of the teacher towards inclusion determines the success of inclusive education, that is negative attitude leads to unsuccessful practice of inclusive education whilst positive attitude leads to successful inclusion of children with disabilities in school. This assertion is supported by Allodi, (2000) when he studied the interaction between psychosocial aspects and teacher's attitudes. The study showed that teacher's attitudes have effect on the climate in the classroom regarding pupils learning. Again it came out that children achieve better in an academic environment where they feel happy since the classroom environment is directed by the teacher. More so the teacher is seen as a role model upholding to the values and standards of education, hence children modeling the behaviour. In addition, the teacher takes the central role in the management and support with disabled children's education.

Further, according to Donald et al (2001) what happens at home and amongst the peers can have influence on the learner's reactions in school. These interactions have a notable influence on adopted teaching practices. In addition, Berk, (2001) stated that in the case of children with disabilities, their self-efficacy and educational outcomes are in the first instance influenced by the family in the home setting as beliefs and practices of these primary people in the child's life have a direct bearing on the child's development. For instance in the context of Ghanaian traditional family, beliefs and practices influences the child upbringing. This is due to the fact that, the Ghanaian family is cohesive unit which defines social, moral norms and safeguard traditions. It

also provide social, economic psychological and emotional security to the children and the larger society. Thus the family members provides support to the children and the larger family. This suggests that, children with disabilities may come from supportive environments, which provides effective care, support and kind behaviour to them at home. Once the child goes to school, the linkages between home and school for the child, and the new transactions with teachers, peers, classmates, workers, and managers will have developmentally influential effects on the child. This informs inclusive education in the sense that, inclusive education cannot be possible without taking note of relationship developing between the different systems, hence the disabled child's functioning is being acknowledged in the classroom and the school with respect to these factors. This shows that, Ghanaian cultural beliefs and practices plays vital role in the provision of understanding of disabilities in a particular perspective which leads to forming individual attitudes and behaviour. Thus the concept of beliefs and practices has evolved in a direction that may help the understanding of disabilities which can either narrow or widening the gap between the school and home with respect to acceptance leading to interactions and relationships. That is the cultural orientation one receives in the family concerning persons with disabilities in the Ghanaian society directs the kind of reception the child receives from the people in his/her environment particularly in school. Essentially the child's development is directly affected by the immediate family environment that provides linkage between the child and the outside world.

Beyond the micro and mesosystem, is the exosystem, Bronfenbrenner explains it as, consists of the settings or events that do not directly involve the child but still influence the people the child has proximal relationships with in the microsystems. That is the indirect effect impacts the child through the other people in the child's life. For example if there is financial crisis in a country it affects the child's parents who may not be able to meet the needs of the family. That is

there will be stress on the family due to financial insecurity. Within this study, these settings or events can be identified as school policies, interactions between the school, community and other stakeholders such as Non-Governmental organisations (NGOs) counselors and other professionals. Even though there is no direct involvement of the child and teacher, in these interactions or decision making processes, it has impact on them.

The macrosystem refers to the layer comprising of political, social, economic and cultural patterns, which have great influence throughout the interactions of all other layers. It may be thought of as a societal blueprint for a particular culture, or broader social context. Thus it looks at policy makers, educational policy and set the context of inclusive education. For example the constitution of Ghana serves as blue print and makes provision of operations of all educational institutions in Ghana. The constitution guarantee equal access and non-discriminatory to education for all learners, thus, from the ecological system above, the constitution of Ghana influences the operations of all the other systems within the ecosystem (microsystem, exosystem, meosystem and the macrosystem)

This suggest that a broader policy change in the educational system affects other layers in the ecosystem, meaning, implication of policies developed have influence on the practice and management of inclusive education.

The last system is termed chronosystem, it describes the time frame of development. Swart and Pettipher, (2005) describe this as a developmental time frame that crosses through and affects interaction between systems and in turn, their influences on individual development. It is through the interaction among any of the above levels that barriers or support may occur at any time. They further suggest that change in any part of the system affects other systems and individuals and at a later time could be seen as a cause for change. For example in Ghana schools must be adequately

prepared for changes needed in the education system over time to cope with the transition and implementation of inclusive education. Thus there is the need for modification in the mainstream schools to make it more accessible to learners.

It is worth noting that all these different layers or systems are highly dynamic and interactive. To understand the activities of a school, one needs to get insight ~~into~~ and knowledge of the interactions that occurs amongst the different systems; this is important, especially when one is trying to understand an educational system. This means that when a change occurs in the one part of the system it affects the entire system impacting on inclusive education practice. For example when there is a change in the school management system, it affects all those that interact within it. Bronfenbrenner believes that development is reciprocal and has dynamic relationships between the five systems and likewise, individual development is affected by interaction between a number of overlapping systems; thus, describing the complexity of the influences, interactions and interrelations between a learner and all the systems in which the learner functions. This theory brings to attention the individual and the environmental (societal) determinants that influence the personal growth of individuals as social beings.

1.4 Definition of terminologies

In order to set the boundaries of the work, definition of key terms is very important to understand the concepts in the context of the study.

Jonsson & Wiman (2001) in World Bank publication on Education pointed out that the relevant terminologies in the education sector have changed dramatically during the last decade. The term 'disability', for example, which is used in labelling children due to impairments is being replaced with terms such as disadvantage children, differently abled children, disabled individuals, children with special education needs, exceptional children and many more. These terms in fact

cover all children facing barriers to education whether related to impairments or not. The terms or concepts chosen below are to accommodate and to bring out explicitly what the problem look like with regards to the study. The UNCRPD sees disability as an "evolving concept" and adopts a social model of disability and describes '**persons with disabilities'** as "*those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with other*" *(Article1,UNCPRD, 2006)*. This approach is consistent with the World Health Organisation's (WHO) International Classification of Function, Disability and Health, known more commonly as ICF, which conceptualises a person's level of functioning, as a dynamic interaction between his or her health condition, environmental factors and personal factors.

In Ghana, '**disability'** means a person who has a problem with a part of the body or mind but Ghana disability Act 715 defines *disability as "an individual with physical, mental or sensory impairments including a visual, hearing, or speech functional disabilities which gives rise to physical, cultural or social barriers that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of that individual"*. Thus **disability** is the result of negative interactions that take place between a person with impairment and his/her social environment. Impairment is thus part of a negative interaction, but it is not the cause of, nor does it justify, disability. Again, in Ghana, there is **societal classification** based on traditional beliefs not seldom based on negative myths which classify disability as a person who is deformed as a punishment from the gods or from his/her family's misdeeds. PWDs in Ghana are identified by their disabilities and not by their names; they are seen as disgrace or stigma to families, liabilities and objects of scorn and pity. Therefore people with disabilities in Ghana are often regarded as unproductive and incapable of contributing in any positive way to society, and rather seen as constituting an economic burden on the family and the

society at large, a mindset which leaves them in a vicious cycle of shame and discrimination. For the purpose of this study ' **a person with disabilities'** can be defined as a person who is unable to perform one or more activities or who uses an assistive device to get around, or a person who needs assistance from another person to perform basic activities (Agbenyega, 2003; Avoke, 2002; Michailakis, 2003). In Ghana, it is becoming increasingly popular to apply the social model to understand disability and ultimately the services that society is willing and able to make available for people with disabilities PWDs (Ocloo, 2003; Agbenyega, 2002; Avoke, 2002). **Resource teachers** are teachers with specialised education knowledge in teaching pupils/students with special leaning needs.

The next concept relevant in the Ghanaian educational context to be defined (which could be seen in the write up) is '**exceptional child**'; this has been defined in many different ways. Thus some use it when referring to a particularly bright child or a child with unusual talent. The term generally has been accepted to include both the child who is handicapped and the child who is gifted. For example, if an exceptional child is said to be one who differs from the group norm, then we have many kinds of exceptionalities. A red haired person would be an exceptional child if all the other children in the class had brown hair. This difference is of little concern to the teacher because a red haired person is not an exceptional child educationally, since the educational program of the class does not have to be modified to serve the child's need. Children are considered educationally exceptional only when it is necessary to alter the educational program to meet their needs. For the purpose of this study 'exceptional child' can be defined as a child who needs a specifically tailored educational program to enhance his/her potential. There are other concepts that run through the write up. These concepts are related but differ in explanation. These include **integration**, **mainstreaming and inclusion**. Integrated education is the term used to describe the

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process of bringing children with disabilities into mainstream school. Inclusive education is a wider process of integration, incorporating the idea of access for all (other disadvantaged groups with special needs as well as those with disability) and the accommodation of the mainstream school to the diverse needs of all children. Both terms are commonly used to describe the process of providing access to mainstream education for children with disabilities. Internationally, 'integrated education' is a term used to describe the process that has been succeeded by 'inclusive education'. **Inclusive education** is the term used to describe the process of bringing children with disabilities into mainstream school. In this study, the use of the term, inclusive education, will be based on the **work of Booth (1996)** that describes inclusion as a process of increasing participation of students within and reducing their exclusion from the culture, curriculum and communities of neighborhood centres of learning. In inclusive schools, all children learn together, the school recognises and responds to the diverse needs of their pupil/students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organisation arrangement, teaching strategies, resource use and partnership with their communities. Inclusion may therefore be regarded as the process whereby all children including those with special educational needs receive their education in mainstream schools with structures in place to ensure participation and progress. M**ainstream education**, in Ghana, refers to regular education where all 'normal' children receive their education. The strategic goal of mainstream basic education in Ghana is to "provide equitable access to good-quality, child-friendly universal basic education, by improving opportunities for all children" (MoE 2011B, 6).

The above defined concepts, mainstreaming, inclusion, and integration have a common philosophy that they all share, that is interaction of pupils or students with and without disabilities. Finally, accessibility has been an overriding concern in the disability rights debate throughout the

world. The interpretation of the term accessibility has been diverse and dynamic depending upon the context and the circumstances. Therefore for the purpose of this study, '**accessibility'** is defined as the capacity of the education system to welcome all children of school going age, which encompasses a wide range of issues such as provision of services, the design of infrastructure, cost, attitudes towards them in and outside the school, teacher's knowledge, attitudes and competencies, quality of education, parental involvement, policy implementation and any other factors that hinder children with disability's progress in school. Thus accessibility should ensure that every child with disability has the opportunity to have full range of services needed for his/her progress and success in school.

The above terminologies chosen are relevant to the study. In addition, these terminologies will accommodate and bring out explicitly the magnitude of the problem. In order to keep this section brief, there are many other concepts that have not been included in the defined ones above, but which will be mentioned in the course of the discussion in the relevant section of the thesis.

1.5 Organisation of Thesis

This thesis studied and review accessibility and provision of inclusive education as welfare service for children with disabilities in Ghana. The work is made up of six parts. The first chapter is the introduction to the entire thesis which sets the context for the study. It covers the background to the study explaining the situation of children with disabilities and the relevance of inclusive education for all, the problem statement, objectives of the study, purpose of the study, theoretical framework, definition of terminologies, and organization of thesis. The second chapter deals with literature review to examine and review the existing literature related to conceptual issues outline in the thesis. Background to the study area and explanation of the methodological approach used and the sampling procedure adopted are next.

The fourth chapter presents the quantitative analysis and its interpretation and also the qualitative, while chapter five contains the discussion of findings based on the objectives of the study and data analysis. Chapter six, which is the final stage, draws conclusions on the major findings, states recommendations and suggests further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The need to provide for education as welfare service for children with disabilities has become a sense of urgency for national and international policy. However, people with disabilities face many obstacles in trying to gain access to educational services and in obtaining assistance to meet their special needs. Children with disabilities and many others who have difficulties in learning are often marginalised within the education system and within society in general. Some are placed in separate special schools to pursue their education while most others do not get access to education at all. Consequently, the education for disabled individuals has become an area of interest for most scholars and social policy developers. There has been a lot of written documents on educating disabled individuals. However, literature portrays that scholars took different angles of approaching the issue.

This chapter therefore discusses written works with regards to access to inclusive education as a welfare service to children with disabilities considering the barriers associated with inaccessibility. The literature review will explore the dominant themes of the study such as, stigmatisation and discrimination, cultural beliefs, teachers' attitudes and many more. Although the literature presents these themes in a variety of context, this study will focus their application to the topic.

2.1 The developmental path of education in Ghana

Literature reviewed under this sub-topic traces the path that education in Ghana has taken over the years with regards to socio-economic development and national development at large. Education in Ghana started as far back as the pre-colonial era when native Ghanaians had

traditional ways of educating their members in the various societies. Formal education in Ghana

dates back to the mercantile era preceding colonisation. Thus the root of formal education can be

traced from the arrival of European missionaries and traders in the 15th century (Adde-Mensah,

Asare & Nukuya, 1992). European merchants and missionaries set up the first schools in the

country. The main aim of these early schools was to facilitate the training of the local inhabitants

as interpreters for purposes of trade and to convert Ghanaians to the Christian religion. This led

to limited curriculum focusing on basic literacy with the Bible and scriptures as the main text of

teaching or schooling. The Christian missionaries after some time took over from these

merchants because they realised that to be able to propagate the gospel, they needed a well-

educated native staff to assist them.

In the nineteenth century, education came into the hands of the British administrators and

it involved levels from pre-school, primary, middle and teacher training to tertiary. The British

government worked with the Christian missionaries to expand education in the Gold coast (Ghana)

and by 1881 there were 139 schools. The total number of primary and secondary schools reached

3000 in 1950 with an enrollment of 280,960 students, constituting 6.6 percent of the population of

4.2 million at a time. However, education policy or formal education introduced by the colonials

and missionaries never responded to the needs of the indigenous people; instead, it had negative

effects on the traditional education system, thus alienating the traditional system. Dr. Kwame

Nkrumah was the Leader of Government Business during the final colonial era; he took over the

administration of the state in 1951. In 1952, the Nkrumah government affirmed the place of

education as a major instrument of national development and introduced the "Education for All"-

policy. The first step Dr. Nkrumah took was to introduce a policy called Accelerated Development

Plan (ADP, 1951) which was very significant for expanding and accessing basic education in

Ghana. The aim of this plan was to achieve universal primary education for all by abolishing tuition fees. This means that prior to independence, a strong foundation had been laid for education and this is due to the fact that the need for education was realised to help national development. These educational provisions continued until Ghana attained independence in 1957. During this period, about half a million children were attending primary school. The number of primary schools rose from 3,571 to 3713 in 1957 and middle schools from 1311 to 1394 in 1959, (Hayford, B.K., 1988).

The ADP did many things for education and became a reality in 1961. The government realised that education was important in national development and introduced another policy, the Education Act of 1961. The Educational Act of 1961 made an indirect provision by declaring education free and compulsory for all children of school going age. Inclusive in this provision are children with special needs. For example the Special Education Division of the Ghana Education Service was created in 1962 to meet and promote the education needs of PWDs in Ghana. Primary education underwent a rapid and steady growth, emergency teacher training programs were introduced, and a large number of pupil teachers were appointed. The act made primary and middle schools free and compulsory for all children and in 1964 the number of students in secondary school increased to 6000. The early 1960s saw the introduction and expansion of 6th- form education as a path to university education and by the year 1966, about 20 secondary schools were offering 6th- form courses with a student population of about 10000 students. The Government later established the Ghana Education Trust (GET) to take charge of secondary schools. The Trust was able to build 24 schools which are known as GET schools scattered all over the country. Evidently, the ADP was introduced to achieve universal education for all.

The government, encountered problems with finance, manpower, and buildings; hence, it could not enforce the law on compulsory education. The policy of free, compulsory education was

therefore not fully implemented. The government also allowed individuals to establish private schools. This idea of private participation in the provision of education was a further emphasis on the policy of decentralisation. Quality of education after these initial stages was paid due attention. In 1963, the government paid more attention to the provision of educational infrastructure as well as teaching and learning materials like textbooks and stationery. As a result, the government began to supply free textbooks not only to primary and middle schools, but also to all assisted secondary schools.

In 1968, a new system known as "continuation school" was introduced. It aimed at making the elementary school system practice-oriented. This system was an attempt to provide practical job training to school leavers to help them get employment and to prevent a rush for scarce white collar jobs. The continuation school system, even though was laudable, did not last for long mainly because the government could not mobilise adequate resources to sustain it. The structure of education in this period consisted of six years primary, four years middle school (both terminal and continuing), and seven years of secondary schooling (5 for Ordinary levels plus an additional 2 years of sixth form Advance level for qualifying into universities). The government also established technical and vocational institutions and polytechnics to provide skills and practical subjects to students. From the 1970s, however, the quality of basic education which had been high in the previous years began to deteriorate as a result of poor national economy which led to thousands of Ghanaian teachers leaving for Nigeria. Poor supervision and ineffective management of schools also led to further deterioration in the quality of education.

The turning point of education in Ghana began in 1974 when major reforms were adopted to alter the system from the strict British system of education which had been in practice since the period of colonial rule. In 1974 a committee appointed under the chairmanship of Prof. N. K.

Dzobo proposed a new structure of six years primary and three years junior secondary school. This system became a nine-year basic education after which pupils sat for the basic education certificate examination. The new junior secondary system meant a broadening of secondary education in Ghana. One of the most significant changes occurred under the Evans-Anfom Reforms of 1987.This era introduced drastic alterations into the structure of education by reducing the number of years for pre- tertiary education from 17 years to 12 years. The Evans-Anfom reports recommended six years of primary school, three years each of junior and senior secondary education. There was another panel known as Anamuah-Mensah Committee in 2007 that also recommended some reforms, but these were similar to the previous Evans-Anfom reforms with the exception of including two years of kindergarten and an additional year to the senior secondary school level.

There have also been several significant education policies implemented to increase access and improve quality in the provision of basic education. The last decade alone has seen a series of concerted efforts on the parts of various Ghanaian governments and its development partners to address educational inequity and improve the overall quality (Etsey, Smith, Gyamera, Koka, De Boer, Havi, & Heyneman, 2009). While a number of these policy reforms and interventions have improved access to Ghana's school-aged population, infrastructural and other resources needed to achieve universal instructional quality and student achievement remain a critical challenge. The Government of Ghana's objective is to provide "equitable educational opportunities for all children with non-severe special needs by integrating them in regular schools by 2015" (Government of Ghana, 2003). Additionally, educational reforms in Ghana, seek to ensure the education for all children of school going age by the year 2015. If this goal is to be achieved, there is the need to mainstream children with disabilities.

2.1.1 Present status of education system in Ghana

The present structure of education is divided into categories. The first level of education starts from kindergarten at age four and the basic level starts at age 6. The structure of education in Ghana is 6-3-3-4 representing, 6 years of primary education, 3 years of Junior High School (JHS), 3 years of Senior High School (SHS) and 4 years tertiary including university. The first 11 years of basic education is free and compulsory and it is designed to expose children to a wide variety of ideas and skills and instill attitudes that will help them cope creatively with their environment and stimulate them to be asset to their country. The curriculum used in schools is work-oriented. The medium of instruction used at the lower primary level is Ghanaian language while English is used at the upper level that is from stages 4 to the university level (Akyeampong et al. 2007, Avoke 2001, GES 2004, MoE 2011A, UNESCO & IBE 2010/2011).

The Primary School level curriculum consists of English, Ghanaian language and Culture, Mathematics, Environmental studies, Integrated Science, Religious and Moral Education and physical activities such as Music, Dance and Physical Education. The Junior High School level makes a distinction between Agricultural and General science and incorporates subjects such as Social Studies, Pre- vocational Skills and Pre-technical skills as well as French. The Senior High School curriculum has Core subjects and Elective subjects. Every student takes four core subjects: English language, Mathematics, Integrated Science (including Science, Agriculture and Environmental studies) and Social Studies (economics, geography, history and government). Students also choose 3 elective subjects from 5 available programs: Agriculture, General (Arts or Science option), Business, Vocational and Technical. Basic and Senior Secondary School run a 40 week school year and students are examined using an internal continuous assessment (30% of final

score) and an external examination conducted by the West African Examinations Council (70% of final score).

School management is done by the central government, regional, district, community and the school. The district level is responsible for school management, budgeting, supervision, school data collection and analysis at the pre-tertiary level. The community and school are responsible for school level planning, management and decision making. At the tertiary level education is managed by governing councils of tertiary institutions and coordinated by the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE). At the school level the head teacher is responsible but overall management of the schools is done by the regional administration, district and headquarters directorate.

Regarding the population of children with various degrees of disabilities, it is difficult to determine as there is no research done in this area. However, enrolment at the primary level as reported in the Education Sector Performance Report increased from 5,092 to 5,564 representing 11 percent primary enrolment, (UNICEF Ghana 2010). It is worth noting that in Ghana, the early provision of special education was heavily influenced by the British (Avoke, 2001). Special education situation in Ghana has also steadily improved. In 2001/2002-2005/2006, there was an increase in enrolment of children with disabilities in special schools of about 40.5 percent (3,361 to 4,722), (UNICEF, 2007). Similarly, female enrolment also increased from 1,249 to 1,901 that is 40.3%. Between 2004/2005 to 2006 there was an increase of 6.7 percent that is 4,435 to 4,722. The education of children with disabilities Act is linked to the 1961 education Act and reaffirmed by the 1992 constitution of Ghana with the provision of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE). FCUBE is a policy which aimed at increasing access to education for all children.

Consequently, to implement the FCUBE policy in 2004, the government introduced the capitation grant and school feeding programs in Ghanaian basic schools. These programs abolished payment of levies to raise funds to meet administrative costs and provided meals for vulnerable children. It also aims at reinforcing the existing FCUBE policy and attracting and retaining children in school. The capitation grants policy provided GH¢3.5 per female pupil and GH¢2.5 per male pupil during the pilot phase in the 2004/2005 academic year. When it was rolled out to cover all schools during the 2005/2006 academic year, the amount was changed to GH¢3 per pupil. In the 2009/2010 academic year, the capitation grant was increased from GH¢3 to GH¢4.5 (Ministry of Finance, 2009).

Moreover, there have been other moves by the government to set up committees to look into policies of vocational training for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, to help reduce public negative attitudes towards disability, the Disability Act was passed in June 2006 which specifically aimed at creating an enabling environment for full participation for persons with disabilities in national development.

The development of inclusive education (IE) in Ghana is basically founded on international and national legal frameworks of education. The Education Strategy Plan (ESP) 2010-2020 indicated inclusive as an approach where schools are designed to accommodate children with disabilities and other disadvantage children to enhance their right, equal education opportunities, to inclusion and participation in other societal affairs (MoE, 2011A). The status of inclusive education in Ghana is very 'gloomy' in that though, efforts have been made to practice inclusive education on pilot bases there are challenges impeding its success. According to Avoke (2001:29), "while trends are increasingly shifting towards inclusive practices, the institutionalisation of people with learning difficulties and others with disabilities remains an entrenched practice". The

passage of the disability Act 715 makes provision for the education of people with special education needs in the mainstream schools. For example, Article 20(1) indicates that a person with disability seeking admission into a school or institution should not be denied access on account of his or her disability unless that person has been assessed by the Ministry of Education, Health and Social Welfare and found to be a person who deserves to be in a special school for children with disability (GOV, 2006). In line with this article, special units have been established on the premises of some of the pilot schools practicing inclusion. Despite the steady importance attached to educating children with disabilities, some challenges still exist. For instance, there is a problem of shortage of teaching and learning materials to help those enrolled, particularly, lack of Braille teaching materials for the blind.

Concerning growth, there has been growth in the number of public mainstream basic schools but limited growth in the number of special education schools in the country. In 2003/2004 there was a total of 35 inclusive schools in ten districts, and in 2008, the number was 129 (Anthony 2009, Anthony 2011, & GES 2004). Anthony (2009, 2011) further stated that in spite of the increasing commitment towards Inclusive Education, Ghana experiences ongoing excluded service provision for children with disabilities with an increased 51% enrollment rate of pupils to special schools from 2001 to 2007. He explained this as due to the fact that inclusive schools show a trend of mostly accommodating children with mild disabilities and children with moderate or severe disabilities are expected to attend special schools. By 2015, all mainstream schools in the country are to target IE principles (MoE 2011B). The Education Performance Report (2008) indicates that between 2004/05 and 2007/08 kindergarten schools increased by 120% from 7009 to 15, 449. Similarly, primary schools increased by 8% from 16,028 to 17,317, and JHS from 8,423 to 9,507 (by 12.9%). There has been an appreciable increase in the number of Special Education schools from 22 basic schools for the disabled and 7 units to 200 special education schools (MOE 2008). These comprise 13

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schools for the deaf, 2 schools for the blind, 12 schools for the mentally retarded, 1 school for the deaf and blind and 129 Inclusive Education schools. There are also 3 Senior High Schools (SHS) for the deaf and 5 for the blind as well as 5 technical schools for the deaf and 2 for the blind. In addition, there is one College of Education for the deaf and 3 Colleges of Education for the blind.

Enrolment at primary and Junior High School (JHS) increased strongly over the last decade: primary Net Enrolment Rate (NER) increased from 59% to 82.9% between 2001/02 and 2007/08 and JHS NER increased from 30% to 52.9% in the same period. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) improved from 0.90 to 0.96 for primary and 0.84 to 0.92 for JHS between 2001/02 and 2007/08. There has also been tremendous improvement in enrolment for the three northern regions; NER data between 2001/02 and 2007/08 shows that enrolment growth in the three northern regions was more than the national growth rate. There have also been great strides in enrolment in deprived districts and rural areas over the years (MOE 2009). In spite of growth of number of schools, there are still communities which are underserved or without schools. It is estimated that the majority of out of school children can be found in deprived and hard to reach communities and include children with disabilities. The Education Sector Performance Report 2008 indicated that in deprived districts NER stood at 77.9%, Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) at 93.8% and GPI at 0.94 compared to the national average of 82.9%, GER of 95.6% and GPI of 0.96 (MOE 2008).

According to UNICEF Ghana (2010) these statistics imply that the educational system has not been able to implement equitable access to and participation in quality education at all levels, especially girls and children with various forms of disabilities. It is estimated that a large proportion of out of school children are those with disabilities. This group of children forms a critical mass whose continuous exclusion will make the attainment of goals of EFA and the MDGs very difficult and will frustrate the compliance of various legislative demands as well as those of

international conventions. It is noteworthy to state that educational services to the disabled individuals are no longer charitable; in Ghana, it is enshrined in the 1992 Constitution and places emphasis on almost all international conventions aimed at promoting and protecting the human rights of all citizens. Nevertheless, the constitution has not lived up to its expectation because the educational sectors does not have the capacity or programs in place to effectively serve special needs children. In addition, current strategies and programs have not been sufficient to meet the needs of children with disabilities who are particularly vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion. These suggest that the education of children with disabilities is undervalued and the lack of awareness of the potential of these children will exacerbate their exclusion from education. In the past, efforts have consisted of specialised programs, institutions and specialist educators. The unfortunate consequence of such differentiation, although well intended, has often been further exclusion. In many instances, response to the situation of children with disabilities is mostly limited to specialised schools or neglected.

That notwithstanding, Ghana aims to reach the middle-income country status by the year 2020. To achieve this status, a road map has been developed known as Vision 2020, (MOE, 2009). The basic objectives of the Vision 2020 document are to reduce poverty, increase employment opportunities and average incomes, and to reduce inequities in order to improve the general welfare and the material well-being of all Ghanaians. In addition the Vision 2020 document contains an education policy with the objectives to ensure all citizens regardless of gender or social status, are functionally literate and productive at the minimum. The education policy mainly extends to four major parts of the education system: Basic Education, Secondary Education, Teacher Education and Tertiary Education. The Vision 2020 education policy has objectives for each sector within the education system.

2.1.2 Funding of education in Ghana

Education in Ghana is being financed by the Government of Ghana (GoG), external donors, non-government and non-donor sources such as the Ghana Education Trust fund (GET fund), District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF) and Internally Generated Fund (IGF) such as Value Added Tax (VAT) and the central government general revenue. The internally generated funds are statutory funds. The total education expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) has increased from 6.2% in 2003 to 9.1% in 2007 and there has been further increase to 10.1% in 2008 but decrease to 9.0% in 2009 (Government of Ghana). This is as a result of inability of cost centres to assess their administrative expenses, inability of controller and accountant general's department to release funds under Budget and Public Expenditure Management System (BPEMS) to the various cost centres and not enough commercial certificates released for most Public Investment Programs (PIP) project in 2009. Delay or release for service and investment affects the activities of the regional, district directorate and institutions to enhance quality education in Ghana. Ghana is one of the highest recipients of education aid in sub Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2004 cited in recoup, 2008 p.6

The GoG budget in the total budget for education has been declining since 2004, but since 2007 the share of expenditure accruing to primary education increased again to 35% and the allocation for 2008 was 37% of the total educational budget. Basic education takes the largest share, followed by tertiary and Senior High School. The shares to special education and non-formal education have been volatile, calling into question their ability to plan and manage programs effectively with such volatile funding. Administration, Service and Investment accounts for 5%, 10% and 20% respectively. GoG funds are the bulk of the expenditure at almost 68%, followed by GET Fund expenditure at 13%. Internally Generated Funds provide 9% of expenditure and donors

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6%. The distribution of donor assistance has varied in recent years possibly as a result of changing donor and GoG preferences. For example donor share of primary education financing has fallen steadily from 70.0% in 2003 to just fewer than 40.0% in 2006.). According to the UIS data an estimated 24.4% of the total government expenditure is

spent on education in 2010

It must be acknowledged that Government of Ghana (GoG) has made several attempts to make education inclusive particularly at the basic education levels. The Ministry of Education's Strategic Plan (2003 – 2015) envisions the achievement of an inclusive education system by 2015 (SpED 2005). As a result, government, donors and NGOs have supported inclusive education and special needs education programs in the last decade.

Summary

Discussions from the above indicated that Ghana has a wealth of knowledge through educational development (formal and informal). Ghana's attempt to educate its citizens dates back to pre-colonial era, through to the colonial era where development of formal education started in the castle by merchants and later taken over by the missionaries and then by Kwame Nkrumah the then government business leader in 1951. His government introduced several educational policies including free compulsory education to increase enrolment in schools. Even though these policies increased school enrolments, there were limitations with respect to finance, manpower and facilities, hence the introduction of private participation. Besides since independence, successive governments in Ghana have recognised the indispensable role which education plays in the country's socio-economic development. As a result government introduced other sources besides its contribution and other donors to finance the education sector. These sources include Getfund, DACF, and IGF.

In spite of the challenges, as the country's economy improves, the government is trying to make steady progress towards improving the country's education system to promote learning achievement. Accordingly, some measures have been and continue to be taken to expand education at all levels. For example, development steps towards mobilizing adequate human and material resources to provide quality and wholesome education for all toward total development of Ghana is in progress.

2.2 Evolution of Special Education

Special education started in the western part of the world and during the Middle Ages. The monasteries became the first institutions to provide care for physically or mentally impaired people, but the development of techniques associated with special education did not emerge until the Renaissance, with its emphasis on human dignity. In the mid-1500s Pedro Ponce de León succeeded in teaching deaf pupils in Spain to speak, read, and write; it is assumed that his methods were followed by Juan Pablo Bonet, who in 1620 published the first book on the subject. This gave rise to a wider European interest in the education of deaf individuals. In the 17th-century, in England John Bulwer published an account of his experiences teaching deaf persons to speak and lip-read, and in France a similar work was carried on by Charles-Michel, abbé de l'Epée (1712–89), who changed the nature of communication for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals by developing the natural sign language. His work was developed by Roch-Ambroise Cucurron, Abbé Sicard, and gave rise to the manual system, or silent method, of teaching people with hearing impairments.

In Germany, the beginning of special education can be traced to the 18th century when individual persons, influenced by the ideas of the Age of Enlightenment, proved successfully that even the deaf and blind people could be educated. Samuel Heinicke experimented with training

deaf children to speak, and from 1820 onwards pioneers such as Weise, Saegert and Haldenwang took influential initiatives in providing education for people with mental handicaps. In the 19th century, Friedrich Moritz Hill (1805–74), a leading educator of the deaf, developed a method in relation to the concept that education must relate to the "here and now" of the child known as the "natural method." This led to the oral method of instruction that with time became an accepted practice throughout the world. Again in the 19th century, residential institutions were established and ran by protestant and catholic organisations. Thus church based care of persons with learning disabilities became increasingly common in the second half of the nineteenth century. These catholic institutions were often closely linked to the monastic establishments and medieval traditional care. This led to the concept of large scale asylums structurally segregated from the rest of the society. By the early decades of the twentieth century, special education developed in the framework of a very highly specialised school system, nearly totally separate from the ordinary schools, (Sieglind Ellger-Ruttgardt, 2006).

Furthermore until the late 18th century, much interest was not made to educate or to train persons with visual impairments. One of the first special schools called National Institution of Blind Youth (Institution Nationale des Jeunes Aveugles) was opened by Valentin Haüy, known as the "father and apostle of the blind", in Paris in 1784, with 12 blind children as his first pupils. News of Haüy's success in teaching these children to read soon spread to other countries. Subsequently, schools for the blind were opened in Liverpool, England (1791), London (1799), Vienna (1804), Berlin (1806), Amsterdam and Stockholm (1808), Zürich, Switzerland (1809), Boston (1829), and New York City (1831).

Scientifically, Jean-Marc-Gaspard Itard a French physician and Otologist was the first to attempt to educate children with intellectual disabilities. In his classic book "*The Wild Boy of*

Aveyron" (1807), he related his five-year effort to train and educate a boy who had been found running wild in the woods of Aveyron. Itard's work with the boy became notable for the possibilities it raised regarding the education of persons with mental or emotional disabilities. Years later, his student, Edouard Séguin who had to later emigrate from France to the United States in 1848 due to his democratic engagements, devised an educational method that used physical and sensory activities to develop the mental processes. Seguin's published works inspired two German pedagogues Georgens and Deinhard to develop a theory of curative pedagogy (Heilpädagogik) and to establish a first school for idiotic children with integrative elements (Schädler, 2003). Seguin also influenced Maria Montessori, an Italian pediatrician who became an educator and the innovator of a unique method of training young mentally retarded and culturally deprived children in Rome in the 1890s and early 1900s. Her approach emphasized self-education through specially designed "didactic materials" for sensorimotor training, that is development of the senses was the keynote of the system. Therefore, Special education for people with disabilities became universal in developed countries by the late 20th century.

The schooling of children with special needs has been described as going from neglect in the early C20th to segregation based on individual needs in the 1920s to 1960s to integration in the 1960s to the present day, (Casey, 1994). In his writing Casey referred to children with 'special need' rather than 'children with disability'. This is because of a desire to focus on how best to give optimal education for these children rather than on their deficits. Casey chose to refer to such children as 'children with special needs' because it would be felt more effectively and communicates his intention to discuss these children, whose differences are so great that, in the recent past, they would have been educated not at all or in a segregated setting. The era of 1900s-1920s, he called the era of neglect, is characterised by lack of educational provision, children with

disability being hidden away at home or in residential institutions where they received no education. The second era 1920-1960 he termed the era of segregation is characterised by the proliferation of special, segregated facilities. The third era (1960 to present) he terms the era of integration. This reflects current trends in education which aims at providing education for children with disability amongst their non-disabled peers. The era also reflects advocacy work by some group of scholars (Dun, 1968; Hobb, 1966; Dybwad, 1964; Reynolds, 1970). These scholars advocated for the rights of students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers in more normalized school environment. On the other hand, attempt were made by some scholars (Kaufman, 1993; Gesham & Forness, 1996; Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994) to slow, stop and even reverse inclusive education.

In the early years in United State, there were no public schools for children and adults with special needs. They were put in poor houses and other charitable centers or left at home with no formal educational provisions. It was estimated that as late as 1850, 60 percent of the inmates in poor houses were people who were deaf, blind or mentally-retarded. Horace Mann, Samuel Gridley Howes, and Dorothea Dix gave impetus to the second stage of Casey's work, the establishment of residential schools. The first permanent residential institution, the Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons later named American school for the Deaf was founded in 1817 (Winzer, 1993). The New England Asylum for the blind was founded in Watertown, Massachusetts in 1829. Thirty years later, a residential school for the mentally retarded, Massachusetts school for Idiotic and Feebleminded Youth, was established in South Boston. These schools offered training, and provided an environment that often protected the individual throughout life. The third stage saw the establishment of special classes in public schools and the first special class for the mentally retarded was organised in Rhodes Island. It was

followed by a class for the physically impaired in 1899. Finally, the fourth stage which started in the mid-1960s, attempted to bring children with disabilities as close to the normal classroom as possible.

2.2.1 Development of special education in Ghana

Similar to the education of children with disabilities in the western countries, historically there are four stages in the development of special education in Ghana. The early provision of special education in Ghana was influenced by the British (Avoke, 2001) and the first special school was established in 1936 by missionaries. Firstly, the pre- Christian era characterizes neglect and maltreatment of disable individual; secondly the spread of Christianity protected and pitied disabled individuals; thirdly institutions were established to provide separate education for exceptional children in eighteenth and nineteenth century; and the final stage, that is the later part of the twentieth century, there has been a movement toward accepting people with disabilities and integrating them into society to the fullest (Avoke, 1977).

Reviewing literature on children with disabilities in the Ghanaian educational system, the concept of educating every child to the highest level is a relatively new idea. In Africa, events in history clearly show that disabled persons were badly treated. The negative attitudes to these individuals stemmed largely from beliefs and cultural prejudices in traditional societies that considered disabled individuals as not worthy of living. Many African societies treated such individuals with contempt and sometimes killed them outright; they were thrown into rivers, mutilated and even left in the open and wild to die. Though exceptional individuals go through difficulty in the society, a number of African societies also worshipped them as divinities. For example in Ghana, among some Ewes and the Fons, hydrocephaly was thought to be a manifestation of Trokosi (Avoke, 1977). The pre-Christian era was indeed marked by such

attitudes as mentioned above, as they were considered polluters of society.

Moreover according to Marfo (1986), before the arrival of Western education, persons with disability were completely excluded from all educational programs. During colonisation, little attention was paid to persons with disabilities. Thus during this time, there were killing, persecution and ostracisation but the influence of Christianity and missionaries gradually gave way to protection; thus, the beginning of special education is traced to the initiative of the missionaries. The education of children with special needs in Ghana for instance started around 1936, by Reverend Haker. He initiated some form of education for the blind. He started with two pupils (Baah, 1994). These individuals were Benhandt Ofori - Addo and Isaac Ofori -Atta. It was after this initiative that the Presbyterian Church officially opened a school for the visually impaired at Begro and Akropong in 1946 in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The curriculum for the school follows a similar pattern as curriculum for schools of regular education, except with adapted materials for teaching.

Marfo (1986) further asserted that Ghana gained independence from Britain in 1957 and its immediate post-independent educational system paid little attention to the education of people with disabilities; no special attention was ever paid to inclusion. Marfo notes again that in 1957, an African-American (Rev. Andrew Foster) who was hearing impaired, opened another school for the visually impaired at Christiansburg in Accra, the capital of Ghana. In 1958, the Methodist church built a school for the "crippled" and this was followed in 1964 with a school for the developmentally disabled by Society of Friends Mentally Retarded (Anson, 1977). In 1964, parents of children with intellectual disabilities (ID) formed an association called the 'Society of Friends of the Mentally Retarded' whose extraordinary advocacy led to the establishment of the first 'home for the mentally handicapped' in 1966 (GES, 2005). This, coupled with increasing

international influence, led the 'home' to become the first "*school* for the mentally handicapped" in 1970 (Avoke, 2001a).

Later, special schools for the different types of disabilities were put in place. In 1961, the first Republican Government of Ghana passed an Education Act making Education Free and Compulsory for All Children of school going age. Marfo (1992:113) noted the General Education Act of 1961 states amongst other things that "*Pupils with special educational needs are included within the general school system, and provision is made for them according to need*". It is students whose disabilities are deemed severe and cannot be admitted to the mainstream system who were admitted into the special schools. Ofori-Addo (1995) points out that there were no policies regarding parental involvement in assessment procedures or decision-making regarding children with special needs. Parents were encouraged to send their children to professionals who assessed them and decide whether they should join the mainstream educational system; and if so, which school the child should attend.

In the 1961 Educational Act, the government put up structures and resourced them with requisite educational materials and equipment to suit the teaching and learning of disabled children. Initially, the emphasis was placed on residential system of schooling but when the demand for admission into these schools increased tremendously, there has been the need to shift to inclusive education. However, since the implementation of inclusive education, it was found that many parents and beneficiaries are favourable with the segregating concept. In addition, according to the Special Education Policy Act of 1962, at the pre-school level, Children with severe mental retardation, visual impairment, and hearing impairment attended special boarding schools whereas those with only hearing impairment attended special Day schools. Furthermore, whereas children with severe learning difficulties attended mainstream schools but also got special

classes in addition, those with only hearing and visual impairment attended regular or mainstream class but had additional support in tuition in such classes.

A study by Walker (Marfo, Danquah & Aidoo, 1986:200-201) provides information to support the above claim and also provides information on specific places where some of the people with specific disabilities were educated. They stated among other issues that *"the blind, deaf, and mentally retarded children are educated and cared for in categorical and segregated settings such as Demonstration School for the Deaf at Mampong-Akwapim"."Children with orthopedic problems are educated in mainstream settings"*. Regarding children with mental disabilities, the authors note that such children are first referred to the Psychiatry Department of the University of Ghana Medical School and the school classifies them into either 'educable', trainable, and profoundly retarded (Danquah, Morson, & Ghanney, 1976; and Ministry of Education, 1974). The educable are placed in mainstream schools whereas the trainable and partially educable were placed in the Home and School for the Mentally Retarded or the New Horizon School. The 1970-80's saw rapid growth in the number of segregated 'special schools' for the 'visually impaired' (VI), the 'hearing impaired' (HI), and the 'Intellectually Challenged' (IC).

Summary

Special education started in the western part of the world and according to writers such as Casey the beginning of special education in the 20th century can be classified into three different eras. The first era is termed the era of neglect, characterised by lack of educational provision where these children were kept away from the public without receiving any education. The second era is characterised by proliferation of special segregated facilities and the third era he called era of integration reflecting the current trends in education which aims to provide education for children with disabilities amongst their non-disabled peers (inclusive education). However in Ghana, there are four stages to the evolution of special education. The first stage is the pre-Christian era

characterized by neglect and maltreatment of disabled individuals, the second stage is the spread of Christianity which pitied and protected disabled individuals. Stage three described the establishment of institutions to provide separate education for disabled children and the final stage is the acceptance of disabled individuals in the mainstream schools and the entire society.

2.3 The path to inclusive education

The development of inclusive education can be viewed in three stages which include segregation, integration and inclusive education. The first stage, segregation, is the provision of education for children with various disabilities in separate institutions called special schools. Second integrated education is the provision of education in a mainstream school but for certain number of hours when it is beneficial to them. Integration education could take place with special units situated on the mainstream school. According to Ferguson (2008), Vislie (2003), Wade & Moore (1992), it was often expected of children placed on the integrated system to team up with children without disabilities to work together. The final stage, inclusive education, emerged as a response to criticism of the first two. The concept of inclusive education is a type of education aimed at accepting all children especially marginalised ones in mainstream schools irrespective of their background. However, it is believed that the school system and culture must change to accommodate the child's diverse needs.

2.3.1 The concept of inclusive education

Inclusive education is defined by UNESCO as a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structure and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the state to educate all

children, (UNESCO, 2005). It is a strategic approach designed to facilitate learning success for all children. It addresses common goals of decreasing and overcoming all exclusions from human rights to education, at least at the elementary level, and enhancing access, participation and learning success in quality basic education for all. The philosophy of inclusive education has been well accepted but there is lack of clarity about its operational meaning in terms of which groups are to be included and the defining characteristics of schools and classrooms. However, writers such as Booth (2000) and Ainscow (2006) clarify the operational definition of the concept to have deeper understanding since there is no comprehensive list. Booth (2000) describes inclusive education as the process of increasing participation and decreasing exclusion from the culture, curriculum and community of mainstream schools. Consistent with Booth, Ainscow (2006) maintains that schools should focus on increasing the participation and attainment of groups who have historically been marginalised.

Moreover, according to Peter (2007) inclusive education concept as contained in the Salamanca Statement is based on the concept of social equity which is in line with the social model of disability. Hence the social model believes that all children are different and the school and educational system need to change to meet the needs of all individual learners. Also Swart & Pettiper (2006) suggested that, to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse learner population effectively, inclusive education must be approached as an ongoing and evolutionary process. This means that inclusive education should be seen as a never-ending (societal) process rather than a single event (Ainscow, 2005). The field of inclusion is often characterized as the field within which resolutions of dilemma of differences emerge (Dyson & Howes, 2009).

Furthermore, some authors describe inclusion in a way that contrasts with special education. The following descriptions seek to mark the difference between inclusion and special

education. Lipsky and Gartner (1999) suggested that inclusive education is not a special education reform but the convergence of the need to restructure the public education system to meet the needs of a changing society, and the adaptation of the separate special education system, which has been shown to be unsuccessful for the greater number of students who are served by it. Also, L.M Dunn (1968) touches on the efficacy studies in segregated education. He argued that segregation was frequently a means to dispose of these children. In reviewing the efficacy of these programs he admits there are no educational benefits in segregated education. He refers to several reviews of efficacy studies, none of which indicates any benefit associated with segregated education. He quotes one reviewer who states: 'It is indeed paradoxical that the mentally challenged having teachers and especially having more money spent on their education to provide for their unique educational needs, should be accomplishing the objectives of their education at the same or at a lower level than similar mentally challenged who had not these advantages and have been forced to remain in the regular class grades'. Dunn is particularly concerned with the negative effects of segregation and labeling and cited studies which indicate the harmful effects of special class placement. He finally pointed out that improvements in general education even make segregation more difficult to justify. One can argue that in segregated schools, students do not receive socialisation needed to participate in mainstream society. Hegarty (1982) elaborated further to justify Dunn's assertion on ineffectiveness of segregated education by touching on factors associated with successful inclusion. Hegarty examined seventeen schools in the United Kingdom and concluded that integration is possible. One would agree with Hegarty because special educational needs can be met in the ordinary school, and to a far greater extent than is currently the practice. Finally, he points out that integration helps parents view their children with disability in a more appropriate and positive way.

More so, Barton (1999: 58) explains that inclusive education is not integration and is not concerned with the assimilation or accommodation of discriminated groups or individuals within existing socio-economic conditions and relations. It is not about making people as "normal" as possible. It is ultimately about transformation of a society and its institutional arrangements such as education. It aims at social inclusion and implements the child's right as pronounced in the Universal Declaration in Human Rights of 1949 (UNESCO, 2003). The question of inclusive education is both complex and contentious and is shaped by historical, cultural, global and contextual factors. Therefore when we talk about education for disabled individuals, the topic of inclusion often comes up. Inclusive education demands that schools create, support and provide necessary resources to ensure that all pupils have access to education or meaningful learning. This suggests that inclusive education should embrace everyone and it is the responsibility of the nation, society and each individual to make a commitment to help provide equitable education to these categories of persons to realise their rights to belong.

The principle of inclusion is a step in the right direction in developing the potentialities of persons with disabilities. However, there has not been a substantive definition for inclusive education (Pearson, 2005 & Beveridge, 1999) nor is there any consistent government definition of inclusion making the practice of inclusion difficult (Sheehy, Rix, Nind & Simmons, 2004). To overcome the difficulty of substantive definition, (Ainscow, 2008) proposed principal features to ease understanding. Ainscow noted that, the process of inclusion is about never ending search to find better ways of responding to diversity and learning how to live with difference, it concerns identification and removal of barriers, also involves a particular emphasis on those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalisation, exclusion or underachievement, and lastly inclusion is about the presence, participation and achievement of all students. This suggest that

inclusion is about valuing diversity and individual differences, and assuring equality and access. Although there are variations in the way different people describe inclusive education, there are also common elements that tend to feature strongly in the conceptualisation of inclusion. Some of these elements are cited by Green (2001:4) and they include "a commitment to building a more just society, a commitment to building a more equitable education system". United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2005:15) also outlines four principles that are common to all definitions of inclusion: inclusion as a process has to be seen as a never ending search to find better ways of responding to diversity; inclusion is concerned with the identification and removal of barriers; inclusion is about presence, participation and achievement of all students, and inclusion involves a particular emphasis on those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalization, exclusion or underachievement.

It is in the light of these arguments that Deiner (2005: 24) pointed out that successful inclusion involves 'placing children in an education setting that provides the support that meets children's emotional, social, and educational needs'. Again Meijer, (1999, 2003) recounted that Education systems in countries have evolved over time, within very specific contexts and are highly individual and any examination of inclusive education and current practice in any country therefore needs to be considered within the context of wider educational reforms occurring in that country. Inclusion may therefore be regarded as the process whereby all children including those with special educational needs (SEN) receive their education in the mainstream with structures in place to ensure participation and progress. The Principle of Inclusive Education was adapted at the UNESCO 1994, Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education and was restated at the Dakar World Education Forum (2000) as: "…schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This

should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups." From this statement it can be said that inclusion means that learning together benefits everyone, not just children or people with disabilities.

Proponents of inclusive education have argued for its implementation on the basis of basic human rights and as a way of providing the same educational experiences for all students (Lipsky & Gartner, 1998; Gresham & MacMillan, 1997; Walker, Ramsey & Gresham, 2004). Inclusion has also been justified on the basis of research, which indicates that it could lead to better academic and social skills for students with special needs (Carlberg & Cavale, 1980; Cole & Meyer, 1991; Freeman & Alkin 2000; Fryxell & Kennedy, 1995; Kennedy, Shulka & Fryxell, 1997; Waldron & McLesky, 1998). Research by the above authors' show that children, who learn together, live together, play together, and share resources live happily together. This again confirms the Salamanca Statement and framework for action (1994) which states that "Regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discrimination, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all" ,(pg., xi).

By logical extension, it can be argued that effective inclusion needs to be based on the human rights and social model approaches stated in the theoretical framework. It must also identify barriers and come up with solutions. These solutions should be directed towards attitudinal and cultural, environmental and organisational change. Again to facilitate effective inclusive education, support that promotes change in attitudes, beliefs, and values and habits must be provided (Werts, Wolery, Snyder, Caldwell & Salibury, 1996; Wilkins & Nietfield, 2004). However, such change does not only involve the school itself; it involves all teachers, parents, local communities and governments. That is inclusive education cannot be met unless teachers and

other school staff, pupils, parents, the community, the government support and commit themselves to it (Mittler 2000, UNESCO & MoES Spain 1994).

Inclusion has its implication for school administration; thus, (Wangal et al, 1992) state that inclusion is a matter of school planning, which includes school policy, organization, practices, teacher training, and curriculum design. They provide examples of features of an inclusion-friendly school system. Casey (1994), Villa & Thousand (1995) and Gearheart et al. (1996) provide detailed guidelines on how to involve children with a wide range of disabilities in regular classroom activities. An example is the definitions these writers gave with an illustration of a typical day in freshman language arts class for 32 students attending an ordinary high school in a large urban school district. These writers believe that the composition of the class with the teacher named Mr. Rice reflects the diversity in most classrooms in the United State. They believe that at one time, many students in such a class would have been labeled and forced into separate classes, thereby limiting their exposure to one another, the essential curriculum, and varied instructional procedures and personal contact. Thousand and Villa (1995) acknowledge that inclusive practices involve substantial changes in both attitude and educational approaches, and the achievement of change is difficult. The benefits of special education and ancillary expertise are not in dispute. The point is that they can be applied to children in mainstream settings at least as well as in segregated settings.

Barton (1997) further suggested that, inclusion is not just about maintaining the presence of the child in school, but also about maximizing their participation. He believes that inclusive education is not an end in itself but a means to an end. Thus it is about contributing to the realization of an inclusive society with the demand for a rights approach as a central component of policy making. However, Barton believed that inclusive education encourages the issue of change to be

fore grounded, unlike integration; the change process is not assimilation but transformation of those deep structural barriers to change. Successful inclusion is less to do with the individual factor such as amount of support for the child; rather, it is the interaction of certain key factors that bring about the likelihood of a more successful inclusion outcome for the child. Children are more likely to be included if the teacher takes a central role in the management of children with disability education and their support. Thus successful inclusion is dependent on how the teacher works with other support staff in the school and curriculum structured in a way to involve the child.

In spite of the suggested positive outcomes of inclusion, Wishart and Manning (1996) claimed that, it was increasingly difficult in secondary schools to meet the educational needs of young people with disabilities in a mainstream class. One reason for this assertion according to (Hemmingson & Borell, 2002; Llewellyn, 2000; Wedell, Stevens, & Walker, 2000) was that staff often felt they were either not skilled enough or did not have the time to adapt the curricula to accommodate the needs of young people with disabilities. In the literature review of Sebba and Sachdev (1997), they disagree with Wishart and Manning; they found a small to moderate positive effect of mainstream education on the academic achievements of young people with disabilities. Further Butler (2001), Kliewer (1998) and Bax (1999) supported these conclusions stated by Sebba and Sachdev (1997) by revealing that young people with disabilities make better academic progress within a mainstream setting even though the differences may only be slight in some circumstances. The positive impact of inclusive placements on learners with disabilities is again noted by MacArthur et al., (2005) and De Graaf et al., (2011), that it improved social relationships and networks, peer role models, increased achievement, higher expectations, increased collaboration among school staff and improved integration of families into the community. Some writers such as (Scruggs, 2000; Saland, 2005) suggested there are various reasons for failure of

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inclusion which may be inadequate personal support for general education teachers and also negative impact on teachers time to mix students according to (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000; Saland, 2005). Also mentioned is uncertainty of the social & academic benefits for children with special education (Taylor et al., 1997; Saland, 2005) and lastly insufficient administrative support according to O'Neil, (1995); Bruneare- Balderrana, (1997) & Saland, (2005).

Besides, in order to achieve the goals of successful inclusive education in all countries, research has identified several key variables that could enhance or impede the success of inclusion. Among the many factors shown to influence the success of providing effective inclusion for students with special needs has been the use of appropriate instructional adaptations. Furthermore, Friend and Bursuck (1996, 2002), Mastropieri and Scruggs (2000), OECD (1995), Salend (2001) and Tomlinson (1995) placed emphasis on the role of instructional adaptation in inclusive settings as an indispensable means for accommodating the needs of students with disabilities. Writers such as Dunlap, Kern-Dunlap, Clark & Robbins, 1991; Jolivette, Wehby, Canale, & Massey, 2001; Scott, Vitale & Matsen, 1998; Schukla-Mehta & Albin, (2003) agree with Friend and Bursuck (1996, 2002), Mastropieri and Scruggs (2000), OECD (1995), Salend (2001) and Tomlinson (1995) also explained that making instructional adaptations require teachers to implement alternative teaching strategies such as modifying instructional materials, assignments, testing procedures, grading criteria, and varying presentation styles in order to enhance the success of students with disabilities in general classroom environment.

In spite of the significant role of instruction to implement effective inclusion, there is concern that individual needs of pupils or students with disabilities will be curtailed in the process of trying to cater for the diversity of needs in regular education classrooms (Westwood & Graham, 2003). Moreover, Schumm and Vaughn (1995); Tomlinson, et al., (1997) believed many regular-

school teachers have often demonstrated considerable lack of knowledge about students with disabilities and inclusion and teachers have often used more undifferentiated large group instruction with few adaptations to meet the needs of included students (Baker & Zigmond, 1990; Schumm, et al., 1995). Consistent with this, Mushoriwa (2001) using Zimbabwe as an example concluded that the use of such generic teaching practices resulted in mainstream teachers in Zimbabwe being unable to cater for the individual needs of students with disabilities.

In contrast to the excellence and uniqueness of inclusive education, according Lewis (2000: 202) it has challenges questioning the rationale 'behind getting same aged groups of students to learn where the real achievements of the less able will never be recognised as they will always be below the artificial average of their peers and where their final efforts are bound to be degraded in the common exam system?'. Lewis's fear is about the possibility of including the vulnerable and being hostile to them. Considering Lewis's assertion, UNESCO in 1994 published that for children with special educational needs (SEN) to fully participate in the regular curriculum and achieve academic and social success, educational systems have to make provision for appropriate aids and support services, with appropriately differentiated curriculum and assessment practices. Other challenges associated with inclusive education are poor parental involvement and community participation, inaccessible buildings which make it impossible for those using wheelchairs to access facilities, as well as large class size and high Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR, which also make it difficult for teachers to give individualised attention to those likely to underachieve academically.

Across Europe successful inclusive education practices can be found in all Member States at national, regional or local levels. Some of these practices are reflected in transnational projects that the European Commission has supported under its Lifelong Learning Programme. The

Education and Training 2020 Strategic Framework and the May 2010 Council conclusions on the social dimension of education and training underline that education systems need to respond to diversity and to provide for the successful inclusion of all learners, including those with disability or special needs. This concern is also embodied in the United Nations Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities and in the European Commission's Disability Strategy 2010-2020. Despite this progress, much remains to be done. Knowledge from research is necessary to enable and guide progress in policy and practice. Inclusive practices need to be incentivised rather than discouraged by funding regimes, so that additional funding follows a child with special educational needs into the mainstream school where they are placed, (NESSE Report, 2012).

2.3.2 Inclusive Education in Ghana

Inclusive education in Ghana, can be traced to as far back as the 1951 Accelerated Education Plan and the 1961 Educational Act for free education which resulted in increases in basic level enrolment. This means that, Ghana has a well-defined legal framework for people with disabilities including children with disabilities and their inclusion into regular classrooms. Educational services to the disabled individual are no longer charitable; in Ghana, it is enshrined in the 1992 Constitution and place emphasis on almost all international conventions aimed at promoting and protecting the human rights of all citizens.

The goal to increase enrolment was realised with the help of UN Agencies, NGOs and the country's legal framework supporting education. Unfortunately, all these measures failed to produce the support needed to achieve effective inclusive education. Moreover earlier reports on Ghana's inclusive education initiatives raised several concerns, including limited teacher knowledge and skills to provide instructional adaptations towards meeting the needs of included students (Kuyini, 1998; Ofori-Addo, et al., 1999; & O'Toole, et al., 1996). More so, according to

Avoke (2000), Ghana does not have a clearly stated legislation and clear cut policy on inclusive education. He further stated that the Special Education Division (SPED) of Government of Ghana Annual Education Sector Operation Plan 2003-2005 accompanying the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) stated inclusive education as an official education policy. Some of the objectives of the policy includes: the provision of support systems for children with Special Education Needs (SEN) by 2015, attendance of children with SEN in schools must be increased to 50% in 2008, 80% in 2012 and 100% in 2015. This means that inclusive education in Ghana must be achieved by 2015, organisation of screening and identification of children with special needs, organisation of sensitization workshops for parents and children with special needs, and incorporation of training in SEN into all colleges of Education (p.16). The Ministry of Education (MOE) is responsible for the provision and management of education in Ghana and it emphases the achievement of an inclusive education system by 2015 as part of its vision in the Education Strategy Plan (ESP) 2003-2015.

In an attempt to enhance the knowledge and skills of teachers for the inclusive education initiative, the Ministry of Education provided a series of training opportunities/workshops involving the use of The UNESCO Teachers' Resource Pack (RP) on Special Needs in the Classroom for principals, teachers and educational administrators. The Ministry of Education also adopted a 'train-the-trainer approach' whereby teachers who received the initial training were required to train other teachers in inclusive education approaches. This was followed by the implementations of The Pilot Action Research Project in November 1994, which led to the incorporation of the content of the special needs methodology advocated by the Resource Pack into the curriculum of teacher training, beginning in 1995 (Ofori-Addo, et al., 1999). A resource team of eight peripatetic teachers was also set up to provide subsequent training for peripatetic

teachers and new teachers in the districts implementing inclusive education (Ofori-Addo, et al., 1999). In the 2003/2004 academic year, the Special Education Division (SpED) of Ghana Education Service (GES) in addressing the policy objectives initiated the implementation of Inclusive Education on a pilot basis in fourteen (14) districts of five (5) regions namely, Greater Accra, Eastern, Central, Volta and Northern.

In spite of these provisions, Kuyini (2004) and Kuyini and Desai (2006) reported that some Ghanaian principals and teachers possessed limited knowledge of the requirements of inclusion and that such educators were unlikely to have any reasonable capacity to provide appropriate instruction. This reflected the earlier finding of Ofori-Addo et al. (1999) who reported that Ghanaian schools implementing inclusive education showed a lack of skills needed for tailoring instruction to the needs of students with disabilities.

Despite the above challenges of inclusive education, it is aimed at providing effective and efficient learning opportunities to all children including children with special needs with reference to their learning needs. Inclusion from an educational perspective can help address the traditional and structural problems of poverty, the challenges of modernization, social and cultural integration, and the growing diversity of national societies. Again it can also be said that inclusive education is at its conceptual stage in most countries including Ghana, because it demands a great deal of preparation, and more importantly, a strong political will and community participation.

Summary

Inclusive education has been endorsed, accepted internationally and locally, and it is seen as human right issue. Inclusion is a big challenge facing school systems throughout the world. Inclusive education have been defined or described by different people but have a common element that features in the conceptualisation of inclusion. Thus the underlying basis of all the descriptions

emphasis the removal of all barriers to learning to include all learners vulnerable to exclusion and marginalisation. To understand the concept, Lipsky and Gartner (1999: 15) differentiate between inclusive education and special education. They believe that inclusive education needs the modification of the education system to meet the needs of the changing society and to adapt to the special education system. On the other hand writers such as Pearson, (2005) & Beveridge, (1999) believe that there has not been a permanent definition of inclusive education which makes practice difficult. To overcome the difficulty of the substantive understanding, Ainscow and Mitchel proposed principal features of inclusive education. In addition, the proponents of inclusive education argued it to be implemented on the basis of basic human rights to help provide equal and equity education to all learners.

2.4 Teachers' attitude towards inclusive education

Teachers' attitude towards student disabilities has a significant impact on educational experience (Kenny et al, 2000, cited by Lodge et al, 2004; Genesi, 2004). According to Leyser & Tappendorf, (2001); Nieto (1997); Sharma & Desai (2002); Wilczenski (1992), beliefs about disability, perception and attitude of teachers can influence the practice of inclusive education, and the quality of educational materials and instruction students receive. Some studies point out that teachers' attitudes to inclusive education are typically positive (Avramidis et at., 2000; Kuester, 2000; Schmelkin, 1981). Again, Avramidis et al. (2000) revealed that teachers' attitudes may be influenced by the disquiet they experience regarding the impact such a process will have on their time and skills. It is believed that many regular education teachers who feel unprepared and fearful to work with learners with disabilities in regular classes display frustration, anger and negative attitude toward inclusive education because they believe it could lead to lower academic standards (Gary, 1997; Tiegerman-Farber & Radziewicz, 1998). Additionally, access to resources and

specialist support affects teacher confidence and attitudes toward inclusive education (Bennett, DeLuca, & Bruns, 1997; Wolery, Anthony, Snyder, Werts, & Katzenmeyer, 1997). On the contrary, it is noted by Avramidis, Byliss, and Burden (2000) that when teachers gain extensive professional knowledge needed to implement inclusive programmes, they may succumb to it. Similarly, Ley Roy and Simpson (1996) reported that as teachers gain experience with students, particularly those with special needs, it intensify their confidence to teach them and is likely to alter their negative attitudes.

In addition Villa, Thousand, Meyerere and Nivea (1996:10) in Pottas (2005:63) indicated in their study that although, teachers appear negative in general, the implementation of inclusive education often results in change in attitudes at the end of the implementation process after gaining professional expertise needed to practice the inclusive philosophy. In line with these arguments, Avramdis, Byliss and Burden (2000a:207) indicated that educating learners with special needs in inclusive settings results in positive change in teachers attitudes. In contrast, (Cook, Tankersley, Cook & Landrum, 2000:20 in Pottas, 2005:63) asserted that, even though a teacher may have acquired high level of experience in teaching learners with special needs in inclusive class room, it does not guarantee positive attitudes as teachers with a great deal of negative inclusive attitudes may be less likely to be concerned about their included students. Researchers have noted that inclusive education is a dynamic process without any quick fix and it requires the endorsement of regular classroom teachers to be successful (Cobett, 2001; Lindsay, 2003). Agbenyega (2007) supports this view by asserting that any intervention program to reduce negative attitudes and improve inclusive education in Ghana should adopt a comprehensive grassroots approach and targets issues.

More so, Clongh and Lindsay (1991) found that younger teachers and those with fewer years of experience have been found to be more supportive of inclusion. The most experienced teachers with more than eleven years of teaching were the least accepting. Similar results were found by (Leyser et al., 1994) and stated that those teachers with fourteen years or less teaching experience had a significantly higher positive score in their attitudes to inclusive education. Attitudes of teachers towards educating children with disability in the ordinary schools vary as a function of several variables. For example, teachers with more expertise teaching children with disabilities in their class hold more favorable attitudes towards inclusion (Forlin et al, 1996). Engelbrecht and Green (2001 in Kubyana, 2005:28) also found evidence that teachers prefer to teach learners who have attention, persistence and adaptability temperament characteristics. Generally, teachers find it difficult to teach students with more severe disabilities, particularly those with blindness, due to lack of training and support and large classes. For example, according to Dopoux et al (2006:56) teachers are generally more receptive towards students with mild incidence disabilities and less receptive towards including children with severe or low incidence disabilities in their general education classroom. This suggests that student's variables also affect teachers' attitudes towards inclusion.

Kretschmer (1997:400) having researched into teachers' attitude concluded that teachers are overwhelmed and exasperated, feeling defeated even before they start the process. As a result, when teachers are faced with these learners, they feel compelled to their teaching styles and lower their expectations because they are loss as where to begin. Kintner (2005) agreed with Kretschmer by saying there exists a considerable residue of fear, hostility and aversion implicitly because of lack of understanding among people. Agreeing to the statement made, Downing (2004) believes that many school districts and teachers are fearful of inclusion programmes given the nature of the

behaviours or any other social deficit that special needs students may have. This is not always the issue as indicated by Kitner that for the presence of a child with disability in their class, most teachers become more positive once they have had the opportunity to work with these children. Professional knowledge, material and human resources are found to enhance teachers' attitudes and their willingness to embrace and make inclusion work (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000: Loreman, Deppeler & Harvey, 2005). Agbenyega (2007) further suggested that it is when teachers are sufficiently equipped in knowledge and expertise and support by other professionals that their confident levels to work with all students in inclusive classroom increases. Thus, knowledge has attracted considerable attention; this is an important factor in improving teachers' attitudes towards educating disabled individuals. The importance of training in formation of positive attitude towards inclusive education was supported by findings of (Al-khatteh, 2000; and Beh-Pojooh, 1992). They found that professional training of teachers was reported to be one of the key factors of successful inclusion or educating children with disabilities. Teacher educational training and qualification can therefore be seen as a prerequisite for practices of quality inclusive education; however, only if teacher education is in line with the goals and principles of inclusive education. Thus if teachers are not trained in line with these, school- level implementation of inclusive education cannot be expected to be met (UNESCO 2009).

Equipping teachers with the relevant knowledge and appropriate skills with regard to their different responsibilities must be regarded as a crucial element of successful inclusive education (Wamae &Kang'ethe-Kaman, 2004:24). Wamae & Kan'gethe-Kamau (2004) went further and referred to the work of Wenday (1986, p. 45) in which it was argued that knowledge is a critical factor in determining teachers' attitudes towards a handicap. Thus, the more knowledge teachers possess about disability, the more committed and accepting teachers are likely to become when

working with children with disabilities. Referring to the situation in the USA, Stough, (2003) asserts that without appropriately trained special education personnel, students either continue to be educated in segregated settings or are inadequately educated in regular education classrooms.

According to Florian (2008), the choices teachers make when students experience difficulty are influenced and limited by factors such as the role of the professional training that they have received and how well it has prepared them to address the challenges of teaching diverse groups of students. It is argued that when teachers gain extensive professional knowledge needed to implement inclusive programmes, they may succumb to it (Avramidis, Buylis, & Burden, 2000). Research by Burke and Sutherland (2004) revealed that teachers with the most intense training and in service dealing with special needs pupils and students are to be the most successful and least eager to complain about inclusive practices. Further, they noted this referent led researchers to believe that the provision of training for regular education teachers must be comprehensive and complete before the inclusion process can take place. These writings on teachers knowledge is clearly in agreement with UNESCO's (2009) assertion that teacher education can thus be seen as a prerequisite for practices of quality IE, however, only if teacher education is in line with the goals and principles of IE. If teachers are not trained in line with these, school- level implementation of IE cannot be expected to be met.

Some additional points need to be considered regarding teachers' attitudes. According to Campbell, Gilmore & Cuskelly (2003), regular education teachers have not been in favour of the influx of students with special needs warranted by special education laws. Thus there are many reasons regular teachers have been apprehensive towards the practice of inclusive education and have been extremely vocal about their feelings on the subjects for many years, suggested McLesky, Hoppey, Willaimson & Rentz, (2004). Some of the reasons given include their inability to

accommodate students with special needs in the classrooms stated Campbel et al., (2003). Furthermore, their apprehension was related to behaviour and not having the extra time to supplement the curriculum utilised in their regular classes at the time of study (Lopes, Monteiro & Sil, 2004). Some scholars such as Riddell and Weedon (2009) have suggested that efforts have been made to introduce a stronger rights discourse into education, but these attempts have not been readily embraced by professionals. Contrary to the assertion made by Riddell and Weedon, mainstream teachers feel that the proper administrative support could increase their ability to collaborate with the special education teacher to solve problems in the inclusive classroom, noted Hammond & Ingalls (2003).

In the Ghanaian context, according to Avoke (1977), attitude towards disabled children are shaped by cultural prejudices, and traditional stereotypes of various communities. Because of this attitude, the need to educate these children is irrelevant in the society and it reflects the classroom teachers' perception of accepting children with disabilities in their class. In Ghana, a study carried out by Obeng (2005) examined the views of teachers on educating disabled children; the result shows that teachers had negative attitude to including children with disability, and although they show love and affection towards the children they teach, they are unwilling to include them in their mainstream classroom. In addition, Ackah (2010) conducted a study to find out teachers' background characteristics and attitudes towards inclusive education. Findings from this study showed that generally mainstream classroom teachers do not support inclusive education as a result of teachers lacking the necessary equipment and training to handle disability issues they encounter in the classroom. More so, the background variables may not affect the negative attitudes of the teachers with regards to inclusive education. Agbenyega (2007) also studied teacher's perception to inclusive education. The responses from teachers indicate that children with sensory impairment

should be educated in the special schools since placing them in the mainstream increase their (the teachers') workload which leads to their inability to complete syllables during the school term. Most significantly, it may affect the academic performance in their classroom. Due to these attitudes, Avoke (1998) cited the United Nation Education Act for disabled children which mandated that there should be free appropriate education for children including youth and children with disabilities.

Furthermore, other attitudinal studies have suggested that general educators have not developed an empathetic understanding of disabling conditions (Berryman, 1989; Horne & Ricciardo, 1988), nor do they appear to be ready to accept students with special needs (Barton, 1992; Hayes & Gunn, 1988). This can be explained by the fact that inclusion had often been effected in an ad hoc manner without systematic modifications to a school's organisation, due regard to teachers' instructional expertise or any guarantee of continuing resource provision. Also, Center and Ward's (1987) study with regular teachers indicated that their attitudes to integration showed lack of confidence both in their own instructional skills and in the quality of support personnel available to them. They were positive about integrating only those children whose disabling characteristics were not likely to require extra instructional or management skills on the part of the teacher. The previously mentioned studies suggest that teachers, who are the prime agents of the implementation of the policy, are often not prepared to meet the needs of students with significant disabilities and are more reluctant than administrators and policy-makers.

Again, Avramidis et al (2000) conducted a survey and the result of the survey demonstrated clear differences in responses between Special Education Need (SEN) children in Ordinary Schools and 207 teachers who had experience of varying degrees and years of including children with significant disabilities in their classroom and those with limited or no experience. The data

indicated that educating students with significant disabilities in mainstream classrooms results in positive changes in educators' attitudes. This study confirms previous research undertaken by Villa et al. (1996) who concluded that teacher commitment often emerges at the end of the implementation cycle, after the teachers have gained mastery of the professional expertise needed to implement inclusive programmes. Similar findings were reported by LeRoy & Simpson (1996) who studied the impact of inclusion over a 3-year period in the state of Michigan. The assessment of teacher attitudes was based on the desirability of segregation, the responsibility for the education of children with severe difficulties and the benefit of inclusion for children with disabilities. They found on all three accounts that teacher attitudes changed in a positive direction over the 3-year period. Their study showed that as teachers' experience with children with SEN increased, their confidence to teach these children also increased. They noted that teachers who have worked with children with SEN in an inclusive setting tend to hold more positive attitudes towards inclusion than teachers without relevant experience (Avramidis et al., 2000; LeRoy & Simpson, 1996). In addition, Shevlin, Kenroy and Mc Neela (2000) study in Irish indicated that teachers expected less of the children with disabilities than their non-disabled counterparts. Teachers accepted work of lower standard and gave inadequate feedback of the physically disabled. Similarly, a study by Priestly and Rabiee (2000) reported low expectation based on perceive severity of impairment.

Historically, teachers have not been favourably disposed to the policy of increased inclusion of children with special needs within the regular classroom. Their concerns include the amount of individualised time children with special needs might require, possibly to the detriment of other students; apprehension as to the quality of work produced by children with special needs; lack of adequate support services; and teachers' concerns about deficiencies in their own training and preparation in the skills required to support inclusive educational practice (Bender, Vial &

Scott, 1995; Tait & Purdie, 2000). Teachers' attitudes are additionally influenced by the level of disability they are asked to accommodate within their classroom. These results indicate that teacher support for inclusion varied with the severity of the disability, and this has been consistently reported in research studies in the United States according to (Rainforth, 2000; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). This may mean that teachers were only willing to accept the inclusion of students with mild physical disabilities. They were reluctant to include students with more severe physical disabilities, or students with intellectual challenges.

On the issue of gender, however, other studies that investigated teacher attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular settings found that female teachers are inclined to have more favorable attitudes (Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001; Pearman, Huang, Barnhart, & Mellblom, 1992) and appeared to have higher expectations of students with disabilities than their male counterparts (Hodge & Jansma, 2000). Contrary to this, other studies found that male teachers were either significantly more confident than females in their ability to teach students with disabilities (Jobe, Rust, & Brissie, 1996), or they held more positive views about inclusive education (Lampropoulou & Padelliadu, 1997). Lampropoulou and Padelliadu (1997) caution that findings linking gender as a variable to investigate reactions to inclusive education are often linked to cultural factors, with some cultures ascribing the care of students with disabilities to female teachers.

Summary

In sum, the above reviewed written works revealed that perception and attitudes of teachers' play a key role in achieving successful inclusive; thus, teachers attitudes have been pointed out to be significant in influencing and guaranteeing inclusive education practice for children with special needs. Teachers who feel unprepared, fearful and do not have knowledge on

disability display frustrations, anger and negative perceptions towards inclusive education because they believe it could lead to lower academic standards. Researches done by writers such as Avramids, Bayliss, and Burden (2000) indicate that those who have less knowledge on educating disabilities, gain extensive professional knowledge after they have worked with disabled children in the classroom. This can provide motivation to accept implementation of inclusive education. Second, studies conducted by different writers suggest that attitude towards inclusive education differ. Some are positive while others are less positive which may be as a result of limited training, teaching experience of disabled children etc. Lastly, it can be concluded that teachers may like to take on children with less disability in their class compared to the very severe ones who are very difficult to manage.

2.5 Parental involvement

It has been realised that, a key to including children with or without disabilities doing well in school is for parents to be involved in their education. For instance Hunt and Goetz, (2004) stated that the involvement of parents of children with special educational needs is highlighted as a vital factor in inclusive schooling. Teachers believe they cannot do it alone and for effective educational processes to occur in classrooms, parental help in partnership with educators is needed, (Wilson et al, 2014). The involvement of parents in the education of their children has attracted a lot of attention over the past years and it was one of the major educational issues to enhance quality education. Parental involvement can range from providing meaningful learning experiences at home to volunteering to help with school activities. The education sector performance report published by the Ghana Education Service (GES) indicates that parents and the community were not widely involved in school due to the long distances between schools and local communities limiting interaction (MOESS, 2008). According to Casley-Hayford (2000), Minor (2006), Pryor

& Ampiah, (2003a, 2003b), the situation calls for the need to encourage parents to actively engage in the education of their children.

McLoughling et al, (2003) noted that, when children see the support, between home and school, they become excited and they sense the value in learning and their intrinsic motivation for learning grows. Research on role construction has provided a lot of evidence about the importance parents attach to their decisions to be involved in their children's schooling. Parental role construction has been defined by (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005) as the beliefs parents hold about what they are supposed to do in connection to their children's education and the patterns of parental behavior that follow those behaviors. They believe that parental involvement in their children's education is caused by three factors such as parents motivational belief, their perception of invitation to involvement and parents life context variables. Hoover-Dempsey et al. explained these three factors as the involvement of parents in their children education as being motivated by parents' sense of efficacy for helping their children to excel in school and their role construction for involvement. Again, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) noted that, parents are more likely to partake in their children's education if they see such participation as one of their obligations as parents. Thus, parents who have strong beliefs that, they have an obligation and contribution towards their children's education become more willing to take part in their learning activities.

In line with Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, Sheldon (2002) revealed in their study that, role construction predicted parents' home and school based engagement activities. For both types of involvement, the more parents believe that all parents should be engaged in the education of their children: the more likely they are to be involved themselves. For example, writers such as Grolnick et al. (1997) indicated that, positive connections exist between the beliefs parents have about their

active role in the education of their children and their involvement in intellectually challenging activities with their children. It can be suggested that role construction for parental involvement in their children's education is caused by the beliefs parents have about the development of their children, such as their effectiveness to raise their children and how to help their children to excel in school. In short, parents need to know what is expected of them, whether they can make a positive difference in their child's life, and if their participation will be endorsed by school authority. Also, parents decide to be involved in their children's education partly because of their belief about the outcome that is likely to follow their actions (Bandura, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1992). It can be said that parents may get involved when they believe that their efforts are going to be rewarded positively.

Further, research findings from Henderson and Berla (1995) showed that, educators hold higher expectations for students whose parents collaborate with the teacher, in programmes that are designed to involve parents in full partnerships. Students whose parents are not involved are more apt to drop out of school. That is the more extensive the parent involvement, the higher the student achievement. This finding means parental involvement in their children's education makes the children exhibit more positive attitudes and behaviours, improves their achievements and progress in school and parental expectations becomes the greatest effect on their achievements.

Consistence with these findings, Shumow & Miller (2001) also found that parental involvement at school positively correlates with academic grade point average. Parents who play active roles in the schooling of their children ensure that homework and other schools tasks are accomplished. They serve as role models and a source of motivation for the children to work hard to complement the hard work and support being provided by their parents (Hafford-Letchfield & Spattcher, 2007). Similarly inviting parents, members of the business community, and service

organisations to identify academic goals and standards and quantify measures of progress sends the message that what students learn and how well they learn is not an issue just for teachers and administrators but is a real priority for the community as well, (Wright and Saks, 2000, cited in Cunningham, 2004). Without the support of the family for their children's learning, it appears difficult for teachers to devise academic experiences to help students learn meaningful content. But research shows an increase in parental involvement correlates with an increase in student achievement (Ballen & Moles, 1994; Beneit, 1995; Esptein, 1991). Teachers normally exhibit positive attitudes when parents get involved, (Beyer, 1994).

According to Turnbull and Turnbull (2001), some parents are more comfortable with certain types of involvement than others. Schools have different philosophies of parent involvement, which basically fall into three categories: school-to-home transmission, interactive learning and full partnership for school success. Some parents enjoy volunteering at their child's school; others have work or family responsibilities that make volunteering hard. Some parents like serving on school improvement teams that make policy recommendations; others prefer to work directly with their own child's learning activities. One type of involvement is not better than others. The important thing is that parents become involved to help their children succeed in school. Dauber and Epstein (1993) revealed that teacher invitations and school programs that are meant to motivate parents to become involved in their children's education were the strongest predictors of home and school-based involvement in their study. Again, Epstein and Van Voorhis (2001) indicated that the invitation from teachers for parental involvement will lead to students having more time to do their homework which enhances their performance.

In addition, Bauer and Shea (1989) remarked that parental activities must reflect the degree to which parents are comfortable and capable of being involved. Interestingly, although this option

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is extended to parents of children without disabilities, there appears to be less willingness to accommodate personal preferences of parents who have children with disabilities. Students with disabilities whose parents were involved in their education missed fewer days of school and were much less likely to fail courses than students whose parents were less involved. Research has demonstrated that, the earlier this involvement takes places, the greater the benefits for the child and the family (Bailey, et al., 1998; Duust, 2002).

Besides, Karnes and Teska (1980) assumed that, parents can interpret and translate scholastic results into a meaningful educational plan. They admitted that despite a lack of formal training and supervision, there may be parents who are able to identify, articulate, and address the unique educational needs of their children at home. They believe that to teach the child at home require identified competencies parents needs such as interacting with the child in ways that promote positive behavior, reinforcing desired behavior and establish an environment that is conducive to learning. On the other hand, Morrisette & Morrisette (2010) disagreed with Karnes and Teska and noted that, the role of parents as educators of their children remains vague, in contexts where they are expected to serve as educators. Also there will be negative consequences if only parents begin to actively teach their children because they may not benefit from this educational arrangement.

It is important to note that, parental involvement in their children education may also be based on the socioeconomic status of the parents such as their financial, educational and marital status. For instance, Conger, Elder, Lorenz, & Simons, (1994); McLoyd (1990) stated that the inability of parents to get involved in the education of their children could be attributed to their limited economic resources. Emphasising further on this point, the works of Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Mariato (1997); Conger, Conger, & Elder, (1997) indicated that financial hardship

which is more prevalent in single-parent families do not only circumscribe options for leisure time activities and investments in education, but also normally brings about strains in the family system that undermine parenting. These strains in the family could therefore serve as a disincentive for the parents to be engaged in the education of their children. Secondly regarding marital status, Zinsmeiter (1996) maintains that due to the rise in single parents households and the breakdown of marriage, children receive less care and oversight from their parents. He contends that teachers are overloaded, and that the burden of raising children is being placed on schools, with less time spent teaching core subjects and more time spent teaching things traditionally left to parents, like personal guidance and ethical instruction. Third, Stevenson & Baker (1987) indicated that the educational status of the mother is connected to the extent of parental involvement in the education of their children. That is parents with higher educational attainment become more involved in their children's education. They further asserted that, educated mothers were current with their children's school performance, had more contacts with their teachers, and were more likely to have provided intervention should there have been the need in order to supervise their children's educational success.

Again, Davis-Kean's (2005) study, proved that the amount of schooling that parents received has an effect on how they structure their home environment and how they interact with their children to promote academic achievement. These studies portray that parents of higher financial and education status gets much involved in their children's education because, it is believed that, lack of income and education limit the effectiveness of parental involvement. According to Lee & Bowen (2006), parents from less privileged minority backgrounds may not have the resources or time to become involved in their children's schools in ways that are valued by the school. Involving families in student's education benefits both children with disabilities and

their non-disabled peers. Research has demonstrated that, the earlier this involvement takes place, the greater the benefits for the child and the family (Bailey, et al., 1998; Dunst, 2002). More so, according to Boyer (1996, p.34), 'thirty years of research tells us that the starting point of putting children on the road to excellence is parental involvement in their children's education. Parental involvement is a distinct association between parent and child with direction and support from the teacher to improve pupil's performance'.

In Ghana studies on parental school involvement have been less, but there are a few studies conducted. For instance Nyarko, (2011) noted that, Ghanaian parents have often engaged in their children's schooling in one form or another, their involvement historically has been limited to school related activities at home such as ensuring the completion of homework. More Ghanaian parents are somewhat involved than absolutely detached from their children's education, but the extent of involvement is low overall, (Chowa, Ansong, & Osei-Akoto, 2012). Other studies have focused on community participation in school activities, a study conducted in a village community named Akurase in the Ashanti region of Ghana, most parents showed less interest in the schooling of their children. These parents lacked interest in education and for that matter did not bother to engage in the learning activities of their children, (Pryor & Ampiah, 2003a, 2003b). This may be as a result of socio-demographic factors such as economic situations, personal priorities and self-interest. Besides, other studies conducted by Addae-Boahene & Akorful, (2000), Boardman & Evans, (2000), Nkansah & Chapman, (2006) focused on community participation in school activities. They found that, involving the community in school is a useful activity due to its beneficial effects in improving the infrastructure of the schools, and also making resources available for the educational success of the students.

Lastly, the benefit of parental involvement has been further emphasised by Garrick and Duhaney; Salend (2000). They believe that parents generally support inclusion because it promotes acceptance, which is crucial to their children's social and emotional development. Clearly it can be pointed out that the effect of parental involvement in their children's education cannot be overstated; parental role has a tremendous impact to enhance the child's school progress and educational achievements in school.

Summary

Most of the studies above indicate that parental involvement is very important in the education of children. In the review above, it can be briefly stated that children including children with disabilities perform better in school if parents are involved in their schooling. This means that failure of parental involvements leads to most of these children dropping out of school and lacking the basic skills and knowledge to participate in society. Moreover, it came out that some parents get involved as a result of their socio-economic backgrounds which dictate their level of involvement.

2.6 Cultural Bias

One of the most critical of all the barriers to free universal education for pupils, particularly those with disabilities, is negative attitudes and prejudice. Events in history show how disabled persons were badly treated; they were treated with a lot of contempt, maltreated and in some cases killed outright, (Avoke, 2000). In most traditional African societies including Ghana, the birth of a child with any form of disability brings a lot of emotional stress and shame to family members as a result of stigma attached to such conditions. Some Ghanaians still attribute the causes of disabilities to curses from gods (Agbenyega, 2005; Avoke, 2002; Oliver-Commey, 2001). Avoke (2000) further indicates that, in many communities in Ghana, pejorative labels and unkind

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treatment were meted out to people with disabilities. These treatments were considered justifiable due to the strong belief that disability was the result of evil placed on an individual from the gods.

Traditionally, disability was regarded to be the work of mythical gods or the presence of evil and witchcraft (Sello, Levitz & Kamper 1997). Some parents believed that disability was a punishment from the ancestors for having transgressed the spiritual or moral values of society. The assumption of traditional African philosophies is that, the birth of a child with disability is a bad omen or an act of bewitchment (Zindi 1997). This is because the disabled child is viewed as someone who will not bring good fortune into the family as argued by Sanders (1985) in Kapp (1994). For example in most African cultural perspectives, the child was and is still seen as an important asset to the family. Having a child fulfill societal expectations of procreation and helps to strengthen the family; the child has always been seen as a source of labour that brings income to the family. Thus having a disabled child may not be able to work for the family and in such situations, the family often responds negatively to the situation.

Writing in the Ghanaian context, Fefoame (2009) wrote that, when a woman gives birth to a disabled child, there is only one explanation that is offered: that the gods are annoyed. She further explained that society does not take into account sicknesses like Rubella and German measles and other factors such as women's nutritional state and prenatal care conditions. Instead, emphasis is laid on the purported guilt of the family, which element is instrumental in curtailing the promotion and protection of the right of people with disabilities. Furthermore, in a country where at least a quarter of the population worships lesser gods and is indigenously sensitised on the role of traditional beliefs and practices, a child born with only one leg may not have been allowed to live long past birth because of taboos and supernatural phenomena associated with having a disability (Walker, 1982; Walker, 1983).

It must be noted that in Ghana, there is a strong influence of religious and spiritual beliefs in conceptualisations of disability (Mawutor & Hayford, 2000, Nukunya, 2003, Salm & Falola, 2002). Explanatory models can be thought of as the framework by which individuals understand disability and are likely to be culturally bound (Groce, 1999b; Daley, 2002; Groce, 1999b). Groce (1999a, 1999b) further stressed and suggested that cultural belief systems and explanatory models for a particular disability tend to dictate how an individual is likely to fare in the community in which they live and the services (such as education) which are provided for them. Thus, societies develop their characteristic patterns of responding to disability, depending on the way disability is understood and their resources accordingly identified. Historical and cultural contexts, to a large extent, determine the criteria for normality and the definition of an ideal or acceptable person (Aristotle 1260 cited in Vehmas 2004). Cultural attitudes towards disabled individuals may have an overall effect on the self-concept of the individual to the extent that the individual becomes and feels disowned in the community in which he/she lives. Therefore, cultural attitudes towards individuals with disabilities deny them the opportunity to acquire knowledge, skills and capacity to improve upon their lives and to participate fully in the society due to their inability to access the core welfare services.

Moreover, cultural bias leads to preferential treatment with respect to allocation of resources and opportunities given to non-disabled children at the expense of their disabled peers. Education is deemed less important for children with disabilities especially for girls, who are expected to become wives and mothers. While some view gender bias as a major barrier, many others believe disability bias limits disabled girls' opportunities (Fadh, et al, 1997). In many cultures, disability is a source of stigma, thus having a disabled child is seen as a double liability that can lead to the devaluation of the whole family. Hence in some families, not only are children

with disabilities denied access to schooling, but they are also hidden away. The economic status of the disabled child is in bed with cultural prejudices. That is, in impoverished families, the limited resources available will be used to educate their non-disabled children with the expectation that they will ultimately help support the rest of the family. Most of these negative attitudes are mere misconceptions that stem from lack of proper understanding of disabilities and how they affect functioning. These misconceptions stem directly from the traditional systems of thought, which reflect magical-religious philosophies that can be safely called superstition, (Abosi, 2002).

Cultural prejudices have mostly shaped the attitudes towards persons with disabilities which have been a universal issue and have been noted throughout history. Anthony (2011) asserted that, in Ghanaian national belief systems, disability is viewed as individually rather than socially determined, while internationally, disability is viewed as socially rather than individually determined. In this regard, she argues that, national education policies are influenced by international principles and guidelines, and that national policies therefore are conflicted between national belief systems based on the individual model of disability and international principles and guidelines based on the social model of disability.

It is worth noting that, Billa (1996) stated that the attitude of the family with an exceptional child is mostly denial and unacceptance of the child. Even the home where acceptance and love to children are part of given role-models, these children face hostilities. Some parents expressed fear that, having 'abnormal child' might be hierarchical with their childbirth and would affect any unborn child (Mandell & Fiscus, 1981:40). The attitude of parents is very crucial for the child, this is because some parents feel these children are useless and they are looked down upon. Attitudes towards and the treatment of children with disabilities are not always a matter of choice but often the result of a lack of options (Avoke,

2001a, Coleridge, 1993, Stone, 1999, Woods, 1993). Societal attitudes toward these exceptional children portray open hostility, persecution and intolerance on the part of the able bodied population. Referring to Adima (1985: 15) elaborated further by Gearheart and Litton (1999), there is an indication that, even among developed countries, individuals with special needs are considered as 'creatures incapable of human feeling and undeserving of human passion.' These negative attitudes can be found at all levels: parents, community members, schools and teachers, government officials and even among disabled children themselves. At the household level, children with disabilities and their families often develop low self-esteem, hiding away and shunning social interaction, which can lead directly to their exclusion from education. This may be due to some local ancient mythology which has it that, persons with disabilities are social outcasts serving retribution for offences of their forefathers. More disturbing, is the fact that the physically challenged are often seen as a disgrace to their families whether they are so from birth or as a result of accident. Hence, at home and elsewhere, they are usually confined to discrete places where people will not readily notice them. Historical events, and several other challenges coupled with their struggle for economic survival, disabled individuals in general have a heavy psychological burden.

Consequently, the negative attitude as a result of cultural beliefs and persistent low regard for children with disabilities poses a serious barrier to social and educational inclusion in Ghana. For example, the impact of such attitudes is evident at the level of national policy-making in terms of planning, budgeting and programming. If these attitudes embedded in our cultural beliefs could be modified, and awareness is created children with disabilities would feel accepted and develop to bring out the potential in them. Also, it is supportive for inclusive education, if parents manage to make the home to be the first place of acceptance.

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In line with the above socio-cultural biases, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities has great relevance to help overcome cultural beliefs in making efforts to provide equal opportunities for educating children with disabilities. Therefore, in all societies, there is a need to raise awareness of the fact that children with disabilities have the same rights and needs as other children. Overcoming negative attitudes presents an enormous challenge, but it is the key to providing inclusive education.

Summary

Cultural beliefs about disabilities continue to interfere in the provision of social welfare services such as education to persons with disabilities. Discussions on cultural biases indicated, the educating children with disabilities in Ghana is affected by sociocultural values. Most of the studies showed that disabled children are seen as evil in Ghana and Africa, to a very large extent. In Ghana, there is strong stigma and family shame attached to having a disabled individual because society attributes it to curses from the gods. This influences the type of services provided for them, thus disability services are provided based on the understanding of disability in that particular society. Again due to cultural bias, non-disabled children are being favoured against these groups of children regarding opportunities. In deed cultural factors shape the attitudes of people toward persons with disabilities and it is a universal issue which is noted throughout history. As a result, strong cultural beliefs in most part in Ghana hinder the development of the children with disabilities in the society as a result of denied opportunities in life.

2.7 Discrimination and Stigmatisation

Discrimination refers to different forms of treatment meted out to persons as a result of their disabilities, whether intentional or unintentional due to stigma, (Goreczyny et al, 2011). Goreczyny has noted that negative attitudes towards individuals with disabilities can be

invisible barriers as persons with disabilities pursue community involvement and community resources geared towards achieving good quality of life (p. 1596). Again, Article 2 of the UNCPRD noted that, "discrimination on the basis of disability" means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field''. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation. In addition it says that states must take all legislative and administrative measures to ensure such protection and care is provided for the wellbeing of persons with disabilities. It is common knowledge that, in Ghana, persons with disabilities suffer greater levels of discrimination (Inclusion Ghana Report, 2011).

Inclusion Ghana Report stated that, discriminatory treatment includes general misinformation on the causes of disabilities and popular beliefs that, disabilities are caused by witchcraft or curses from the gods. Children with disabilities are widely and frequently discriminated against by other members of society (Barnartt and Scotch, 2000; Hahn, 1985). Therefore much of this discrimination is noted to be based on stereotypes about physical and mental impairments and disabilities (Hahn, 1985; Linton, 1998; Russel, 1998). Discrimination may lead to societal exclusion, bullying, aggression, ridicule and devaluation of the self-worth of people and these could bring about oppression against such persons in all areas of life including the ability to obtain housing, maintain regular employment, access education, engage in meaningful relationships and enjoy quality of life (Baffoe, 2013).

Stigmatisation on the other hand refers to the negative and prejudicial ways in which people living with disabilities are labeled (Agbenyega, 2003). Furthermore, stigma arises from a number

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of factors. Some of which include superstition, ignorance, lack of knowledge and empathy, old belief systems and a tendency to fear and exclude people who are perceived as different (Agbenyega, 2003; Avoke, 2002; Baffoe, 2013).

Children with disability face intentional and unintentional discrimination from other people and the system. Fundamental to the disability rights movement is the belief that persons with disabilities are widely and frequently discriminated against by other members of society (Barnartt & Scotch, 2002; Hahn, 1985). Linton (1998); Russell (1998) agreed with Barnartt & Scotch (2002); Hahn (1985) that much of this discrimination is noted to be based on stereotypes about physical and mental impairments and disabilities. Empirical research data indicates that attitudes of individuals without disabilities toward disability tend to be negative unless these individuals have personal relationships with individuals with disabilities or specific disability related sensitivity training (Livneh, 1982; Yuker, 1994). This is particularly evident in the area of employment (Diksa & Rogers, 1996; Hazer & Bedell, 2000; Hunt & Hunt, 2000; Liesener & Mills, 1999). Scholars have attributed discriminatory attitudes towards persons with disabilities and beliefs about disabilities to a variety of factors, including aesthetic anxiety (Hahn, 1985), lack of personal contact with persons experiencing disability (Makas, 1993; Yuker, 1994), public health campaigns citing disability as a result of engaging in high-risk behavior (Wang, 1992) or parental behaviour during pregnancy (Armstrong & Abel, 2000; Lawson, 2003), and the frequent utilization of public funds by persons experiencing disability (Russell, 1998). Hahn (1985), further, argued that the beliefs which lead to discriminatory attitudes associated with persons with disability are translated into policies that enable barriers in the physical, social, and cultural environment which create a social distance between persons with and without disabilities.

There is ample evidence to suggest that people with disabilities face discrimination in most spheres of their daily lives (Gleeson 2001; Imrie & Hall 2001).The social perception that disability equals inability and, thus people with disabilities are incapable of making a meaningful contribution to national development is one of the many forms of discrimination (GFD 2008). More so, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana (Ministry of Justice, 2005) and the Disability Act of 2006 (Republic of Ghana, 2006) sought to eradicate discrimination which comes in various forms. That is not all acts of discrimination are obvious because it may take a more subtle form, as in community members withholding care and support for ailing individuals (Collymore, 2002). Compared to stigma, discrimination can be recognised more often because it includes public restrictions and some forms of punishment (Busza, 1999). Discrimination may lead to societal exclusion, bullying, aggression, ridicule and devaluation of the self-worth of people and these could bring about oppression against such persons in all areas of life including the ability to obtain housing, maintain regular employment, access education, engage in meaningful relationships and enjoy quality of life (Baffoe, 2013).

Given the effects of discrimination, it can be said that discrimination against children with disabilities in schools could be reduced or eliminated if there is greater knowledge and understanding of disability and the practice of inclusion is achieved. Generally discriminatory attitudes towards persons with disabilities persist in society because of lack of knowledge and awareness and little, or no, experience of living closely with them. It is difficult to break down these attitudinal barriers, but it is believed that within the right context, children can be more accepting of difference than adults.

On the basis of gender discrimination, disabled boys may be prioritised over girls with disabilities for family expenditure on education, while, in some contexts. The extents to which

opportunities for disabled girls and boys differ depend on the cultural, and socio-economic, contexts. Girls with disabilities face discrimination with respect to security and safety, thus girls with disabilities are more vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse. In addition to abuse at home, it can happen in school, or on the way to school.

According to Rousso (2005) girls are discriminated against from birth, have lower life expectancy and receive less care, especially if they are disabled. They may be considered an extra burden or cause of despair, and their rights are less likely to be upheld. Available data, mostly focused on literacy, indicate that women and girls with disabilities fare less well in the educational arena than either their male with disabilities or nondisabled female counterparts. For example, UNESCO, the World Blind Union and others estimate the literacy rate for disabled women as one percent, compared to an estimate of about three percent for people with disabilities in general (Groce, 1997).

Statistics from individual countries and regions, while often higher, nonetheless confirm the gender inequalities (Nagata, 2003). In terms of school enrollment, UNESCO suggests that only two percent of disabled children are in school, with disabled girls even more underserved. Moreover, children with disabilities are less likely to start or stay in school than other children due to stigmatisation and discrimination being the most common and powerful barriers. In 1966, Hunt confirmed this by stating that 'disabled children are less likely to be sent to school even if physically possible for fear that they will not cope; that their disclosure will stigmatise the family and affect the marriage prospects of siblings; that they are not a worthwhile investment and others should get priority". Despite disability rights movement and a shift towards inclusion, persons with disabilities remain second class citizens. Children who live with disabilities are amongst the most stigmatised and excluded of all the world's children. Misunderstanding and lack of knowledge of

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children with disabilities result in their exclusion within the educational system, and in the wider society. The negative effects of discrimination they suffer lead to education outcomes which affect their self-esteem, involvement and interaction in the society which exposes them to abuse and further exclusion. Thus discrimination against persons with disabilities is rooted in widely shared attitudes, values and beliefs in societies which normally occur knowingly or unknowingly.

Stigmatisation on the other hand, is the most difficult challenges and threats to children with disabilities accessing inclusive education and it seems to permeate all sections of society. Stigma, as a sociological concept, was developed by Goffman (1963) and has been applied to a wide range of adult illness experiences, (Becker 1981, Bury 1988, Hopper 1981, Jacoby 1994, Lawless et al. 1996, MacDonald 1988, Nijhof 1995, Scrambler and Hopkins, 1986). Becker (1981), Scrambler and Hopkins (1986), Stafford and Scott (1986, p. 80) defined stigma as "a characteristic of persons that is contrary to a norm of a social unit" where a "norm" is defined as a "shared belief that a person ought to behave in a certain way at a certain time" (p. 81). Crocker et al. (1993, p. 505) suggest that "stigmatised individuals possess or are believed to possess some attribute, or characteristic, that conveys a social identity that is devalued in a particular social context". Stigma and discrimination exist in a vicious cycle. Stigma allows or encourages discriminatory attitudes and these attitudes are often reflected in discriminatory behaviour that results in acts of discrimination. Among the varied approaches to understanding stigma, it has been conceptualised as a convergence of interrelated components, such that it occurs when differences are labelled, linked to negative stereotypes, and people are categorised as separate, such that discrimination results (Link & Phelan, 2001). Acts of discrimination draw attention to or increase stigma which can occur in terms of provision and accessing social needs such as education. According to a framework proposed by (Parker and Aggleton). Stigma is part of a complex social

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struggle used to create and perpetuate social inequalities, such that it is through understanding and acting on these social processes that the problem can be addressed. It also plays into, and strengthens, existing social inequalities especially those of gender, sexuality and race (Brown et al. 2001; Nyblade et al. 2003; Heijnders, 2004)

Stigmatisation which leads to discrimination reduces exceptional child's chances of a happy and successful life. In contrast, Blackhurst and Berdine (1981) claimed that children with disabilities could be put in regular schools not necessarily special schools since materials and techniques used in special education could also be used in regular schools. Olusanga (1983) disagreed with Blackhurst and Berdine in that, he believes a child with disabilities in a normal school environment may experience problems of identification as he compares him/herself with normal children rather than children with similar disabilities. Hence the objective of sending him/her to mainstream school may be defeated.

Besides, there is social issues attached to mentally and physically disabled children as they grow up and go through school, in the school children with disabilities are perceived as different from their peers, and as a result have a hard time gaining social acceptance and becoming active members of their communities as they grow (Carter, Satcher & Coelho). The social stigma and prejudice may discourage parents from sending their children to school (Kristensen et al 2006; UNICEF 2008; UNESCO 2010).

Summary

From the above discussion on stigmatisation and discrimination, it can be said that people with disabilities are perceived differently through impairments, that disability becomes a fundamental determinant of the individual. That is discrimination and stigmatisation is one of the major problem for successful inclusive education as indicated from the discussions. This is

because, children with disabilities experience intentional and unintentional discrimination and stigmatisation in school and the lager society, which put them at high risk of not staying in school or taken to school at all for fear of not being able to cope. Stigmatisation and discrimination is a reflection of the Ghanaian belief system and myths in dealing with persons with disabilities. These beliefs are the creation of barriers for persons with disabilities in many areas of welfare provision, including education for the disabled child.

2.8 Policies assessment

Ghana's policy on inclusive education has been influenced by a number of international laws, treaties, policies, and conventions. The government of Ghana has signed and ratified many of these documents related to disabilities. Their primary target has been to raise the living conditions of persons with disabilities by promoting their rights to various services necessary to ensure full and equal citizenship (Basic Education Division, Ghana Education Service, 2004; Ghansah, 2011; Thurman, 2003). In Ghana, it has been noted in various reviews of both whole educational sectors and Special Education Needs (SEN) setting that, there was no specific policy that articulated a philosophy on disability to guide practice (MOESS, 2008; Akyeamong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; GOG, 2007; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Asamani, 2000).

As a result of the lack of the articulation of policy guidelines, various education reforms including the FCUBE which has provided the thrust for education practice from 1996 to the 2000s failed to articulate any coherent targets for SEN. In effect, the reform did not even mention disability at all and this subsequently affected funding to the sector (MOESS 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; GOG, 2005; Casely-Hayford 2002). On the other hand, some studies conducted in special education from 2000 to 2007 indicate that, to a large extent,

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some provisions for people with disabilities (PWDs) were available. These provisions are both inadequate and inappropriate in addressing the educational needs of CWDs (Agbenyega, 2002; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988). Even though there is lack of systematic policy on inclusive education, Ghana has showed some initiative in providing opportunities and in addressing the plights of persons with disabilities. An example is the passage of the disability ACT 715 with a section that addresses educational opportunities for persons with disabilities.

In Ghana, the process of developing a policy on disability has been long. Cabinet passed the National Disability Policy Document in December, 2000 and Disability Act in 2006. The Disability Act guarantees People with Disabilities (PWDs) access to public places, free general and specialist medical care, education, employment and transportation. Thus, it seeks to protect the rights of persons with disabilities in the country. The transitional period of the Act makes provision for 10-years moratorium for compliance with the provisions in access and mobility because of substantial investment needed to make all existing public infrastructure disability friendly.

The Ministry of Education has a Special Education Division (SPED) whose objective is to increase access to quality education and to train young People With Disabilities (PWDs) and children with special educational needs, leading to employable skills for an economic and independent life. Besides, the education strategy program notes that, all children with non-severe special education needs will be incorporated into mainstream schools by 2015 (ESP, 2004). This is ambitious, because generally, the situation presents several difficulties for children with disabilities as a result of some critical barriers facing education in Ghana. In Ghana, some of these barriers identified include, structural, Discrimination, lack of well train teachers, public attitudes, sociocultural perceptions, policies and many more. Even though legal mandate declares that

children with disabilities may be included in regular classroom, these mandates do not ensure that they can be accepted or treated fairly by their teachers or peers (Genesi, 2008 citing marks 1997). Already Ghana's 1992 Constitution guarantees universal primary education for all Ghanaian children.

Children with disabilities are not exempted (Ghana Constitution, 1992). Article 25 (1a) of the Constitution highlights this point and it states that 'All persons shall have the right to equal Education opportunities and facilities and with a view to achieving the full realisation of that right basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all'. It is important to note that the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nation, 1989) informed the above provision of the article in the Constitution. Article 23 of the Convention (CRC) stipulates that children with disabilities should have 'effective access to and receive education, training, health care service, rehabilitation service, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his/her cultural and spiritual development (UN, 1989). Again, the drafting of Ghana's Disability Act, 2006, was informed by the following documents: Millennium Development Goals, Ghana's 1992 Constitution, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights on Persons with Disabilities. Specifically, the Disability Act, 2006, made education accessible to children with disabilities. More importantly, the Act purposed to fight against discrimination against people with disabilities and thereby protect their rights from diverse forms of abuses (Disability Act, 2006). For instance, Section 4 of the Disability Act (2006) makes exploitation of and discrimination against a person with disability illegal. The Act further states that 'a person must not be treated differently from others because the person is disabled'. It also notes that 'one must not abuse or disgrace persons with disability' (Disability Act, 2006).

Notwithstanding the Act and other legal provisions to protect the educational rights of the disabled, in reality however, it appears that children with disabilities are still treated as not deserving education. Particularly children with intellectual disabilities experience diverse forms of discrimination in society and as a result they are denied equal opportunities and access to primary education as well as other educational institutions. This leads to a situation where these groups of children are not expected to participate in mainstream education, but different arrangements are put in place to meet their educational needs. Given the reality facing disabled children, it appears in no uncertain terms that inadequate policies leads to discrimination and exclusion against children with disability in the Ghanaian society.

In many contexts, the way education provision is arranged in Ghana contributes to labeling and discrimination despite good intention. Mainstreaming education has in a way not been catering for special group of children such as those with disabilities. The focus is not on categories but on the provision of friendly learning environments and diverse learning opportunities for all children. According to Avramidis (2002), the design and the development of policies on inclusive education should not be understood as the sum of initiatives and efforts in favour of specific groups (an endless and quite possibly incomplete list). Tutt (2007) noted that the main challenge of providing settings in all schools should be done through the provision of a diverse continuum of services that are part of a school network linked to other social policies.

Given a critical look to Ghana disability policy, it can be said that, government found it necessary to include in the disability law sections which are supposed to make education accessible to children with disabilities. Therefore looking at the various sections, Section 4 of the disability law makes exploitation of a person with disability illegal. This section sought to eliminate challenges children with disabilities encounter when they go to school, challenges which to large

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extent affect their emotional and cognitive development preventing them from realising their full potential as human. It further states that a person must not be treated differently from others because of their disabilities and also one must not abuse or disgrace persons with disabilities. Interpreting the statements in section 4, one can say that teachers have a role to play by accepting disabled children in the classroom with positive attitude rather than, abusing them and making them drop out of school due to embarrassment. In Ghana, the education service implements education policies for the state through the regional and district offices to the schools and finally to the classroom teachers. The role of the Ghanaian teacher in educational policy implementation with the cooperation of other professionals is in line with the view of Ainscow (2007). To him, teachers have a key role in the changing process as they have to change their attitudes, ways of working, materials used and their cooperation with other professionals in and outside the classroom, among other things. According to Avramidis & Norwich (2003), in terms of inclusive education, it can be that, teacher's perception of inclusive policies, will not only determine their acceptance of inclusive policies but will also affect their commitment to implement such policies. The effects of public attitudes, traditions and cultures which discriminated against such children, largely lead to several of them dropping out of school can be minimised by the inclusion of section 4 to the law.

More so, section 16 of the Act makes it mandatory for every parent, guardian, or custodian of a child with disability who has reached school going age to take him/her to school. It further states that, the school can be the mainstream school where all children go or a special school if the disability of the child demands that he or she attends such a school. Also in response to challenges with structural barriers for disabled children, section 17 of the Act insists that, government makes available facilities and equipment to schools in each region which will make it possible for persons

with disability to benefit from Educational Institutions. This section was aimed at solving challenges faced by disabled children on physical infrastructure available in schools. Lack of infrastructure makes it difficult for children with disabilities to have access to schools and plays down the moral of such children making them end up as school dropouts. Despite section 17, children with disabilities have had to contend with structural barriers for the number of hours they spend in school. Examples of structural barriers include rigid curricula, steep rumps, uncut side walk, heavy doors and many more. Again, section 18 of the article aims at solving problems that are created by financial barriers by emphasising that, children with disabilities have the right to go to school free of charge. This thus clears the excuse by many parents, custodian or guardian of a child with disabilities for not sending their children with special education needs to school for the excuse of lack of finances. This section also charges Government to provide special schools for persons with disabilities who cannot attend normal schools solely because of their disabilities.

It is worth mentioning that, in instances where parents or those taking care of persons with disability intend to send their child to the mainstream schools, the law does not permit a school authority to refuse to admit or accept the child simply because of his disability, unless the child has severe a disability that makes him only able to go to a special school. This is seen in section 20 of the disability Act. It is in line with the needs for special schools by some children with disabilities that section 21 of the disability Act instructs the Minister of Education to do it best to set up Special Education in Technical, Vocational and Teacher Training Institutes or places where the children with disability will be given education to learn sign language and the use of Braille. It is believed that, with the setting up of these teacher training centres that, the challenges regarding teachers lack of knowledge will however be solved. Section 22 also states that public libraries shall

have all the facilities or things that will make it easy for persons with disability to use for any purposes for successful education.

It must be acknowledged that, in Ghana, despite all the legal frameworks including the disability Act which spells out clearly that all children should have access to education irrespective of their background, the situation is different. This is because most disabled children are still being excluded in the regular schools; thus, although legislation has substantially reduced some types of barriers and violation, other types of discrimination still persist. It can be said that, there are still a large number of children with disabilities who are prevented from undertaking basic education in schools. Also, others do not complete basic education due to hostile environment practices adopted by teachers, pupils and other staff. The few that manage to persevere through formal education system often do succeed and in most cases distinguish themselves in their career.

Summary

The passage of disability law in Ghana was to guarantee people with disability equal rights through participation in the Ghanaian society and to realise their full potential and worth. Generally, the situation appears difficult to achieve due to critical barriers such as lack of practicing policies and unavailability of resources facing the education system in Ghana. Critical assessment of the disability policy with regards to educating People with Disabilities (PWDs) appears to be challenging. This situation leads to children with disabilities not expected to participate in inclusive education but different arrangements are made to meet their education needs which defeat the idea of inclusion. Although the policies demonstrate the government of Ghana's commitment to equity for all children, from an insider perspective, we would argue that Ghana's education system is essentially arbitrary, dualist in nature with good education policies

on one side and poor implementations on the other side (Avoke & Avoke, 2004; Kuyini & Desai, 2006, 2009; Ocloo & Subbey, 2008; Yarboi-Tetteh, 2008).

2.9 Poverty and Disability

Poverty plays a dominant role in creating difficulties for children in education (Micheal, 2000 cited by Hadrman, Drew & Egan 2005). Poverty is both a cause and consequence of disability. In 1999, the World Bank estimated that people with disabilities may account for as many as one in five of the world's poorest people. According to Yeo (2003), the relationship between poverty and disability is complex and differs by country and context. Again, a World Bank (2000) study on Poverty and Disability indicated that 16.7% of the world's poor are disabled as compared with a general average in the South of 4.8%. Furthermore, studies by World Bank (2005) tentatively concluded that "disability is associated with long-run poverty in the sense that, children with disabilities are less likely to acquire the human capital that will allow them to earn higher incomes". Children with disabilities have lower educational attainment than other children, which leads to lower economic status. Neufeldt (1998) cited in a World Bank (2005) literature review entitled "Poverty and Disability" suggest that, disabled children are more likely to leave school earlier with fewer qualifications. Thus, if, from birth onward, disabled people are not given the resources and access they need to participate, then, "to assume that this group is a drain on society becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy" Groce, & Chamie (2000).

Poverty can fail to inspire any education decision-making by parents for children regarded as difficult to learn (Mictchel, 2010). In line with the statement made by Mictchel (2010), supported by Chitoyo & Chitoyo (2007) found that poor families, with little or no resources, are unable to send their children to school, and the situation becomes worse for children with disabilities. Kabzems & Chimedza (2002) also noted that when parents are not able to raise money

for school fees and transportation, children with disability become the first to stay at home. These suggest that, there is a strong correlation between poverty and access to education for children with disabilities. Poverty contributes significantly to children's access to education. Household income is an important factor in determining access to education (croft, 2002). Croft noted that school is expensive and it involves upfront and hidden costs. Upfront cost, he explained as, includes fees whiles hidden cost cover uniforms, stationery, traveling equipment and many more. More so, Woolfolk (2000) agrees with most of the evidence indicated by the above authors and concludes that even if education is free the poor, socio-economic status of parents may interrupt their child's education. On the basis of this evidence, Sanders (2000) stated that families with exceptional children often face complex family functions because family resources can be strained by multiple needs of the child with disability. The full inclusion of disabled people could contribute to poverty reduction within households, and entire communities. Yet even many organizations claiming commitment to poverty alleviation frequently exclude disabled people. Further evidence suggests that disabled people are disproportionately overrepresented in the poorest of the poor (Department for International Development 2000; Yeo & Moore 2003).

In addition, a World Bank paper (2005), "Disability, poverty and schooling in developing countries", argued that the schooling gap between children with and without disabilities starts at Grade 1 and then widens throughout schooling, but due to discrimination and stigmatisation, the chances to access education and employment are very restricted for people with disabilities. This means that, the disabled poor are likely to remain poor, as are their children; thus, poverty is discouraging children from continuing to go to school, since the basic household income may depend on various forms of child labour. However, one of the important exit routes out of poverty is identified as formal education; especially, where it improves individual skills and capacity to

enhance their human capital formation to be productive on the labour market. Further support can be found in studies by (Baskind & Birbeck, 2005; Cock, 1989; Dhungana, 2006; Filmer, 2008; Hoogeven 2005; Kiani, 2009; Mitra & Sambamoorthi, 2006; Rischewski, et al 2008; Trani & Leob, 2010) who suggested education routinely denied to children with disabilities is a key factor to determine poverty during adulthood for people with disabilities. This indicates a strong correlation between poverty and low levels of schooling and educational opportunity generally. In the case of children with disabilities, poverty exacerbates and deepens the extent of their disability and social exclusion. Education programmes aimed at the poorest children may still exclude disabled children, with excuses about expense and lack of expertise being used.

Moreover, according to Birbeck (2000), people become disabled due to poverty; thus, poverty may lead to delayed evaluation by a physician and therefore may cause disability. This disability may exclude people with disabilities socially and economically, which makes them poorer and gives them even less access to care, which in turn may aggravate their disability. Elwan's (1999) study in Cambodia confirms Birbeck's assertion that poor people lack access to basic health care, meaning that simple infections, illnesses and injuries could result in permanent disability because they go untreated or are mistreated. All informants in the study who became disabled later in life indicated that they became poorer after they were disabled, and most said they had become much poorer. This might be explained by the fact that disability can have an impact on a person's ability to work and earn a living; consequently, people with disability, irrespective of their other advantages, are more likely to live in poverty. There is little doubt that participation in work and employment are key cultural signifiers of citizenship and status in modern societies. Yet, disabled people and disabled women in particular, continue to be disproportionately unemployed, underemployed, and underpaid (along with young people and nondisabled women),

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resulting in conditions of extreme poverty for many millions of their families. In 1999, Elwan noted that among children with disabilities who acquire education, the majority often receive inferior treatment, have low expectations of themselves, experience low expectations from their significant others and fail to get the support they need to participate equally. As adults, discrimination also tends to exclude them from employment and income earning opportunities, leaving them in perpetual poverty (Hoogeveen, 2005; Lwanga-Ntale, 2003; Tudawe, 2001; World Bank, 2005). This initial exclusion and lack of growth opportunities create a downward cycle of economic well-being that can follow persons with disabilities throughout their lives.

The International Labor Organization (ILO, 2009) estimated that some 470 million people of working age are disabled yet many, up to 80 percent in some countries, remain unemployed due to the disabling attitudes of employers, unequal access to education and training, an absence of appropriate support, and disabling barriers in the workplace. Access to economic resources for those who are unemployed is often very limited, and in many developing countries threatens physical survival (Turmusani, 2001). Women with disabilities face worst problems especially if their disability is from their childhood; a lack of access to education reduces their chances for employment in adulthood. In contrast women who acquire their impairment during adulthood lose financial support of their spouses (if married) and their family (Dunhgana, 2006; Kiani, 2009). Consequently, access to adult paid employment is sometimes seen as the only available mechanism for breaking the link between disability and poverty. Differential access to the benefits of paid employment and education means that world poverty is a key issue for persons with disabilities. In a global context, poor people are more likely to be affected by impairment and disability, and persons with disabilities are likely to live in poverty. The causes of such disadvantages are not simply to do with disabling attitudes or prejudice. They are deeply rooted in structural inequalities

and conflicts arising from uneven educational, economic, technological, and political development.

In Ghana there has been some significant education policies and frameworks implemented to increase access and improve quality in the provision of basic education. At the international level, Ghana has welcomed strategies from United Nations to alleviate poverty and to promote national development. For example, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targets countries to ensure all children complete full course of primary education by 2015. In response to the mandate of the MDGs, Ghana developed the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS 1&2) to promote sustainable economic growth and reduce the high incidence of poverty in the country.

Summary

It can be assumed from the literature review that poverty can be said to be both a cause and consequence to disability and thus inseparable from the above discussions. Poverty is stated to be the reason why children with disabilities could not attend school and have the lower means of education indicated by the authors above. For example, Loeb et al (2008) did not find much difference between people with disabilities and non-disabled persons in terms of poverty but they did find that persons with disabilities have lower means of education. World Bank estimates that people with disabilities may account for as many as one in five of the world's poorest people. Disability is associated with long term poverty in the sense that children with disabilities are less likely to acquire the human capital that will allow them to get jobs and earn income. This situation leads to discrimination and stigmatization restricting persons with disabilities the chances of accessing education and employment. It is worthy to note that Alan Elwan (2000) stated that education, stigmatization and discrimination are cited as the reasons for high unemployment amongst people with disabilities. This suggests that the disabled poor as well as their children are

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likely to remain poor and discriminated against if they are denied access to education; hence, the strong correctional between poverty and low levels of schooling and educational opportunities generally.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology adopted for the study. Thus it explains the context of the research, research design, data collection methods, procedures and analysis. It finally discusses the ethical consideration and the limitation of the study.

3.1 Context of the research

The major consideration for selecting the study area for the research is primarily based on the aim of the study which sought to find out accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities in Ghana. Since the Eastern and Greater Accra regions are amongst the regions that pioneered inclusive education in Ghana, the research was carried out in these two selected regions. Second, it considered geographical and socioeconomic background, thus geographically these selected areas are in different geographical zones. They represented peri urban and urban settings with different socio-economic backgrounds and they are found convenient. In addition, all schools selected in these areas practice inclusive education with special needs children included in the mainstream schools. More so, the schools in the selected districts agreed to cooperate with information gathering.

3.2 Profile of the study area

This section presents information on Ghana where the two selected regions are located for the empirical study followed by the description of the two study areas. First, Ghana is a country located in sub-Saharan Africa, (West Africa); it is boarded by Ivory Coast in the west, Togo to the East and Burkina Faso to the North. The country covers an area of 238,540kmsq generally consisted of low plains with a disserted plateau in the south with scattered area of relief. It lies just above the equator. It has a population of 24,658,823 (Census, 2010) and has a tropical climate with

mean annual temperature ranging from 26 to 29 degree Celsius. Ghana currently has enable political stability compared to neighbours in the West African sub region rather high. Thus Ghana has achieved greater peace than most countries in the sub region.

Politically the organisation of the country continues to be influenced by two types of authority: the modern political system, which is the constitutionally recognised political authority, and the traditional authority, which revolves around the institution of chieftaincy. Ghana is organised as a unitary state with a central government; it has a decentralized local government system. In between the central government and the local governments are ten 'regions', administrative divisions within which the local government institutions, called District Assemblies, are located. There are 10 administrative regions which are divided into 110 districts and each with its own District Assembly. The District Assemblies constitute the administrative structures at the local level and operate as the "highest political authority in the district, and shall have deliberative, legislative and executive powers." (Article 95, constitution of Ghana, 1990).

Figure 2: A map of Ghana where the study was undertaken with the ten

administrative regions

3.2.1 Eastern Region (New Juabeng Municipal, Koforidua)

The New Juabeng municipal was established by the legislative instrument (LI) 1426 of 1988. The municipal has 52 communities with Koforidua as its capital. New Juabeng municipal covers a land area of 110 square kilometers. It shares boundaries to the north-east with East Akim municipal, to the south-east of Akwapim North district, Yilo Krobo district to the east and Suhum Kroboa Coaltar district to the West. The population of New Juabeng is 136,768 with a growth rate of 2.6 percent, which is lower than the national average of 3.1 percent. New Juabeng has a female population constituting 51.5 percent and 48.5 percent males. The main inhabitants are Akans but there are other tribes such as Ewes, Gas, and many others. Most of the economic active populations are into farming, trading and service occupation with few professionals and technicians and other related workers. For example, it is estimated that 2.6 percent of the economically active population is engaged in the agricultural sector. The key sectors of the municipal economy are industrial manufacturing and processing which constitutes about 26.7 percent, the service sector 39.9 percent, percent, while 7.3 percent engage in other socio-economic activities. As a result of the 2.1 percent of the economically active population who engage in agriculture, there are extension officers who provide technical assistance to farmers and the ratio of extension officers to a farmer is 1:800 which is a large gap.

New Juabeng has education facilities such as pre-schools, primary, Junior High school (JHS), Senior High School (SHS), Technical and Vocational schools, Teacher training colleges and Tertiary institutions. There are a total of 128 pre-schools that is 50 public and 78 private. Enrolment in the public schools is 4,664 and private schools are 7,726 making a total enrolment of 12,490 children. There is a total of 143 Primary Schools in the New Juaben Municipality comprising of 66 public and 77 private schools. In 2009/2010 the total enrolment was 23,803

pupils, made up of 11,749 boys and 12,054 girls. The total enrolment in public schools was 16,799 and private schools were 7,004 respectively. The net primary school enrolment rates for the districts range from 59.2 per cent in Afram Plains to 84.7 per cent in New Juabeng. Again there is a total of 107 J.H.S. made up of 56 public and 51 private. The total enrolment is 10,686 made up of 5,326 boys and 5,356 girls. The public J.H.S has a total of 8,324 made up of 4,216 boys and 4,108 girls. The private J.H.S. has a total of 2,358 comprising 1,110 boys and 1,248 girls. Also the municipal has 6 public S.H.S. and 6 private ones making a total of 12. The public SHS has a total enrolment of 9,549 made up of 6,667 boys and 2,882 girls. The private SHS also has a total enrolment of 1,971 comprising 751 boys and 1,220 girls. The Municipality has one model school Oyoko Methodist Senior High School and one public Technical school with 789 enrolments. There are 4 other private vocational schools in the municipality and one private technical school. The single teacher training in the area has a total of 814 enrolments, 541 male and 273 female. Concerning tertiary education the municipal has one polytechnic and one Accredited Private University. There is one special school which caters for the intellectually challenged, deaf and dumb (New Juabeng Municipal Assembly report, 2012). Most of these schools in the district practice inclusive education.

3.2.2 Greater Accra (Ga East District)

Accra is derived from the Akan word "nkran" meaning "an army of ants" (Gog, 2013). It is believed that the name was derived from the thousands of anthills which engulfed the Accra plains. Ghana's first president, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah declared Accra a City, the first city of Ghana in 1961. The Greater Accra Region is the smallest of the 10 administrative regions in terms of area, occupying a total land surface of 3,245 square kilometres or 1.4 per cent of the total land area of Ghana. It is the capital of Ghana and the largest urban center in the country. In terms of

population, however, it is the second most populated region, after Ashanti Region, with a population of 4,010,054 in 2010, accounting for 15.4 per cent of Ghana's total population. The political administration of the region is through the local government system. Under this administration system, the region is divided into six districts namely: Accra Metropolitan Area, Tema Municipal Area, Ga East District, Ga West District, Dangme West District and Dangme East District. Each District, Municipal or Metropolitan Area is administered by a Chief Executive, representing the central government but deriving authority from an Assembly headed by a presiding member elected from among the members themselves.

The study area, Ga East municipal, is located in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. Ga East Municipal was established by the legislative Instrument (LI) 1749 in 2004. The Ga East Municipal is located at the northern part of Greater Accra Region. It is boarded on the north by the Akwapim South district in the Eastern Region of Ghana. It has a population of 259,668 (2010, census). It is divided into for zones with 16 operational areas consisting of 42 communities. The structure of the population has about 51percent (51%) males and 49 percent (49%) female with an average household size of 6.2. There are about 65 settlements in the municipality with Abokobi, a well-known Presbyterian community as the capital. The population is concentrated mainly along the urban and peri urban area particularly along the border with Accra Metropolitan Assembly to the south. The level of urbanization is above the national average. The peri-urban population constitutes 82 percent of the municipality's total population with the remaining 18 percent residing in the rural portion towards the Akwapim Hill. The main inhabitants of the community are Gas, as the name depicts, but there are other inhabitants such as the Akans, Ewes, Fantis, and many others. The economically active population constitutes 55 percent (55%) and they are involved in agricultural activities. Women mostly farm and process cassava into gari and dough.

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The distribution of schools in the municipality ranges from pre-school to tertiary. There are 68 public primary schools with about 40 Early Childhood Development Centers, (ECDC). There are 71 Public Junior High Schools (JHS) and a number of private schools. The Municipal Assembly has 2 public and about 13 privately owned Senior High Schools (SHS). There are therefore 181 public schools in the municipality. Education wise, most of the older population are illiterates; in other words, there is a negative correlation between age and education. Illiteracy among females is nearly twice higher than males, but this difference declines as the population occupation becomes younger. Almost all the public schools under Ga East practice inclusive education and that informed the choice of the area in the Greater Accra Region.

3.2.3 Similarities and differences in the study areas

From the two the study areas there it can be said that, Ga East municipality is located in the capital city and schools are more populated than New Juabeng in the Eastern region being peri urban. Due to the densely populated classroom in the Ga East district teachers find it difficult to provide individual support to children with disabilities. Resources available is inadequate in both study areas to meet the needs of these group of children to achieve meaningful education outcomes. Infrastructure provision in the schools in both areas are less equipped and inadequate. For example, some schools do not have bathrooms and the few ones available are not disability friendly. Space in the classroom are not large enough in some schools in Accra to accommodate the child in the wheel chair to learn, but outside space to play for both study areas are large. That is, in the two study areas infrastructural facilities lag behind demand and there is pressure on the existing ones. Even though Ga East is in Accra and New Juabeng is in koforidua considered as peri urban center, their socio cultural perceptions of disabilities and educating children with disabilities are the same. There is the belief that children with disabilities have limited capacity to

be in school. On the other hand, socio-economically persons living in Accra have more exposure to acquire knowledge and skills to get jobs as compared to New Juabeng which has less job opportunities. In New Juabeng due to the community nature of the living arrangement children with disabilities may get support in their daily living as compared to Accra where the environment is individualistic.

On the whole both areas enjoy advantages in terms of provision of education for children with disabilities as compared to rural areas. Also, due to the limited provision of resources in the two study areas, it often limits the number of children with disabilities attending school.

Figure 3: A map showing the two study areas
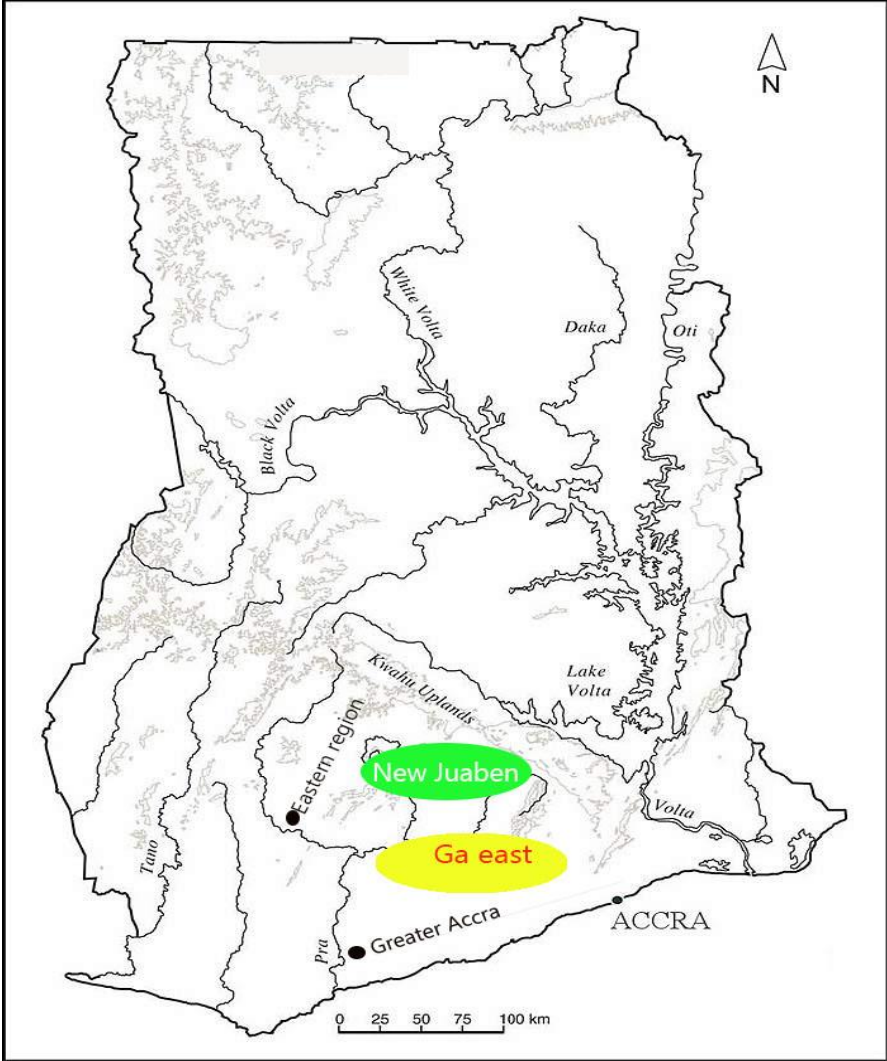
3.3 Sampling Design

3.3.1Sample size

The population for the study comprised of children in New Juabeng and Ga East basic schools. This includes children with disabilities and their parents, children without disabilities and their parents, teachers, head teachers, district education officers and persons from the disability council. In all, a total of two hundred and eighteen respondents whose age ranges between 8-60 years were employed for the study. 20 schools were sampled for the study from the two study areas that is 10 schools from each area. Out of the two hundred and eighteen people involved, 40 were children with disabilities, 38 children without disabilities, 39 parents with disabled children, 35 parents with non-disabled children, 43 teachers, 20 head teachers from regular schools, one personnel from the disability council and 2 people from various district education offices. In all, two hundred and eighteen respondents were interviewed.

3.4 Sampling procedure

Basically, simple random and purposive samplings were used in selecting participants for the study. Simple random sampling was used in picking the schools so that each school would stand an equal chance of being chosen. Thus the benefit of using simple random sampling helped to make population highly representative, simplified the data interpretation and analysis of the results. In all, 20 schools were chosen in the Ga East and New Juabeng district respectively. Second purposive sampling was used because the target population was not randomly distributed in the area and those that were intentionally picked exhibited most of the characteristics of interest to the study. Also, they are subjects with the vast knowledge and experience in the area of study. For purposive sampling, enquiries were made to pick schools with disabled pupils/students. Bryman, (2008) noted that purposive sampling means that the sites and units of analysis are chosen

purposively so that the researcher can interview people within the field of investigation and conduct observations of sites that are relevant for the field of investigation. All the schools chosen from the two regions were public, meaning they are state owned.

Using simple random sampling in selecting schools, the list of schools involved were arranged in a convenient order with a serial numbers assigned to each school. The serial numbers assigned to each school were also written on pieces of paper to correspond to the number assigned to schools. The pieces of papers with the numbers written on them were put in a bowl and well shuffled, after which the pieces of papers were drawn one after the other. Before each draw the pieces of paper were well shuffled. This process was carried out until the total number of pieces of paper added up to the number of schools needed, which is twenty.

3.5 Research Design

3.5.1 Methodological approach

The study employed mixed methods approach due to the nature of the data needed for the work and this informed the methodological approach. Thus qualitative and quantitative research methods were used and many reasons informed this approach. First, some of the questions require to use qualitative method because in depth information could be retrieved through interviews whiles others were quantitative, and questionnaires were used. Secondly, it helped me to triangulate to facilitate the credibility and reliability of the results since a single method could not completely give reliable results looking at the characteristics of the study. For instance, the qualitative aspect of the study enables the experiences and feelings of the people to be explored, permitting an understanding of their lives not accessible by means of quantitative studies or other data collection techniques. This is in line with Bray et al. (2007), Bryman, (2008), Creswell, (2003)

suggestion that in qualitative research, the participant is expected to give detailed rather than general information on the features of the specific case under investigation.

Again, it provided a holistic view of the issue under study and helped to interact with the research subjects in their native languages other than English which provided different ways of looking at the problems. In addition, it helped to examine the research questions from different perspectives which led to a broader understanding of inclusive education in Ghana. In conducting research into the issues of marginalised groups such as children with disabilities, qualitative enquiry helps to bring out their experiences in order to understand their situation. Danforth and Morris (2006) support the use of qualitative approach for marginalised people and explain that qualitative research encourages contextual dialogue between researchers and practitioners about the education of students who are often subject to marginalisation. Marginalisation is a social phenomenon with respect to children or people with disabilities and it can be as a result of social construction. Bryman (2004) believed that it is based on the beliefs that social phenomena are socially constructed by participant individuals. Therefore combination of different methods gives the opportunity to get in depth information from the various respondents.

Using more than one method in a single investigation can have substantial advantage even though it almost inevitably adds to the time invested, (Robson, 1993). More so, the use of mixed methods helped to crosscheck data gathered through different methods enhancing the validity and reliability of the results. This can be supported by Bryman's (2004) assertion that combining two methods enhances the researcher's validity for his or her conclusion if they can be shown to provide mutual confirmation. Bryman further argued that quantitative research is associated with the researcher's perspective but qualitatively the object of study is seen through the eyes of the people being studied. This means that, combining the two methods helped to view the study from

my own perspective and also from the respondents' perspective. The use of the mixed methods prevented biases and subjective preferences of the result of the study. To justify and support the informed usage of combined methods, other scholars apart from Bryam and Robson have suggested that combined methods complement each other in a single study of social phenomena. For example, Grix (2004) said it is generally for a social scientist to use more than one method of enquiry to improve the chances of getting a better, more reliable data and to minimise the chance of biased findings. Grix (2004) believes that as long as you are aware of employing a specific method, and what method is pointing you towards, and how this relates to other methods employed there should be no problem. Preece (1998) also supports mixed methods approach by saying that some disciplines have come to be associated with more quantitative or qualitative approaches, both find a place in the field of study. Triangulation as stated in this study being one of the reasons for the mixed methods approach, can also be supported by the writings of Denzin (1989) suggesting that triangulation can be done in social research by using different methods, sources, investigators, AND theories to attack the questions. The above arguments give an understanding of a strong and firm basis for the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in the study hence relying on one method may lead to incomplete or loss of information.

On the other hand, there have been criticisms of using mixed methods, Huges (1998) and Blaikie (2000) argued against combining two methods in a study, in that research methods carry epistemological commitment which needs to be respected. Again, they believe both methods are difficult to combine because of different epistemology and ontology underpinning the two research strategies. However the criticism notwithstanding, the mixed methods strategy of social investigation is fast becoming popular among researchers (Grix, 2004: Bryman, 2004). Finally, it must be acknowledged that, above all, fusing the two in a single study of social phenomena is

intended to provide a detailed description of the issue and also has valuable benefits as stated in my reasons for using combined a methodological approach.

3.6 Data collection instrument

The methodological approach to the study is mixed methods, quantitative and qualitative; as a result, research tools associated with qualitative and quantitative were combined to collect data. Thus the research tool used for the quantitative was self- administered questionnaire whiles the qualitative study employed a semi-structured interview guide. On the other hand, secondary data was also relied on for the study; thus, a range of published works, such as books, articles, internet, newspaper articles and many other publications useful to the study was included. The use of secondary data in the form of documentary sources in social science research is supported by Miller and Brewer (2003). They believe that documentary sources in social science research include reports, periodicals, newspapers, articles, photographs, letters, diaries and many more. Hence as part of gathering information for the study, these sources were employed to draw data relevant to the study.

The tools for the data collection translated the research objectives into specific items in which the responses provided the data required to achieve the research objectives. Most importantly, in order to achieve this purpose, each question conveyed to the respondent the ideas required by the research objectives, and each item obtained a response which was analysed for fulfilling the research objectives. Further, the choice of data collection methods was informed by a number of reasons. Firstly, self-administered questions are widely used primary data collection tool for quantitative study and it helped to gather standardised data for the study. Again, it is valid and reliable as a result of the pilot test which helped to clean all errors before conducting the main research. Supporting the issues of reliability, Radhakrishna, Francisco, & Baggett (2003) stated

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that achieving reliability will be established using a pilot test by collecting data from at least 20-30 subjects not included in the sample.

More so, the design of the instruments matched carefully the research objectives of the study and also the questions went through various stages of validation ranging from student, colleagues to expert validation in the persons of supervisors. This validation process, in essence, made the questionnaire very reliable. Thus, validity is established using a panel of experts and a field test as confirmed by Norland (1990). In addition, the questionnaire measured what it intended to measure; it represented the content of the study; it was appropriate for the population; and it was comprehensive enough to collect all the information needed to address the issues of the study. Questionnaires used in the study made data collection faster and relatively cheap to administer and this can be supported by Bryman's (2004) assertion that the appeal of the questionnaire stems from it cheapness and quickness in terms of administration.

Qualitative methods such as interviews were used to obtain in depth information necessary for the study. An Interview guide was developed with it two sections. The first part is made up of demographic information and the second part is made up of guiding questions for the interview for the various respondents. In-depth interview helped and allowed respondents to respond from their own perspectives without any influences from me. This proved effective since it allowed the participants to describe their own experiences with inclusive education. The interviews complemented each other in that the interview which was open ended questions allowed the respondents to express themselves freely and to give detailed information about the situation studied. Moreover, the interview conducted helped to use less structured approach; that is, the interview was conducted in a more conversational style, and probed more easily for understanding and further conversation (interview). Again, in the interview, the respondents talked more

compared with restriction placed on them in choosing from a range of answers to fill out a questionnaire. This confirms, Robson's (1993) claim that most respondents are more willing to talk in an interview than the case would have been if they were asked to write or fill out a questionnaire. Also, it was realized that respondents felt secured since the information collected was done face to face. It was also noted that the advantages of interview over only questionnaire is enormous in that the interviewee is able to ask for clarification if a question is not well understood. There is high response rate regarding questions attempted by the interviewees. Thus there is a guarantee that all the questions will be answered if the interviewee allowed time for the interview. In achieving the validity of the interview, transcriptions were taken to some of the respondents to verify before analyzing it to prevent any errors. However, the comments or changes they made and suggested were corrected before the data was analysed. The act of validation is very important here because information can be distorted in the course of transcribing; however, it is important to cross check from the interviewee to make the data authentic to the study.

In all the methods used, there were high rate responses from the respondents in the data collection process. In spite of it being time consuming, the data collection process and exercise went generally well and provided a relevant data needed for the study.

Briefly, the issues raised above made the questionnaire and interview relevant, reliable, and valid and adequately addressed the concerns of the study.

3.7 Data collection process

Administering questionnaire

The data collection was in two phases. The first phase was a pilot study undertaken in the two study areas over a period of eight weeks from February ending to March ending 2012. This helped to pretest the research instruments to determine the strength and weakness of the

questionnaire and to also familiarize myself with the two study areas. According to Radharkrisha, R. B., Francisco, C.L., (2003), achieving reliability will be established using a pilot test by collecting data from at least 20-30 subjects not included in the sample. Therefore in the pretest, 40 people were used for both survey and interviews respectively. Semi-structured interview guides were used for the pilot study interviews but a structured interview was used in the main data collection. This is because initially the respondents were not very well known, therefore, after learning from the pilot study result, it made it possible to design a good set of interview structures. According to Mitchell .M.L and Jolly .J.M (2009), if you do not know your respondents or a certain topic area to create a good structured interviews, you may want to first conduct a semi structured interview. Again the semi structured interviews helped to follow up interesting questions on the standard question which was incorporated into the main interview guide. Approximately 45% of the respondents gave accurate answers and 55% gave interesting responses concerning the practice of inclusive education in the two study areas in Ghana. The analysis was done and the instruments were revised for the final data collection. The main field work was carried out from October, 2012 to March, 2013.

However before setting out in organizing the survey or administering the questionnaires for the second phase, it was first necessary to get the number of schools in the community from the Ga East District education office at Abokobi and New Juabeng Municipalities. This helped to determine which basic schools to pick or reject.

First, letters were sent to the districts to inform them about the study and to seek permission to use the schools in the district. The letters were attached with copies of questionnaires and interview guide. Secondly, in Accra where the study was undertaken the community was mapped into three sections that is A, B and C. A represented school around Dome-Kwabenya area, B

represented schools around Atomic Junction and C, represented schools at the Madina estate. After mapping it was estimated there were one hundred and fifty number of schools in the Abokobi district; simple random sampling was used in picking the schools. Similarly, in the Eastern Region, which is New Juabeng district in Koforidua, the area was mapped A, B and C. A represented school in the New Juabeng estates, B represented schools around Betom and C represented schools around Asokore, along the main road. Mapping made it possible for easy travel in between the various schools and locations.

The questionnaire was structured with closed ended questions which gave the respondents the opportunity to choose from a range of answers provided. The questions were in two parts, the first covered general demographic information about the respondents: age, occupation, marital status, sex, number of children, stage and educational background. The second section was questions administered to the respondents under the various variables: access to education, stigmatization and discrimination, parental involvement, attitude of teachers, and cultural beliefs. Different parts of the questionnaire were administered to different respondents; for example, non-disabled children and disabled children's parents answered the same questions whilst teachers, children with disabilities and children without disabilities parents responded to similar questionnaire with few variations in some questions. This allowed for systematic data collection from respondents. Seven-page questions were asked ranging from sections A to C. Questions for children with disabilities, teachers, parent of the exceptional children and children without disabilities were more detailed, whilst the non-disabled parents were less detailed.

The interview guide for the qualitative study, on the other hand, was opened ended and it allowed respondents to express their feelings and to give vast and expert information on the issue under study. Respondents selected for the qualitative data were children with disabilities and their

parents, head teachers, teachers, resource teachers, education officers and officer from disability association. Interviews were done by the researcher and two other field assistants for between 20 to30 minutes. All interviews were recorded, with the permission of the respondents being interviewed, and respondents were assured of anonymity.

Different Ghanaian languages were used in getting the information from the respondents, particularly for illiterate parents. Ghanaian languages such as Ga, Ga-Adangbe, Ewe, Fante, and Twi were used. Thus the questions were translated from English to these local languages for respondents. Also in administering the questionnaire, two field assistants in each study area were employed to help to conduct the survey as well as to help with translation of languages such as Ga- Adangbe and Ewe. The field assistants also helped illiterate respondents and this was done in the form of reading and translating the questions whiles the responses were recorded.

On the whole, it took five months to collect the information with some difficulty due to the stigmatization attached to children with disabilities or persons with disabilities as a whole.

3.8 Data analysis

Field information collected from the qualitative and quantitative data using methods such as self-administered questionnaire and interviews were analysed. The data for the quantitative method was analysed after thorough correction of all errors. Data for the quantitative was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS) version 18. The results cover the demographic data of the participants particularly age groups and sex, occupation, levels of education among others. The major statistical tools employed are the frequency distribution whose results are presented in percentages, cross tabulation and the Pearson Moment of correlation co-efficiency to establish the relationships among the variables; hence, each variable was placed in matrix to come out with the relationship between them. Independent Sample T-Test was used to

compare access in the two major areas of the study. However, the standard multiple regressions were used in testing hypothesis. The presentation of the results in the data analysis is in accordance with the objectives and the hypothesis of the study. The findings are presented in tables and chats with interpretations given either below or above the tables and chats.

The qualitative method used interviews to collect data; interviews were conducted with all the various respondents selected purposively. Analysis was done manually by summarising the views of the respondents. These summaries of views were supported by captured responses or quotations from the interview scripts. Therefore the interesting theme which emerged was analysed. Analysis done created a picture of the situation under study based on the information gathered with reference to the objectives of the study translated in the form of questionnaire and interview guide.

3.9 Scoring

Analysis of the study indicated that almost all the variables were measured with 7 numbers of items or questions except some few variables which were measured with 6, 8 and 10 items. Access to education for the children respondents were measured with 25 items with three subscales such as general education, special education, and school progression. The other two variables, attitudes of teachers and discrimination were measured with 16 items or questions. On the other hand access to education for adults respondents, such as teachers and parents variables were measured with 21 number of items with three subscales. The subscales include general education, special education and school progression and were measured with 7 items respectively with no subscales. Questions administered to children with disabilities and children without disabilities were the same, except four items on the variable teachers' attitudes which were different. Parents with children with disabilities, parents with children without disabilities and teacher's

questionnaire were also the same except for one variable, which is parental involvement added to the teacher's questionnaire. Therefore with response alternation, it ranges from scale one to five for all the items; that is, strongly agree to strongly disagree. According to Gale at al (2003), a good method of dealing with respondents who lack familiarity with the area or topic of research is to include no "opinion" option as one of the responses alternatives for each item/question. This argument of Gal et al informed the odd number (5) response set scale used.

3.10 Limitations of the study

The very marginalisation that persons with disabilities face made it difficult for the researcher to find them and to communicate with them and there are several reasons for this especially in an African setting like Ghana. For example, stigmatisation is attached to having a disabled person in the family; thus, some members of the family denied the existence of their relatives and refused to response to the questionnaire and interview. Also, in cases where the other partners were absent, specifically the male, the woman refused to be interviewed in the absence of the male. This attitude put up by women is as a result of socialization, which place the male above the female in the Ghanaian society. There were also times when the elderly semi- literate siblings influence their illiterate parents not to respond to the interview. Hence this accounted for the reasons why the number of questionnaires administered reduced by four that is 218 against 220 respondents. However, after convincing them and making them aware that the principle of confidentiality was uphold in the study, they responded to the questions. Again, due to time constraint it was decided that, only the schools that had responded to the researcher's request were included in the study, though they agreed to allow data collection in their school. More so majority of the parents who responded to the questions were workers and more often out and the researcher had to revisit them which was time consuming and to some extent delayed the progress of the data.

Moreover, the questionnaire in spite of its advantages as a research tool of data collection had some limitations. In that in most cases the questionnaires were completed in the absence of the researcher and it is difficult to ascertain if the complete questionnaire was done by the selected respondent. This limitation was, therefore, minimised in this study since most of the questions were filled out immediately in the schools and homes of children with disabilities in the presence of the research assistants.

One major limitation is the lack of availability of relevant literature for the Ghanaian context as few empirical studies have been undertaken in Ghana. Since information in developing countries is very limited, the literature tends to focus on mostly western writers on disabilities with few ones from Ghana. Another constraint that had to be faced was finance because I had to rely on my limited resources to meet the cost of my entire studies.

3.11 Ethical consideration

The research conducted considered a number of ethical issues. First, participation in the research was voluntary and confidentiality was guaranteed. Thus, to uphold to confidentiality and anonymity, information disclosed by participants was not made known to others. For example, the known personal or demographic data were left out in the report as well as in the attachment of the entire work. Thus all names of the participants including the schools were made anonymous to prevent identification of respondents. This will make it difficult to trace the respondents. Secondly, education officers, teachers and parents consent were sought before undertaking any interviews. Thus all participants were informed of the objectives of the research and the implications to be part of the study. In addition, the right to respond to a question willingly was also explained to them. Thirdly, due consideration was given to children to avoid embarrassing them during the

interview session and also not to force them to disclose information they are uncomfortable sharing.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA ANALYSIS AND ITS INTERPRETATION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents both quantitative and qualitative analyses and interpretation of the data. The presentation is structured in two parts. The first part is the quantitative studies and the second part is the qualitative studies. The analyses have been carried out to achieve the objectives as well as to test the hypotheses which have been stated in the introductory chapter. Thus the main objective of the study seeks to investigate the barriers hindering children with disabilities from accessing inclusive education in Ghana. The data for the study was collected from the Greater Accra Region (Ga East District) and the Eastern Region (New Juabeng Municipal in Koforidua) of Ghana.

SECTION A: QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

For the quantitative study, a total of 195 respondents were involved. This comprised of 40 children with disability, 38 children without disability, 39 parents with disabled children, 35 parents without disabled children, and 43 school teachers. The teachers were sampled from the basic school levels who have taught over a maximum of five years.

Firstly, the quantitative results cover the socio demographic profile of the respondents by way of developing a context to the understanding of the main issues. Particularly the key demographic variables such as age groups, sex, occupation, levels of education among others were considered in this analysis. The major statistical tool employed in the quantitative analysis is descriptive statistics which made use of frequencies and percentages. Also, Independent samples t-test, Means and Standard Deviations and correlation analysis were used. The findings are basically presented in tables with interpretations given either below or above.

Table 1 below presents the breakdown of respondents involved in the study in the two Districts: that is, Ga East District and New Juabeng District in the Greater Accra and Eastern Regions of Ghana. More of the respondents (53.8%) were covered from Accra than they were covered from Koforidua (46.2%) which may be attributable to the fact that there is a larger and denser population in Accra than there is in Koforidua. Particularly, there were more children with disability, parents with disabled children, and school teachers covered from Accra than they were covered from Koforidua.

Table 1: Breakdown of Respondents from the two study areas

Categories of respondents	Total frequency	Accra	Koforidua	Total
Children with disability	40	11.3%	9.2%	**20.5%**
Children without disability	38	9.2%	10.3%	**19.5%**
Parents with disabled children	39	11.3%	8.7%	**20.0%**
Parents without disabled children	35	10.8%	7.2%	**17.9%**
Teachers	43	11.3%	10.8%	**22.1%**
Total	**195**	**53.8%**	**46.2%**	**100.0%**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.1 FINDINGS

The finding of the quantitative study is organised into two parts that is, findings from the children and secondly findings from the parents and teachers. The analysis employed descriptive statistics making use of frequencies and percentages, Means and Standard Deviations, Independent samples t-test, chi-square test, and correlation analysis.

4.1.1 Findings from children

This part of the analysis presents the data and findings extrapolated from the children involved in the study. The children comprised those without disability and those with disability. Altogether, a total of 78 young respondents have been classified as children for the purpose of this study.

4.1.2 Demographic variables of children

The demographic information of the children solicited includes age of children, gender, educational level, and type of disability (in terms of children with disabilities).

4.1.2.1 Age distribution of children

The ages of the children involved in this study suggest that they were mainly basic school children whose ages range between 8 years and 16 years. Most of the children were aged from 11 to 14 years (55.1%). This is followed by children aged between 8 and 10 years (24.4%), notably, children having some form of disability. Children aged 15 and 16 years constituted 16.7%. Only a few children (3.8%) were 17 years or above. Table 2 gives an overview of the results.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age (years)	Children with disability Frequency	%	Children without disability Frequency	%	Total Frequency	%
8-10	13	32.5	6	15.8	**19**	**24.4**
11-14	16	40.0	27	71.1	**43**	**55.1**
15-16	8	20.0	5	13.1	**13**	**16.7**
17+	3	7.5	0	0.0	**3**	**3.8**
Total	40	100.0	38	100.0	**78**	**100.0**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.1.2.2 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Table 4 below shows that majority of the children in the study were females (51.3%) whereas males constituted 48.7%. Comparatively, there were more males who had some form of disability than their female counterparts as is reported in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Children with disability		Children without disability		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Male	25	62.5	13	34.2	**38**	**48.7**
Female	15	37.5	25	65.8	**40**	**51.3**
Total	40	100.0	38	100.0	**78**	**100.0**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.1.2.3 Educational Level of Respondents

Majority of the children (65.4%) were in the primary stage level in terms of education. The rest of the respondents (34.6%) were at the Junior High School (JHS) level.

Table 4: Educational Level of Respondents

Educational level	Children with disability		Children without disability		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Primary	28	70	23	60.5	**51**	**65.4**
JHS	12	30	15	39.5	**27**	**34.6**
Total	40	100	38	100.0	**78**	**100.0**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.1.2.4 Types of Disability

In respect of the children with disability involved in this study, different kinds of disability were identified. These include physical disability, visual impairment, hearing impairment, and intellectually challenged individuals. Results from Table 5 below demonstrate that the type of disability experienced by most of the children having disability in this study was intellectual challenge 19(37.3%). In other words, intellectually challenged was the type of disability mostly dominant with the disability sampled for this study. This was, however, followed by physical disability 16(31.4%) and visual disability 9(17.7%) and hearing impairment 7(13.7%). It must be noted that some respondents experienced more than one type of disability hence multiple response**.**

Table 5: Types of Disabilities involved in the Study

*Type of Disability	Frequency	Percent (%)
Intellectually challenged	19	37.3
Physical disability	16	31.4
Visual disability	9	17.7
Hearing impairment	7	13.7
Total	**51**	**100.0**

(*) Multiple response

4.2 Background to Access to Education

This study embarked on investigating the opportunities for accessibility to education for all children, particularly, children with disabilities. In this regard, the study first set out, generally, to find out the factors of inaccessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities. Thus accessibility to education is assessed from the children point of view in terms factors such as psychological in relation to stigmatisation and discrimination, availability of material resources, the provision of special education needs, school progression, teachers attitudes in terms of their

training competencies to teach and handle children with disabilities. Approval ratings against statements were elicited from the children covered in this study on a 5-point Likert scale. The response format was anchored on 1 (Very Low approval), 2 (Low approval), 3 (Moderate approval), 4 (High approval), and 5 (Very High approval). The statements were phrased such that high approval to statements gives a good notion about education provided.

4.2.1 Access to Education

The approval ratings for ten (10) statements assisted in the assessment of the general status of access to education. A Mean was calculated for each statement for purposes of comparisons. The results were summed up and divided by 10 to arrive at a summary performance indicator value wherein 1 represents Very Low, 2 – Low, 3 – Moderate, 4 – High, and 5 – Very High performance with regards to provision of education.

From table 6 below, the picture which emerged from the mean ratings obtained suggests that the children had a moderately low regard for the efforts that have been harnessed to provide education given the overall approval rating of 2.74 (close to Moderate). The ratings ranged between 1.96 (close to Low) and 3.35 (Moderate) in respect of approval of access to education. In particular, the respondents gave the highest approval of (3.35) in respect of the statement "School makes efforts to address barriers to learning and participation by all children". The respondents moderately agreed (3.01) with the view that their schools have ramps and toilet facilities for all children and (3.14) that the education they are receiving will help them to move around easily. These results mildly echo the belief of the respondents that education is one of the factors that will help them to live their lives easily or freely. That is being worth on the labour market and earning income to meet their needs and to improve upon their living conditions. Also it underpins the fact that respondents moderately believed that the school meets the educational needs of children.

On the other hand, the view that school gives the children good opportunity to read, write and do maths attracted the least approval rating of the respondents. This suggests that there is more to be desired in terms of school curriculum that promotes students' advancement in literacy and numeracy skills, and respondents shared most similar views in this direction (given by the least standard dev. of 0.93). The respondents also had quite low acceptance of the view that school is available to all children including children with disability because there are so many children with disability. Table 6 presents an overview of the findings.

Table 6: Access and Quality of provided Education

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
School is available to all children including children with disability because there are so many children with disability	78	2.47	1.44
My school provides the needed text books to learn to progress through higher education	78	2.51	1.35
My school gives me good opportunity to read, write and do maths	78	1.96	0.93
School makes efforts to address barriers to learning and participation by all children	77	3.35	1.21
The school provides tables and chairs for all children to learn	78	2.53	1.16
The classroom has big space for children with disabilities	78	2.59	1.19
The education received will help all children including children with disabilities to learn basic skills of everyday living to move around easily and accepted in community	78	3.14	1.22
My school has ramps and toilet facilities for all children	76	3.01	1.13
The school provides everything (pencils, erasers, pens etc) needed to come to school and learn with my friends with disabilities and those without disabilities	78	2.46	1.42
The school encourages me to involve in school activities such as games	78	3.33	0.91

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| Provision of Education (overall) | | | | 2.74 | 0.45 |

Hypothesis 1: Children with disabilities are less likely to get access to education than

children without disabilities

Table 7 shows, however, that there is a significant difference between an overall value provision of education (access) for children with disability and children without disability (p < 0.05). A mean provision of education of 2.44 on a maximum scale of 5 was obtained with respect to children with disability which falls short of 2.84 for children without disability. This implies that the hypothesis that provision of access to education for children with disabilities and children without disabilities will differ in favour for children without disabilities is valid. The smaller standard deviation of 0.60 obtained shows that children with disability have more similar views concerning provision (access) of education to them than children without disabilities.

Table 7: Provision of Education to Disabled and Non- Disabled Children (Independent samples t-test)

Category of children	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	P
Children with disability	40	2.44	0.60	2.58	0.02
Children without disability	38	2.84	0.74		

Out of the total of ten variables used in measuring access to education, four was identified to measure provision of educational support materials while the remaining six measured level of educational involvement. It is believed that adequate provision of educational support materials will help improve involvement of all children in the school including children with disabilities.

In view of this, the researcher disaggregated access to education variables into educational support materials and educational involvement and then measured respondents' responses in these

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categories. In general, there was low mean rating and similar responses for educational support variables with overall mean and standard deviation of 2.66 (moderate) and 0.24, respectively. Educational involvement variables in this regard scored a total mean rating of 2.79 approximately moderate and a standard deviation of 0.57 which is also substantially low approval rating. Thus, the availability of education materials and general involvement of all students are related. (See table 8 below for details.)

Table 8: Educational Supporting Materials and Educational Involvement

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
Education Supporting Materials			
My school provides me with the needed text books to learn to progress through higher education	78	2.51	1.35
The school provides tables and chairs for all children to learn	78	2.53	1.16
The school provides everything (pencils, erasers, pens etc) and learn with my friends with disabilities and those without disabilities	78	2.59	1.19
The school gives good opportunity to read and write	76	3.01	1.13
Education Supporting Materials (overall)		**2.66**	**0.24**
Educational accessibility and Involvement			
School is available to all children including children with disability because there are many children with disabilities in the school	78	2.47	1.44
My school gives me good opportunity to read, write and do maths	78	1.96	0.93
School makes efforts to address barriers to learning and participation by all children	77	3.35	1.21
The education I am receiving will help all children including children with disabilities to learn basic skills of everyday living to move around easily	78	3.14	1.22
The classroom has big space for children with disabilities	78	2.46	1.42

	78	3.33	0.91
The school encourages me to involve in school activities such as games			
Educational and Involvement (overall)		**2.79**	**0.57**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

Hypothesis 2: Unavailability to material resources would have negative association to the education of children with disabilities.

A further probing correlational test affirmed the relationship that exists between the availability of education supporting materials and educational involvement of all children (r = 0.78, p < 0.01). The result indicates that, there exist a strong significant positive relationship between the availability of education supporting materials and educational involvement (access to education). Due to low availability of education supporting materials found to be associated with low involvement of all categories of pupils, children with disabilities happens to be the most vulnerable. Hence unavailability of material resources is found to be negatively related to the education of children with disabilities, thereby, accepting the hypothesis. See table 9 below

Table 9 Correlation between Educational Supporting materials and Involvement

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Correlation (r)	P
Education Supporting Materials	2.66	0.24		
			0.78	0.00**
Educational Involvement	2.79	0.57		

**correlation significant at p<0.01

Comparison between the two study areas on access to education

A comparison analysis of the data was conduct to compare the responses from the two study areas on general access to education to help uncover any differences in access to education by children with Disabilities. Generally, there was low access to education in both study areas with a total mean of 2.74 on the 5 point scale. Ga East municipal in the Greater Accra region scored little

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above the total average score (2.77) while New Juabeng municipal in the Eastern region scored little below the overall scores (2.73). This indicates that even though there was generally low access to education by the children with disabilities in both areas, Ga East respondents in Greater Accra region had little advantage in terms of accessing education by the children with disabilities. The difference among the study areas may be attributed to sample error or may result from the fact that Ga East is situated in the capital city of Ghana and for that matter enjoys a lot of advantages in terms of provision of educational supporting material and social acceptance among others. Also Accra is a cosmopolitan city and as a result the intercultural association may have shaped the views of the inhabitants positively to help provide accessibility to education children for children with disabilities. Tables 10 and 11 present the disaggregated views of the respondents on access to quality education from the two study areas

Table 10: Access and quality to education (Ga East)

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
School is available to all children including children with disability because there are so many children with disability	40	2.54	0.85
My school provides me with the needed text books to learn to progress through higher education	40	2.52	0.64
My school gives me good opportunity to read, write and do math	40	1.94	0.93
School makes efforts to address barriers to learning and participation by all children	39	3.28	1.11
The school provides tables and chairs for all children to learn	40	2.66	0.71
The classroom provide big space for children with disabilities	40	2.57	1.01
The education received will help all children including children with disabilities to learn basic skills of everyday living to move around easily and accepted in the community	40	3.35	1.24
My school has ramps and toilet facilities for all children	38	3.02	0.85

	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
The school provides everything (pencils, erasers, pens etc) needed to come to school and learn with my friends disabilities and those without disabilities	40	2.51	1.21
The school encourages all children to be involved in school activities such as games.	40	3.26	0.84
Provision of Education (overall)		**2.77**	**0.45**

Source: field data, 2013

Table 11: Access and quality of education (New Juabeng)

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
School is available to all children including children with disability because there are so many children with disability	38	2.39	0.69
My school provides me with the needed text books to learn to progress through higher education	38	2.51	0.92
My school gives me good opportunity to read, write and do math	38	1.98	1.02
School makes efforts to address barriers to learning and participation by all children	38	3.63	1.35
The school provides tables and chairs for all children to learn	38	2.41	1.05
The classroom has big space School meets the educational needs of children	38	2.61	0.82
The education received will help all children including children with disabilities to learn basic skills of everyday living to move around easily and accepted in the community	38	2.95	1.32
My school has ramps and toilet facilities for all children	38	3.01	0.91
The school provides everything (pencils, erasers, pens etc) needed to come to school and learn with my friends with disabilities and those without disabilities	38	2.42	0.79
The school encourages all children to involved in school activities such as games	38	3.4	0.95
Provision of Education (overall)		**2.73**	**0.51**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.2.2 Provision of Special Education

The study also investigated the special education provisions that are put in place for children. The results, as indicated in Table 4.12 below, show that the children had, overall, a moderate feeling with respect to special education provision in school as presented by the mean approval rating of 3.01 (Moderate). The children gave the highest approval rating (3.65 – close to High) on the statement that "people in the class largely help each other when they do not understand a lesson". The children also approved that "the school has extra instructional periods for children" and that teacher organized extra classes in their difficult areas. There was a moderate to low approval (3.55 to 2.42) concerning the views that "there are special teaching and learning materials to help children in school", "the school gives counseling services" and that "the school identifies learning needs of children". There was, however, the lowest approval rating indicating "the school provides special education teacher to help children with disability to understand lessons in class". Table 12 below gives the overview of the findings.

Table 12: Special Education Provision

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
My school has an office that every child could go for advice if he/she has a problem	78	2.38	1.03
The school identifies learning needs of children	78	2.42	0.96
The school has extra instructional periods for children	78	3.64	0.66
The other people in the class help children with disabilities if I do not understand a lesson	78	3.65	0.79
The school provides special education teacher to help children with disabilities to understand lessons in class There are special teaching and learning materials to help children with disability in school	78	3.55	0.71

Teacher organizes extra classes in difficult areas of the lessons	78	3.63	0.82
There are special teaching and learning materials to help children with disability in school	78	1.81	0.95
Special education provision programme (overall)	**78**	**3.01**	**0.45**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

A significant difference exists between special education provision for children with disability and children without disability (p < 0.05). Specifically, children with disability scored a mean of 2.99 on a maximum scale of 5 whiles non-disabled children scored 3.04. This implies that special education for children with disability was on a lower scale compared to children without disability. The lower standard deviation of 0.39 indicates that children with disability have more similar impressions concerning special education provision than children without disabilities. Table 13 presents the findings.

Table 13: Special Education provision for children with Disabilities and without Disability (Independent samples t-test)

Category of children	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	P
Children with disability	40	2.99	0.39		
				-0.47	0.04
Children without disability	38	3.04	0.52		

4.2.3 School Progression

This part of the study attempts to explore opportunities for children's progression in their school. Overall, the children gave a low (2.36) to moderate (3.23) approval rating to statements concerning school progression. The children most strongly approved that "the school gives as much knowledge and skills to improve and develop oneself at every level in case a child fails to progress

to the next class or drop out from school". However, the lowest approval was given that "children with disabilities are not asked to leave the school if they do not do well in their lessons". This suggests that children with disabilities are sometimes threatened with expulsion from school when they do not reform according to minimum standards. The results are as presented in Table 14.

Table 14: Opportunities for Respondents' Progress in School

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
Children with disability are not asked to leave the school if they do not do well in their lessons	78	2.36	0.87
Children are not asked to repeat their class when they are not performing well in school	78	2.74	0.86
The current class prepares children with disabilities very well to be able to understand the lessons and move to the next class.	78	3.18	1.43
The school gives as much knowledge and skills to improve and develop oneself at every level in case a child fails to progress to the next class or drop out from school	78	3.23	1.36
Children with disabilities are provided with supporting materials during assessment/examinations to them understand a the exams and participate to progress further to prevent repetition or drop out	78	2.63	1.15
The type of disability will not have great influence in going further in school	78	2.99	1.16
There is enough encouragement to move from one stage to the other in school	78	2.71	1.35
Opportunity for school progression (overall)		**2.83**	**0.31**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

Comparatively, children with disabilities were slightly disadvantaged to progress in school than the children without disability. On a maximum scale of 5, disabled children had 2.74 chance to progress in school while non-disabled children had 2.77. The descriptive statistics is presented in Table 15.

Table 15: Progress in School for children with disabilities and without disabilities

Category of Children	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Children with disability	40	2.7675	0.55558
Children without disability	38	2.9375	0.55688

Further probing reveals that there exists a significant relationship which is a negative correlation between children with visual disability and the probability that they would be asked to repeat a class (r = - 0.422, p < 0.01). This implies that on any established event that if a child is visually disabled, it is more likely the child is asked to repeat a class. The results are as presented in Table 16 below.

Table 16: Type of disability and tendency to repeat a Class

Children are not asked to repeat their class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Correlation (r)	P
Physically disabled children	16	2.44	0.81	0.288	0.072
Visually disabled children	9	3.44	1.01	-0.422	0.007**
Children with hearing impairment	7	2.50	0.76	0.141	0.386
Children intellectually challenged	19	2.68	0.67	0.071	0.665

**correlation significant at p<0.01

Hypothesis 3: Children with physical disability are likely to progress through school to higher levels than the intellectually challenged.

In testing hypothesis three the results showed that, a significant relationship exists between the intellectually challenged children and enough motivation to progress in school. The two are negatively correlated (r = - 3.88, p < 0.05) meaning that intellectually challenged children have lower probability of getting enough motivation to progress in school. The findings are given in Table 4.17 below.

Table 17: Type of Disability and Levels of Motivation to progress in School

Enough motivation to progress in school	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Correlation	P
Physically disabled children	16	2.56	1.09	0.100	0.539
Visually disabled children	9	2.33	0.50	0.176	0.277
Children with hearing impairment	7	2.63	1.19	0.033	0.838
Children intellectually challenged	19	3.16	1.34	-0.388	0.013*

*Correlation significant at p<0.05   Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.2.4   Teacher Attitude

This part of the study attempted to unravel teachers' attitudes from the viewpoint of the children. First, teachers' attitudes were asked from the view point of the children with disabilities and implications of those attitudes were drawn. Second, teachers' attitudes were assessed from the point of view of children without disabilities to aid comparisons. These were done through approval ratings on a scale of 5 to the statements assessing teacher attitudes.

From Table 18 below, it was observed that the children with disabilities had, generally, a moderately high approval rating (overall approval indicator value = 3.24 on a maximum scale of 5) in respect of their teachers' attitudes. The approval ratings specifically ranged between 2.50 (close to Moderate) and 3.60 (close to High). The children with disabilities mostly accepted the fact that "teachers in the school know how to care for children with disability". The children also somehow accepted the fact that "teachers and other staff in the school who do not teach make the school a friendly place for children with disabilities", "teachers do not get angry with children with disability when they do not understand a lesson," and "teachers do not show impatience when dealing with children with disability".

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On the other hand, there was a moderately low regard for the fact that "lessons are provided by teachers to help meet the learning needs of every child in the class" and that "teachers try to make the lessons easier for disabled children to understand". This implies that though teachers may have put in several efforts to get to the disabled children, lesson planning has yet to reach all category of pupils and yet to be made completely easier for disabled children to assimilate. Table 18 presents the details.

Table 18: Children with disabilities Views of Teacher Attitudes

Children with disability views of teacher attitudes	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lessons are provided by teachers to help meet the learning need of every child in the class	40	3.03	1.51
Teachers try to make the lessons easier and simpler for disabled children to understand	40	2.50	1.41
Teachers and other staff in the school who do not teach make the school a friendly place for children with disabilities to attend	40	3.50	1.22
Teachers in the school know how to care for children with disability	40	3.60	1.01
Teachers do not get angry with children with disability when they do not understand a lesson	40	3.40	0.74
Teachers do not show impatience when dealing with children with disability	40	3.35	0.74
My teacher involves all me during questions and answering time in class	40	3.28	1.48
Overall	**40**	**3.24**	**0.37**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

A careful scrutiny reveals a significant relationship exists only between pupils who have hearing impairment and the amount of patience that teachers exhibited. The amount of teachers' patience was found to positively correlate (though weakly) with children with hearing impairment ($r = 0.327$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that children with hearing impairment had earned more of the

teachers' patience compared to the other types of disabilities identified in this study. Table 19 presents the overview of the finding.

Table 19: Level of Teachers' Patience in terms of Type of Disability

Correlation	Physically disabled	Visually disabled	hearing impairment	Intellectually challenged
Correlation (r)	-0.098	0.095	0.327	-0.024
Sig. (p)	**0.546**	**0.561**	**0.039***	**0.883**

*Significant at p<0.05

Among the children without disabilities, there was a low (2.59) to high (3.71 – close to High) regard for the attitudes of teachers. Specifically, the respondents had a positive regard for the statement that "teachers do not show signs of hatred towards children with disabilities" (3.71), and that "teachers do not get angry with children when they do not understand a lesson" (3.63). There was a moderately high acceptance of the fact that "teachers have knowledge on handling children in the class" (3.47); "teachers do not show impatience when dealing with children" (3.32); "teachers treat children with disabilities with fear of they being cursed persons" (3.29); and that "teachers are not careless when handling disabled children" (3.26). On other hand, the children without disability weakly approved of the statement that "teachers try to make the lessons easier for all children to understand" (2.59), or that "teaching and learning are planned with all categories of pupils in mind" (2.89). Table 20 gives an overview of the findings.

Table 20: Children without disabilities Views on Teacher Attitudes

Non-disabled Children's views on teacher attitudes	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lessons provided by the teacher meet the learning needs of every child in the class	38	2.89	1.25
Teachers try to make the lessons easier for all children to understand	38	2.59	0.93
Teachers do not get angry with children when they do not understand a lesson	38	3.63	1.24

Teachers have knowledge on handling children in class	38	3.47	0.69
Teachers do not show impatience when dealing with children	38	3.32	0.70
Teachers treat children with disability with fear of being a cursed person	38	3.29	0.93
Teachers provides lessons to only children without disabilities in class	38	3.26	0.69
Teachers do not show sign of hatred towards children with disabilities	38	3.71	0.96
Overall	**38**	**3.27**	**0.37**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

Observing the summary indicator values (overall) of the Children with Disability and Children without disabilities, the summary indicator value of Children with disability **(3.24)** is lower than that of Children without disabilities **(3.27)**. The inference here is that Children without disabilities have had a better sight of their teachers. Disabled Children emerged to be slightly disadvantaged in terms of their teachers' attitudes towards them.

4.2.5 Discrimination and Stigmatisation

This part of the study delves into discrimination and stigmatisation towards children with disabilities from the children's perspective. From Table 21 below, there was a moderate (3.04) approval rating on a maximum scale of 5 concerning the view that there was no stigma and discrimination toward children with disability. In other words the children moderately expressed the view that there were accepting attitudes towards children with disabilities. Specifically, they most strongly agreed that children with disabilities are not seen as pupils who do not do well in school (3.72). They moderately agreed that the school is a welcoming environment for all children including children with impairments (3.03). There was also a moderate acceptance among the children of the fact that children without disabilities play with pupils with disabilities (2.91) and

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those children with disabilities do not get teased because of their disabilities (2.90). However, the view that "it is important to educate children with disabilities in regular school" attracted a moderately low approval of the respondents (2.83). The lowest approval rating emerged concerning the views that "children with disabilities do not get bullied because of their disability" and "other children do not shun the company of disabled children".

From these results, it can be deduced that there have been relatively stronger stigmatisation and discrimination against children with disabilities by other children shunning their company, teasing them, and subtly having thoughts that it is not worthwhile to educate children with disabilities. However, there has been accepting attitudes toward children with disability by projecting them as capable of achieving something and they being welcomed to school as all children. Table 21 below presents an overview of the results.

Table 21: Stigmatisation and Discrimination against Children with Disability

Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My school is a welcoming environment for all children including children with impairments	78	3.03	1.32
Children without disabilities play with pupils with disabilities	78	2.97	1.17
Children with disabilities do not get teased because of their disabilities	78	2.90	1.50
Children with disabilities do not get bullied because of their disabilities	78	2.71	1.39
Other children do not shun the company of the disabled children	78	2.71	1.38
It is important to educate children with disabilities in regular school	78	2.83	1.22
Children with disabilities are not seen as pupils who do not do well in school	78	3.72	1.22

Children with disability do not get bullied because of their disability	78	3.42	1.24
Overall	**78**	**3.04**	**0.36**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

There was a significant difference (p<0.05) between the accepting attitudes of children with disabilities and children without disabilities. The accepting attitudes of children without disabilities was lower at 2.87 on a maximum scale of 5 as against the summary value obtained from the children with disability themselves (3.08). These results suggest that children with disabilities had a slightly higher projection of their inclusiveness and value than was thought of them by other children. This also implies that children without disabilities stigmatized against children with disabilities at school beyond what the latter would have expected. The summary is presented in Table 22 below.

Table 22: Accepting Attitudes with respect to children with Disabilities and Children without disabilities (Stigmatisation and Discrimination)

Category of children	N	Accepting Attitude on a scale of 5	Std. Deviation	t	P
Children with disabilities	40	3.08	0.65	1.51	0.03
Children without disabilities	38	2.87	0.58		

Hypothesis 4: Stigmatisation and discrimination would have negative association with accessibility to education for children with disabilities

The study found a significant positive correlation between accepting attitudes towards (reducing stigma and discrimination) children with disabilities and their access to education ($r = 0.396$, $p < 0.05$). This finding means that, as discrimination and stigmatization towards children with disabilities increases (rejecting vs accepting attitudes) their level of access to education decreases, that is high inability to access education. It also implies that, the more positive the accepting

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attitudes toward children with disabilities the higher their ability to access education as far as the opportunity to education is provided. Hence the hypothesis "stigmatization and discrimination would have negative association with accessibility to education for children with disabilities" is supported and accepted. See table 23 below

Table 23 Correlation between Accepting Attitude and Access to Education by children with disabilities

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Correlation (r)	P
Accepting Attitude	3.04	0.36	0.396	0.01
Access to Education	2.74	0.45		

4.3 FINDINGS FROM THE PARENTS AND TEACHERS

This part of the analysis presents the findings obtained from the parents and teachers involved in the study. The parents here comprised 39 of those with disabled children and 34 of those without disabled children. In addition to 44 teachers, a total of 117 respondents were covered.

4.3.1 Demographic Variables

4.3.1.1 Gender Distribution

Table 24 below shows that more than half of the respondents were females (65%) whiles the fewer respondents were males (35%). The breakdown of respondents according to their category has also been presented in Table 24.

Table 24: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender and Respondent Category	Male		Female		Total	
	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent
Parents with disabled children	14	35.9	25	64.1	39	100
Parents without disabled children	14	41.2	20	58.8	34	100

Teachers	13	29.5	31	70.5	44	100
Total	**41**	**35.0**	**76**	**65.0**	**117**	**100**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

Table 25 below further presents the fact that majority of the respondents (teachers and parents) involved in this study were old enough to sufficiently presuppose that they would be influential guardians or instructors of children in school and at home. Specifically, as much as 62.4% of the 117 respondents ranged between 31 and 43 years of age. About one-quarter of them 23.1% were aged between 44 and 56 years with only 12% of these respondents ageing between 18 and 30 years. Few of the respondents (2.6%) were well advanced in age given that they ranged between 57 and 70 years.

Table 25: Age Distribution of Adults Respondents

Age group (years)	Frequency	Percent
18-30	14	12.0
31-43	73	62.4
44-56	27	23.1
57-70	3	2.6
Total	**117**	**100.0**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.1.2 Educational Level of Teachers

Data solicited on the educational background of teachers revealed that the teachers mainly comprised individuals educated up to Diploma level (61.4%). This was followed by those who had attained a first Degree (18.2%) whereas 15.9% had gone up to Teachers' Training School, and 4.5% educated up to Senior High School level. The results are presented in Table 26 below.

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Table 26: Educational Background of Teachers

Educational Level	Frequency	Percent
Senior High School	2	4.5
Teachers Training School	7	15.9
Diploma	27	61.4
First Degree	8	18.2
Total	**44**	**100.0**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.1.3 Number of years taught by teachers

The study elicited information about number of years teachers have taught; they were grouped into years categories of 1 to 10, 11 to 20, 21 to 30, and 31 to 40years. It was found that most teachers; 18 (40%) have taught for 11 to 20 years, this was closely followed by 17 teachers representing 38.6 percent who have taught for 1 to 10 years and 6 (13.6%) with 21 to 30 years of practicing teaching. Only 3 of the teachers reported to have taught for 31 to 40 years. See the table 27 below for details.

Table 27: Numbers of years taught by teachers

Years Taught (Years)	Frequency	Percent
1 to 10	17	38.6
11 to 20	18	40.0
21 to 30	6	13.6
31 to 40	3	6.8
Total	**44**	**100.0**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.1.4 Marital Status of Respondents (Parent Category)

The study found that most of the parents (71.6%) were married. As much as 18.9% of the respondents were single parents while 5.4% and 4.1% were widowed and divorced, respectively. Table 28 below gives the detail.

Table 28: Marital Status of Parents

Marital status of parents	Frequency	Percent
Single	14	18.9
Married	53	71.6
Divorced	3	4.1
Widowed	4	5.4
Total	**73**	**100.0**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.1.5 Number of Children (Parents with Disabled Children only) and ability to take proper care of Disabled Children

A cross-tab analysis was performed to check for relationship between number of children per parent and the ability of parents with disabled children to take proper care of their disabled children. This was done with an attempt to investigate whether the number of children by parents with disabled children affects their ability to take proper care of them. Out of the 39 parents who have disabled children, 15 (38.5%) had 1 to 3 children, this was followed by 13 (33.3%) who had 4 to 6 children, and 11 (28.2%) with 7 or more children. It can be observed from the crosstab analysis that as the number of children increase, the ability of the parents to take proper care of disabled children reduces. As many as 73 percent of parents who have from one to three children indicated they are able to take proper care of their disabled children with only 27 percent indicating they are unable to do so. With parents with children of 4 to 6 and 7 or more only 31 and 27 percent

respectively indicated they are able to take proper care of their disabled children. Thus, larger family size is found to be associated with low tendency to take proper care of disabled children. See table 29 below for details.

Table 29: Number of children by parents having child with disabilities

No. of Children	Ability to Take Proper Care of Disabled Child		
	Yes	No	Total
1 to 3	11 (73.3%)	4 (26.7%)	**15 (100%)**
4 to 6	4 (30.8%)	9 (69.2%)	**13 (100%)**
7 and above	3 (27.3%)	8 (72.7%)	**11 (100%)**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.1.6 Nature of Child Disability (Parents with Disabled Children only)

The result obtained from parents with children having disabilities was consistent with earlier findings that intellectually challenged children formed the commonest type of disability among the children. In the home setting, most parents with children having disabilities (30.8%) described those children as intellectually challenged. In other words, their children had disabilities associated with cognitive impairments. About one-quarter of the parents with disabled children (25.6%) indicated that their children had physical disabilities whereas 15.4% and 12.8% of the parents revealed that their children had visual disabilities and hearing impairment, respectively. A notable aspect of the findings is that most of the children with disabilities have been categorized as intellectually challenged individuals. Table 30 below gives an overview of results from parents with disabled children.

Table 30: Parents with children with disabilities and the nature of their disabilities

	Yes		No		Total	
Types of disability	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**	**Freq**	**%**
Physical disability	10	25.6	29	74.4	39	100
Visual disability	6	15.4	33	84.6	39	100
Hearing impairment	5	12.8	34	87.2	39	100
Intellectually challenged individuals	12	30.8	27	69.2	39	100

Source: *Field data, 2013*

Occupation of Parents

Majority of the parents (57.5%) worked in the informal sector while only 38.4% worked in the

formal sector. Three of the parents constituting 4.1% were unemployed; a notable aspect of the

finding indicated that these were mainly parents with disabled children. Table 31 below gives an

overview of the results.

Table 31: Occupation of Parents

Occupation and Parents Respondent Category	**Parent with Disabled Child**		**Parent without Disabled Child**		**Total**	
	Freq	**Percent**	**Freq**	**Percent**	**Freq**	**Percent**
Formal Employment	15	53.6	13	46.4	28	100
Informal Employment	22	52.4	20	47.6	42	100
Unemployed	2	66.6	1	33.3	3	100
Total	**39**	**53.4**	**34**	**46.6**	**73**	**100**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.1.7 Ability to Take Proper Care of Disabled Child (Parents of Disabled Children)

In an attempt to inquire from parents having child (ren) with disabilities whether they are able to

take proper care of their disabled child (ren) as they deemed best, the majority; 21 (53.8%)

indicated "No", thus they are not able to cater for their disabled children to their level of

satisfaction, while less than half; 18 (46.2%) of the parents said that, they are able to take proper

care of their disabled children to their level of satisfaction. Table 32 below presents the statistical

details.

Table 32: Ability of Parent to Take Proper Care of Child with disability

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Yes	18	46.2
No	21	53.8
Total	**39**	**100.0**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

The researcher's quest to understand possible influence of parents with disabled children's ability

to take proper care of their child with disability or not led to the performing of Cross-tabulation

and Chi-Square test of significance analysis between employment category of parents with a

disabled child (as independent variable) and their ability to take proper care of their disabled

children (as dependent variable). The result from the cross-tabulation analysis indicated a

significant relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. Majority of the

respondents who are formally employed, 73.3%, indicated they are able to take proper care of their

child with disabilities, while 26.7% indicated they are unable to do so. On the other hand, as many

as 68.2% and 100% of informal employee and unemployed, respectively, reported they could not

take proper care of their child (ren) with disabilities. This shows a pattern of cross-over relationship

between the independent and the dependent variables. Thus, parents who are formally employed

are more likely to have constant income to enable them take proper care of their child with

disabilities than their counterparts in the informal sector and the unemployed. This may result from

the fact that formally employed parents have relatively reliable and constant source of income and

well-structured working time schedule making it easier to take care of their disabled child (ren).

From the exhibits of the Chi-Square test, at a significance level of 0.02 with its degree of freedom

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(df) at 2, produced a chi-square (x^2) value of 7.99 where ($P < 0.05$) . This indicates a statistically significant relationship between respondents' occupation (as independent variable) and the ability to take proper care of their disabled children (as dependent variable). Table 33 below depicts the statistical results from the cross-tabulation and chi-square test analysis.

Table 33: Ability to Take Proper Care of Disabled Child by Occupation (Disabled Child Parent)

Employment Category	Ability to Take Proper Care of Disabled Child				
	Yes	No	X^2	df	sig (P Value)
Formal	11 (73.3%)	4 (26.7%)			
Informal	7 (31.8%)	15 (68.2%)	7.99	2	0.018
Unemployed	0(0%)	2(100%)			

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.2 Parents' and Teachers' Views regarding Access to Education

The study sought to find out from parents and teachers the provision to access to education for the children, notably children with disabilities. Respondents' approval of statements measuring the education accessed by the children was evaluated using the ratings on a maximum scale of 5 wherein 1 represents Very Low, 2 – Low, 3 – Moderate, 4 – High, and 5 – Very High. Generally, responses from parents showed that, the quality of education accessed by their children, particularly, children with disabilities, was moderately low (2.59 – close to moderate). The respondents, however, most strongly agreed that the school makes efforts to address barriers to learning and participation for children with disabilities (2.97). On the other hand, they respondents (teacher and parents) felt there were more left to be desired in terms of school's disposition to welcome all children including those with disabilities (indicated by the lowest rating of 2.14). On the whole, school's ability to provide educational needs, emotional needs, skills needed to progress through higher education, and curriculum that equips with

literacy and numeracy skills for children with disabilities as indicated by the parents were

relatively low. Table 34 below gives the overview of the findings.

Table 34: General Access to Education (Parents)

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
The school welcomes all children including children with disabilities	73	2.14	1.14
The school provides skills needed to progress through higher education for children with disabilities	73	2.57	1.23
The school gives reading, writing and mathematical skills for children with disabilities	73	2.20	1.14
The school makes efforts to address barriers to learning and participation for children with disabilities	73	2.97	1.28
The school provide children with disabilities the needed textbooks, tables, chairs and writing materials to learn to progress through to higher education	73	2.62	1.11
There are ramps, spacious class room and toilet facilities for children with disabilities.	73	2.92	1.14
The school gives opportunity to children with disabilities to participate in school activities such as games	73	2.72	1.19
Overall (access to education)	**73**	**2.59**	**0.32**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

Analysis of data obtained from the teachers on general access to education did not result in

much difference of the views of parents. Results obtained from the teachers indicated that the

quality of education accessed by the children, particularly, children with disabilities, was

acceptable only to a moderate level (2.61 – close to moderate). Teachers on their side also most

agreed to the statement the school makes efforts to address barriers to learning and

participation for children with disabilities (2.98). In addition, teachers gave moderate approval

ratings to statements such as 'there are ramps, spacious class room and toilet facilities for

children with disabilities', 'the school gives opportunity to children with disabilities to

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participate in school activities such as games' and 'the school provides children with disabilities the needed textbooks, tables, chairs and writing materials to learn to progress through to higher education'. On the contrary, the teacher expressed total disagreement to statements the school provides reading, writing and mathematical skills for children with disabilities and that the school welcomes all children including children with disability with respective approval mean ratings of 2.19 and 2.21. See table 35 for further details

Table 35: General Access to Education (Teachers)

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
The school welcomes all children including children with disabilities	44	2.21	0.93
The school provides skills needed to progress through higher education for children with disabilities	44	2.58	1.06
The school gives reading, writing and mathematical skills for children with disabilities	44	2.19	1.04
The school makes efforts to address barriers to learning and participation for children with disabilities	44	2.98	1.11
The school provide children with disabilities the needed textbooks, tables, chairs and writing materials to learn to progress through to higher education	44	2.62	0.89
There are ramps, spacious class room and toilet facilities for children with disabilities.	44	2.94	1.20
The school gives opportunity to children with disabilities to participate in school activities such as games	44	2.76	1.05
Overall (access to education)	**44**	**2.61**	**0.32**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.3 Parents and Teachers Views regarding special education provision

Results from Table 36 below indicate that overall, parents had a moderate regard (3.10) for the special education provision and initiatives. Specifically, the respondents most strongly approved of the fact that pupils without disabilities are paired with children with disabilities to

learn (3.62 – close to High). The respondents also showed positive regard for the fact the school identifies learning needs of children with disabilities (3.60) and the school gives counseling services to children with disabilities (3.58), and moderately accepted that curriculum is developed to meet the learning needs of all pupils including children with disabilities.

The respondents, however, most strongly disagreed with the view that special learning materials to help children with disabilities are present in the schools (2.31). Comparatively, the creativity of the school at identifying learning needs for children with disabilities also proved to be moderately low (2.60). The findings are presented in Table 36 below.

Table 36: parents views on special education provision

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
There are special learning material to help children with disabilities in school	73	2.31	0.79
The school identifies learning needs of children with disabilities	73	2.60	0.93
The school has additional instructional periods for children with disabilities	73	2.99	0.92
The school offers remedial teaching for children with disabilities	73	2.97	0.98
The school gives counseling services to children with disabilities	73	3.58	0.89
The curriculum is developed to meet the learning needs of all pupils including children with disabilities	73	3.04	0.95
Pupils without disabilities are paired with children with disabilities to learn	73	3.62	0.84
Total	**73**	**3.02**	**0.48**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

On the views expressed by the teachers, it was noted that there is a moderate approval by the teachers regarding the acceptance of special education provision by the various schools in

question as evidence in an overall approval mean rating of 3.27 (close to moderate). Specifically, respondents gave highest approval rating to the statement that the school gives counseling services to children with disabilities (m = 3.68), this was followed by the statement that the school offers remedial teaching for children with disabilities (m = 3.62) and the school has additional instructional periods for children with disabilities (m = 3.60). On the other hand the teacher showed highest disagreement to the statement that the curriculum is developed to meet the learning needs of pupils including children with disabilities (m = 3.04). See table 37 for details.

Table 37: Teachers views on special education provision

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
There are special learning material to help children with disabilities in school	44	2.71	0.73
The school identifies learning needs of children with disabilities	44	2.68	0.79
The school has additional instructional periods for children with disabilities	44	3.60	0.84
The school offers remedial teaching for children with disabilities	44	3.62	0.91
The school gives counseling services to children with disabilities	44	3.58	0.79
The curriculum is developed to meet the learning needs of all pupils including children with disabilities	44	3.04	0.91
Pupils without disabilities are paired with children with disabilities to learn	44	3.51	0.83
The school's lessons taught from the various subjects meets the learning needs of my child	39	3.44	0.92
Total		**3.27**	**0.40**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.4 Opportunities for children's progression in school

This section evaluates parents and teachers assessment of the presence of opportunities for children with disability to progress in the schools. As evident in table 38, parents gave low regards 2.34 (close to low) to the presence of opportunities for children with disability to progress in school. Moderate approval 2.53 and 2.51 were given only to the statements, the school gives as much education at every level in case a child fail to progress to the next class or drop out from school and children's type of disability will not have great influence on his/her education progression respectively. Low approval ratings were given to all the remaining statements with lowest approval rating 2.05, to the statement that there is enough motivation to progress in school for children with disabilities without discriminations. These results indicate that parents in general disagree to the fact that their disable children have the opportunity to freely and easily progress in school. Table 38 presents the detail results.

Table 38: **School progression for children with disabilities (Parents view)**

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
Children with disabilities are not threatened with expulsion from school if they are not performing	73	2.31	1.03
Children with disabilities are not asked to repeat their class if they are not performing well in class	73	2.12	0.88
The current class of children with disabilities prepares them adequately to meet the demands of the next class	73	2.44	0.96
There is enough motivation to progress in school for children with disabilities without discriminations	73	2.05	1.11
Children's type of disability will not have great influence on his/her education progression	73	2.51	0.92

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	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
The school gives as much education at every level in case a child fail to progress to the next class or drop out from school	73	2.53	1.04
The school provides supporting examination materials during assessment or examination to help children with disabilities understand and participate to able to progress to prevent repeating or drop out	73	2.41	0.79
Total		**2.34**	**0.19**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

Contrary to parents who disagree with the presence of opportunity for the progression of disabled children in school, the teachers in general, expressed a moderate approval 2.91 (close to moderate) for the presence of such opportunities. Teachers gave highest approval 3.62, to the statement that the current class of children with disabilities prepares them adequately to meet the demands of the next class. A moderate approval was given to the statement that the school gives as much education at every level in case a child fail to progress to the next class or drop out from school 3.36 and children with disabilities are not asked to repeat their class if they are not performing well in class 3.12. Least approval 2.41 was given by the teachers to the statement that Children's type of disability will not have great influence on his/her education progression. See table 39 for details.

Table 39: **School progression for children with disabilities (Teachers view)**

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
Children with disabilities are not threatened with expulsion from school if they are not performing	44	2.58	0.71
Children with disabilities are not asked to repeat their class if they are not performing well in class	44	3.12	0.82

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The current class of children with disabilities prepares them adequately to meet the demands of the next class	44	3.62	0.78
There is enough motivation to progress in school for children with disabilities without discriminations	44	2.81	0.76
Children's type of disability will not have great influence on his/her education progression	44	2.41	0.90
The school gives as much education at every level in case a child fail to progress to the next class or drop out from school	44	3.36	0.78
The school provides supporting examination materials during assessment or examination to help children with disabilities understand and participate to able to progress to prevent repeating or drop out	44	2.49	0.89
Total		**2.91**	**0.46**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.5 Attitudes of Teachers

In a bid to find out the attitudes of teachers towards children with disabilities, their teaching approaches and countenance toward children, notably, children with disabilities were carefully assessed. Results from the parents and teachers involved in this study depict the picture that teachers attitude has been moderately acceptable (overall rating = 3.24 – close to Moderate). However, the rating (1.95 - Low) obtained for the fact that "the teachers try to make the lessons simpler and easier to the understanding of everyone including children with disabilities" was low. This implies that in a larger part, the respondents disagreed with that kind of view. In other words, lessons were not really made simple to all the children. Respondents mostly agreed with the view that the teachers become impatient when dealing with children with disabilities (3.76). There was also high approval of the view that teachers do not treat disabled children with fear that they have been cursed but teachers to a high extent also did not show signs of hatred towards disabled children (3.66). Table 40 below presents the results in detail.

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Table 40: Views on Attitudes of Teachers

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
Teaching and learning are planned to meet the learning needs of all categories of pupils in the class	177	2.80	1.35
The teachers try to make the lessons simpler and easier to the understanding of everyone including children with disabilities	116	1.95	0.91
The teachers have knowledge on handling children with disabilities	116	2.93	1.35
The teachers do not treat children with disabilities with fear of they being cursed children	116	3.66	0.91
The teachers do not show signs of hatred towards children with disabilities	116	3.65	1.28
Teachers are not angry with the children with disabilities when they do not understand the lessons	112	3.59	0.82
The teachers do not become impatience when dealing with children with disabilities	116	3.76	0.84
Teachers are not careless when handling children with disabilities	116	3.60	1.41
Total		**3.24**	**0.64**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

Comparing number of years taught and teachers attitude.

Only views express by teachers were considered for the purpose of this comparison. On a scale of 5 points, teachers who have taught for 30 to 40 years gave an approval mean score of 4.13 indicating a moderately high acceptance, those who have taught for 21 to 30 years followed with an approval mean rate of 3.44 close moderate, the least approval mean rate; 2.92 was given by those who have taught for 1 to 10. A consistency of decline in approval rating was found as the years of teaching decline. A correlational test proved strong positive significant ($r = 0.96$, $p < 0.01$) relationship between years taught and views of acceptance by teachers regarding children with

disabilities. The strong relationship found may be a result of the fact that as teachers' years of teaching increases their experience level as well increase thereby gaining better understanding in issues of children disabilities and consequently formed better notion about them.

Table 41: Comparing number of Years Taught by teachers and their Attitudes.

Teachers Years of Experience	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Correlation	P
1 to 10 years	17	2.92	1.01		
11 to 20 years	18	3.16	0.56	0.96	0.00
21 to 30 years	6	3.44	0.51		
31 to 40 years	3	4.13	0.34		

Source**:** *Field data, 2013*

4.3.6 Views on discrimination and stigmatisation of children with disabilities

Findings obtained from the respondents' views about stigmatisation and discrimination against children with disabilities indicate that children having disabilities are discriminated against to a moderate level (overall rating = 2.93). The ratings for accepting attitudes toward children with disabilities ranged between 2.60 (close to Moderate) and 3.58 (close to High). The parents and teachers studied showed to the highest extent that the children with disabilities are not seen as non-achievers. The respondents, on the other hand, most strongly disagreed with the view that other children do not shun the company of children with disabilities. The findings are presented in detail in Table 39 below.

Table 42: Parents and teachers Views about stigma and discrimination toward children with disabilities

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
Children with disabilities are accepted in school by both teaching and non-teaching staff	116	2.85	1.12
Other pupils in the school play with children with disabilities	116	3.08	1.43

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Children with disabilities do not get teased because of their disability	116	2.91	1.50
Children with disabilities do not get bullied because of their disability	116	2.83	1.50
Other children do not shun the company of children with disabilities	116	2.60	1.11
It is important to educate children with disabilities in the regular school	116	2.66	1.26
The children with disabilities are not seen as non achievers in school	116	3.58	1.31
Total		**2.93**	**0.71**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.7 Parental Involvement and Impact on Disabled Children

The study attempts to assess the extent of parental involvement in their children's education and its impact on children with disability accessibility. Here, teachers only were required to rate their approval in this area on the extent to which parents have been involved in the activities of their wards who are disabled. This was done on a maximum scale of 5 wherein 1 – Very Little, 2 – Little, 3 – Somehow, 4 – Much, and 5 – Very Much.

The assessment revealed that the rate of involvement of parents in their wards welfare ranged between 2.93 (close to Somehow) and 3.49 (approximately 4 - Much). The overall rate of involvement was 3.24 indicating that parents were somehow involved in their child (ren) with disability school welfare. The teachers most strongly agreed that parents visit the schools to find out how their children with disability are faring but much lower approval was given to the view that the school involves parents in the identification of special education needs of their disabled children. Table 43 below presents the detailed results.

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Table 43: Parental Involvement in School Welfare of Disabled Children

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
Parents visit school to find out how their children with disabilities are faring	43	3.49	1.61
The school authorities consult parents on whether their children with disabilities should be promoted to next class or repeated.	43	3.19	1.22
The school involves parents in the identification of special education needs of their disabled children	43	2.93	1.32
Disciplinary measures taken against disabled children are done in consultation with their parents	43	3.44	1.26
There is support available in the school to help parents with children with disabilities	43	3.23	1.46
Parents of non disabled and children with disabilities are given equal educational rights	43	3.19	1.14
Total		**3.24**	**0.83**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

4.3.8 Cultural Beliefs and their Effects on Disabled Children

Cultural beliefs were also rated to assess the mindset of respondents regarding cultural beliefs associated with children with disability and their education. Statements were rated to assess how strong or weak cultural belief is on a maximum scale of 5 where in 1 represents strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – uncertain, 4 – agree, and 5 – strongly agree. A strong cultural belief is a sign of discrimination and stigmatisation towards children with disabilities.

Findings from Table 44 paint a vivid picture that there is quite a high cultural belief system which seemingly discriminates against children with disabilities. The overall rating of the extent of cultural beliefs was 3.50 – approximately 4 on a maximum scale of 5. The respondents (both parents and teachers) altogether strongly agreed that the cultural beliefs dictate that a child with disabilities can harm non-disabled children when they play with them (3.78 – close to High). Other

relatively high cultural perceptions indicate that having a child with disabilities is seen as a curse (3.64); families of disabled children should be ostracized from the community (3.59); and that a child with disabilities is a god that came in human form (3.48). All these reveal tendencies of cultural belief systems that discriminate against children with disabilities. However, the respondents strongly disagree with the view that a child with disabilities is a punishment from the gods (3.25). The results in detail have been presented in Table 44

Table 44: Cultural Belief System

Statements	N	Mean	Standard Dev.
A child with disabilities is a god that came in human form	116	3.48	1.05
A child with disabilities is a punishment from the gods	116	3.25	1.15
Having a child with disabilities is seen as a curse	116	3.64	1.09
A disabled child may die earlier than the child without disabilities	116	3.29	0.94
A child with disabilities was bewitched from her mother's womb	116	3.44	1.07
A child with disabilities can cause harm to a child without disabilities when they play with them	116	3.78	0.87
Families of disabled children should be ostracized from the community	116	3.59	1.00
Total		**3.50**	**0.78**

Source: *Field data, 2013*

Hypothesis 5: Negative cultural beliefs have negative association with access to education of the disabled Children

The study found a significant negative relationship ($r = -0.54$, $p < 0.01$) between general access to education by the disabled children and negative cultural beliefs towards them. From the analysis, as negative cultural beliefs towards the disabled children identified to be moderately

high (3.50), it was found to be associated with moderately low access to education (2.74). In this regard, for an improvement in the access to education by the disabled children there is the need to raise public education to shape their thinking and negative cultural beliefs towards the disabled children.

Table 45: Correlation between negative cultural beliefs and access to quality education by Disabled Children

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Correlation (r)	P
Negative cultural belief	3.50	0.78	-0.54	0.00**
Access to Education	2.74	0.45		

4.4 Results from testing Hypotheses

Concerning the hypotheses stated, the outcome of the study can be linked directly to those statements raised. The hypotheses were tested based on statements raised in the hypotheses and their relationship with access to inclusive education for children with disabilities. These include children with and without disabilities educational access, cultural beliefs about educating children with disabilities, discrimination and stigmatisation of educating children with disabilities, progression of children with disabilities in school, and availability of education material resources. The interest in this study is the relationship between the above listed factors and accessibility to education. First, statistical test to assess the relationship between provision of education (access) for children with disabilities and children without disabilities indicated that there is a significant difference between an overall value for provision of education (access) for children with disabilities and children without disabilities ($p < 0.05$). A mean provision of education of 2.44 on a maximum scale of 5 was obtained with respect to children with disabilities which fall short of 2.84 for children without disabilities. This implies that education access by children with

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disabilities and children without disabilities comparatively yield significant deficits which is against children with disabilities. Thus the hypothesis was valid or accepted, (See table 7).

Secondly, in testing the hypothesis "unavailability to material resources would have negative association to the education of children with disabilities", a Pearson correlation test of significance was performed between availability of educational support materials and educational involvement, the result indicated that low availability of educational support material led to low level of educational involvement. There was a strong statistically significant positive relationship ($r = 0.78$, $p < 0.01$) between availability of education supporting materials and educational involvement (access to education). Thus unavailability of material resources is found to be negatively related to the education of children with disability, thereby, accepting the hypothesis, (See table: 9).

Thirdly, testing the hypothesis which stated that children with physical disabilities are less likely to progress through school to higher levels than the visually, hearing and intellectually challenged, the intellectually challenged was found to be negatively associated with school progression ($r = - 3.88$, $p < 0.05$). The relationship, though low, is an implication that intellectually challenged children have low propensity to progress to higher education level as compared to other types of disabilities the children had, (See table 4.18). Also, further probing reveals that there exists a significant relationship which is a negative correlation between children with visual disability and the probability that they would not be asked to repeat a class ($r = - 0.422$, $p < 0.01$). This implies that on any established event that if a child is visually disabled, it is more likely the child is asked to repeat a class, (see table 16).

Fourthly, testing the hypothesis to find the relationship between stigmatisation and discrimination against access to education by children with disabilities revealed that there is a

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positive relationship (r = 0.396, p < 0.05) between accepting attitude towards children with disabilities and their access to education. This finding is an indication that as discrimination and stigmatisation towards children with disabilities increases their level of access to education decreases and vice versa, hence the hypothesis "stigmatisation and discrimination would have negative association with accessibility to education for children with disabilities" is supported and accepted, (See table 23).

Fifthly, in a bid to test the effects of negative cultural beliefs towards children with disabilities and their access to education, it was found from the correlational test that, high negative cultural beliefs towards children with disabilities was associated with low general access to quality education by children with disabilities. A moderate negative correlation (-0.54) was found to exist between negative cultural beliefs towards children with disabilities and their access to education and this was statistically significant at (p < 0.01). The hypothesis "negative cultural beliefs have negative association with access to education of the disabled Children" is therefore confirm and accepted, (See table 46).

The five hypotheses raised proved to be true after testing; that is the assumptions were supported. From the hypotheses it suggests that there are limitations or unattended challenges to children with disabilities accessing inclusive education. This limits the successful implementation and disrupts the smooth running of the program to benefit children with disabilities in the mainstream schools. Despite the limitations, the education of children with disabilities is gradually having a change phase in Ghana with the introduction of the inclusive education.

SECTION B

4.5. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

In this section, the narrative accounts of nineteen respondents that is, 4 children with disabilities, 4 parents with a disabled child, 4 teachers, 2 head teachers, 2 resource teachers, 2 education officers, and 1 person from the persons with disabilities association are presented from the two study areas. These interviews highlight the issues in the study with respect to sociological factors such as discrimination and stigmatisation, human resource factors such as professional competence (qualification) of teachers and their attitudes, parental involvement, cultural beliefs, and policies assessment. The nineteen cases were carefully selected based on their uniqueness. The nineteen respondents were found in all the two study areas. Discussions were done on the key emerging factors that shape the experiences of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. In addition, the narrations of some of the remaining respondents were used to illustrate further these educational experiences of children with disabilities in school. The sampling criterion used in getting respondents for this second part of the study is purposive sampling. These subjects of respondents have experiences with vast knowledge and special expertise on the study, particularly the key informants such as officers, head of schools, representative from a disability association and parents. The main analytical tool used for the qualitative study is constant comparison analysis, and each interpretation and finding is compared with existing findings as it emerges from the data analysis. The comparism is in line with the interpretation.

❖ *All the names mentioned in the narratives below are anonymous*

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Stella: child with disability

Age: 15 years (JHS)

Study area: Accra

What are the problems you face in school?

> *The people in my class prefer to give their notes to others who are non-disabled like them rather than me. I am being insulted and humiliated due to my disabilities by my mates. Sometimes they do not want to play with me; especially, Baba Issah who has a tumour in the head is always being ridiculed by his mates. Also I have been repeated in class for poor performance and sometimes several repetitions become a threat to my stay in the school. Also, I am sometimes teased by our mates due to my inability to remember what is taught in class. The teachers are patient for me in the classroom but when the lessons are over they do not want you to ask questions for further explanation. My friends help me in the explanation of our notes but they also sometimes mislead me.*

Do you know about the disability law? If yes, say what you know about it.

> *No, I have not heard about the Law.*

Do you think government should support your parents to take care of you?

> *Yes. Because my mother is poor, she sells in the market and my father is dead. We are four children and it is only my mother that takes care of us. My mother is poor and I want the government to provide me with my education needs since my mother is not able to provide. The government should provide facilities and everything I need for my education to be easier for me. I need learning materials that will make the resource teacher's work easier.*

How do you expect the school to help children with disabilities get education easily in the mainstream school?

> *The school should provide me with special material or equipment for learning. The school does not given any special materials or equipment for learning. We need good teachers who have time for me and would help me understand the subjects. The school should provide buses to be picking me since I get tired when walk for long.*

A number of issues emerged from Stella's narration: first in her interview, children with disabilities are accepted into regular schools; second, no special class is offered to her; third, no special resources or materials are given to her, suggesting there is no attention paid to her educational

needs; fourth, the narration shows the patience with which teachers teach special education need child in class; fifth, the narration also shows a lack of sensitivity by the mainstream classroom teacher to the special education need child by his unwillingness to give further explanations and clarifications outside class; sixth, attitude of peers/class mates being both positive and negative; and seventh expectations from government to help parents as well as children like her to benefit from education. Lastly, no knowledge of disability law.

Prince: Child with disability

Age: 13 (JHS)

Study Area: Accra

What are the problems you face in school?

> *There are no special materials in school and the teachers are sometimes not nice to me. Though my classmates do accept me and talk with me some of them laugh at me in class and also they tease me of my disability by calling me names like "Akakedro" (ginger). Few of my mates don't talk to me in class because of my disability. I have no idea why they don't speak with me. I think this problem I am having will have a great effect on my life and also my education at school, because at times I cry and want to stop schooling though the teachers are good. I feel motivated to come to school and learn and I have learnt a lot of things in school but if I come to school and I have these problems I feel like stopping the school.*

> *Apart from these problems I participate in question and answering in class. I am part of the school activities; I normally play football. Some of the people in the class are my friends who are very helpful in class when I don't understand what I am being taught. We attend extra classes together in school. My madam is times a good teacher and she will ask me if I understand what she teaches me. My madam also has patience for me in class. She sometimes even asks of me when she notices I am not in class. I really like her*

> *Teachers work hard for me to feel comfortable in class and school. They accept and talk to me sometimes to know what is wrong with me. Mr. Baidoo normally asks me if I feel okay or alright every time I come to school. .*

Do you know about the disability law? If yes, say what you know about it.

> *No, I have not heard of any law; I cannot say anything about it.*

Do you think government should support your parents to take care of you?

> *Yes, I think the government should help my mother to be able to take care of me in school since she is a petty trader. She finds it difficult to provide me with my books*

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and other things I need to learn with in school. It at times makes me feel sad because even though some of my class mate will like to share theirs with me at times too they do not mind me. The government can support my mother by providing me with all the things I need in school to reduce the burden from my mother.

How do you expect the school to help children with disabilities get education easily in the mainstream school?

I want the school to provide me and my other friends who are disabled with all we need to help us learn like our other friends who are not disabled. There is no additional class for me alone but they do it for the whole class, so it is difficult to help me with lessons I did not understand. I want the school to try and organise extra class for me. I want the school to provide ramps in the school to help get into the class easily because at times it is difficult to climb the staircase. Also I want the school to provide me writing materials and other materials to help me.

Prince's narration brings to fore four important issues: first, the feeling of being welcome in the school as a result of motivation by teachers, friends and participation in certain activities; second, the attitude of class mates as friends and also a source of ridicule; third, consciousness of type of disability reveals that disabled children differentiate the levels of disability; the idea of dropping out from school due to some classmates attitude, the negative perception of future capabilities as a result of disability and lastly, no knowledge of disability law.

Ofosu: Child with disability

Age: 12 (JHS)

Study Area: New Juabeng

What are the problems you face in school?

The teacher's sometimes say because of my disability I will leave the school and also I have been repeated for four times because (I can't speak well) of my speech problem. I feel frightened going to the next class because I have a reading problem which I think wouldn't help me as I move forward to the next class. I was sometimes asked to be repeated in my education and the reason was that I could not understand the lesson properly and it is affecting my studies because I know I could do well in school. My teachers don't mind me, they always leave me out of the class because they don't ask me to answer or ask questions in class. May be if they are in good mood sometimes they help me understand my notes; I have no idea. Again I think teachers don't prepare me to move forward with my classmates.

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The school do not really address the barriers I have when I come to school and learn. Some of the teachers normally will get angry and cane me if I don't see well what is written on the board. The school doesn't provide me with any remedial class to explain further if I don't understand some subjects in class. I really don't know if they do welcome me to the school.

Do you know about the disability law? If yes, say what you know about it.

No, I have not heard about any law.

Do you think government should support your parents to take care of you?

My parents are not able to afford the treatment and get me the reading aids. The government can help to provide me treatment since my mother and father cannot afford. Also the government can help my parents with some money to provide me with the materials I need in school to learn.

How do you expect the school to help children with disabilities get education easily in the mainstream school?

I will be happy in school if the school provides learning aids for me; the headmistress should talk to teachers to write boldly on the board for me to see. I can achieve my dreams if the government comes in to help the school to provide my educational needs.

The main issues emanating from Ofosu's narration are the differing attitudes of teachers towards the special needs of a child with disability; inability of regular schools to provide needed resources for special children which most times leads to lack of understanding of class lessons and grade retention; absence of a resource teacher; low expectation in class and the pressure to perform in class; the role of class mates as helpers in understanding class room work; expectation from the school to meet the his learning needs as a special child and better expectations from government to parents to help them meet their educational needs in school.

Akosua: Child with disability

Age: 14 (JHS)

Study Area: New Juabeng

What are the problems you face in school?

The school welcomes me and all the other children with disabilities but we face problems in our studies. First of all, the school environment is not too good for someone like me who limbs and uses crutches. There are no ramps and my

classroom is up so I have to suffer before I get to the classroom to join my friends to learn. There are no learning materials for my other disabled friends who cannot see properly to help them learn. I get some teasing from other pupils in the school and classmates even though they at times help a lot in our stay in the school till closing time. There are no remedial classes for us after school to catch up with our friends; I learnt there is a resource teacher but I always don't have access to her to help because she has to go round the schools in the area or district to help them. At times I wonder if we can progress like our friends. But our classmates help us in the classroom and the school.

Do you know about the disability law? If yes, say what you know about it.

Yes, I have heard about the disability law: my sister told me about it, but i don't know the details.

Do you think government should support your parents to take care of you?

In fact my parents don't have enough to hire a teacher to help and to buy books, shoes and uniform. I will like government to help my parents get good jobs; especially, my father who doesn't have a well-paid job. They find it difficult to provide my needs; I think the government should come in to help since my parents cannot help me meet my education needs. At times I don't come to school because my parents don't have enough money to buy books or other things I need.

How do you expect the school to help children with disabilities get education easily in the mainstream school?

I will plead with the school to provide my learning needs in the schools to get along with our classmates. Also to bring rules that will make the teachers change their negative mind towards me by helping me if I do not understand what the teachers teach. The school should make the environment friendly to make it easily accessible to me

The fundamental issues identified from Akosua's narration are the acceptance of the school for her to study with her non-disabled peers; the barriers she encounter as a result of poor architectural structure, absentee resource persons and lack of TLMs; the role of the classmates to help her in her studies; her expectation from the government to assist her parents to provide her educational needs; and lastly, a suggestion that the school should be disability friendly to fulfil her childhood dream.

PARENTS WITH CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Mensah: Parent with a disabled child

Sex: male

Study Area: Accra

Occupation: Trader

What is disability?

> *Disability is when someone has impairments and he or she is not able to perform certain activities like any other person.*

What do you think about the word disabled?

> *The word disabled brings the idea that the person is sick. In fact the moment that word comes to mind it means the persons needs help. I am a parent with a child with disabilities but the word disabled brings negative thought to many people because they view that person as not part of society. And because of the negative thought they are looked down upon, I think the word should be replaced with a more respectful word.*

Are you involved in decision making concerning your child's education?

> *Yes, the school at times invites me to the school if my child has a learning need that has to be provided. Normally there is a general parent- teacher association meeting which is held twice in the term to discuss issues concerning the school and all the children's education. PTA meetings give the opportunity to all parents to get involved and be informed of the issues in the school.*

Please explain how you are involved in your child's education.

> *As I said I get involved when the school invites me and during the normal PTA meetings. I don't really know any problem he is encountering in school because he comes home happy every day. Also he always tells me interesting things about what happens in school each day. I don't get too much involved because there is not much to do for him in school. In fact the problem that my son goes through in school I think has always been there and nothing has been done about it; I accepted it the way it is but just pray he completes successfully. For example, there are no ramps for easy accessibility.*

What are some of the major barriers your child encounters in the school?

> *My child has a physical disability that is he limbs and finds it difficult to get to his class; it is my biggest problem. His friends always have to help him which he said he feels uncomfortable with. At times to he needs additional tuition to catch up but it seems that opportunity is not available.*

Do you think the nature of your child's disability will influence his or her educational progress in school?

> *Well, I do not think his disability will influence his progress; if the right schooling environment is provided, he could move along with his peers without any problems. I do my best as parent to make sure he also benefits from education but it seems he finds it difficult to get around in school.*

Are you aware or familiar with the disability Act 715? How did you come to know about it? Could you please say what you know about it?

> *I have never heard of any disability law.*

Has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily?

> *Actually I don't know about these policies; if there is any then I believe it is not helping too much because for example my child will have been provided with a better school environment to learn.*

Do you think there is legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

> *I don't think so because you normally see them around in pity. I believe if there is anything legal for them their situation would have changed. This is because I don't think children with disabilities or persons with disabilities are given much attention and protection both in school and outside school. This is because other people shun them and looks at them with hostile eyes; others also don't respect them and even they are not accepted in work places.*

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of people with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?

> *The government isn't supportive in anyway because for example, my child's legs problem is still the same. I have sent him to hospitals and even herbal clinics but no improvement. Any hospital I send him they want to charge big sums of money but if the government is in support there would be free medical care for him and others. Even when the government said all children should go to school we take our children to school and you realised they have not put the measures in place to get these children in school. For example I can say there are too many children in one classroom.*

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

> *Yes, culturally educating these groups of children is not allowed because they see them as gods. Even me myself at first I was having the perception that they are from the gods. I have realised my mistakes through sensitisation from my children. At first I even was having the perception that they are children from the gods. Also I understand it can be a medical condition which not detected early could lead to disabilities.*

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Suggest ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disabilities in Ghana.

> *Firstly, the school buildings should be modified to help these groups of children. Secondly, there should be sensitisation that these people are also like other non-disabled persons so they should be given the same treatment, and finally the government should not only come out to say we should take all our children to school without providing them with their educational needs.*

The main issues emanating from Mensah's narration are five. First, there is the notion that the word disability connotes negative thoughts; second, his involvement in child's welfare is mostly during PTA meetings; third, there is no idea of disability law or policies and he does not see the role of the government in helping and protecting persons with disabilities; fourth, he/she? accepts the problems his child encounters in school as normal because it has been there for long and nothing has been done about it; it also brings out cultural beliefs against persons with disabilities and recent sensitisation and change of attitude.

Efua, Parent with disabled child

Sex: Female

Study Area: Accra

Occupation: Trader

What is disability?

> *Disability is a condition in which a person is physically and mentally challenged. I think disable means a physically challenged person.*

Are you involved in decision making concerning your child's education?

> *Yes, I am very much involved with my daughter's illness. I sometimes come to school to check on her and also the teachers talk to me about her performance. I sometimes come because I am a trader and don't have time always to come to the school.*

What are some of the major barriers your child encounters in the school?

> *Because my child is dumb it becomes difficult for her to ask questions and also she cannot complain much if she doesn't understand anything. Also she can't tell me what has happened to her exactly if she is being beaten by a grown up or somebody in school. I only notice when she comes to the house crying.*

Do you think the nature of your child's disability will influence his or her educational progress in school?

> *Yes, because she is not able to talk well, I know it is having great effect on her studies because if there is something she doesn't understand and needs explanation she cannot ask and the teacher may not be able to help since the teacher cannot use sign language. I hear there is a special teacher around but mostly not available because she has to go round all the schools to help other children with disabilities too.*

Are you aware / familiar with the disability Act 715? How did you come to know about it? Could you please say what you know about it?

> *I have no idea about any disability law.*

Has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily?

> *I don't believe there is any policy that helps them in this country because their situations don't improve. You see them on the street begging and someone like me that take my child to school I don't see any help they give them.*

Do you think there is legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

> *As I said I don't think there is any legal protection for the;, they would not have been on the street begging and also in school the needed educational resources would have been provided for them like the other children who are not disabled.*

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of people with disabilities in terms of policies   and programs available?

> *I don't think the government has helped them in anyway because others who are also disabled still don't get any attention just like my daughter. I don't know about any policies. If there is do they work because I don't see any help from the government trying to support them.*

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

> *Even my friends say my daughter's problem is as a result of a woman I fought with in the market when I went to shop who cursed me and my baby at that time I was 3 months pregnant with her. Cultural beliefs concerning these children are still in our society and because of these beliefs they see her as a cursed child and I feel very bad about it.*

Suggest ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disabilities in Ghana.

> *I don't know how these barriers can be reduced if the government is not helping. I think people should be educated to do away with the cultural beliefs to accept them in the society.*

The main issues emanating from Efua's narration are five. First, she understands the word disabled as someone with a physical challenge which reveals that she recognises physical deformity more than the other forms; second, there is difficulty in finding out from her daughter the problems she encounters in school as a result of the child's inability to talk clearly; also, she has no knowledge of disability law and policies; further, negative cultural perceptions of causes of disability, and lastly lack of government intervention for persons with disabilities.

Michael: Parent with disabled child

Sex: male

Study Area: Accra

Occupation: Trader

What is disability?

> *Disability is when someone's hand is cut off or cannot do something due to the impairment. It could also be any part of the body that does not function and it can be as a result of an accident.*

What do you think about the word disabled?

> *When we use the word disabled we make the person feel that they cannot do anything for themselves. In this our country it comes with negative ideas.*

Are you involved in decision making concerning your child's education?
> *Yes, I am involved in my child's education or any other decision taken on him, I normally go during Parent Teachers Association (PTA) meetings and at times upon invitation to the school by the teachers. I help her to do her homework as well.*

What are some of the major barriers your child encounters in the school?
> *The barrier is that the friends have been laughing at him and also because of his hands he cannot write well, and there is not much support from the school to help him.*

Do you think the nature of your child's disability will influence his or her educational progress in school?

> *I do not think so because I am ready to support him go to school and when the right learning environment is provided he can go further because it is his hand and it has not affected his brains*

Are you aware / familiar with the disability Act 715? How did you come to know about it? Could you please say what you know about it?

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No, I have not heard anything like that about ACT 715. I know there are policies in Ghana but I don't know if disabled persons have specific laws.

Has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily?

Not really, I don't think so because the story is the same even if there are any policies there are no improvements. I believe the government may be doing its best but it is not enough to help this group of children. My child to me is not getting enough in the school because he goes through the same schooling process with regards to academic activities with all the other children without disability.

Do you think there is legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

As I said I have not heard of the Act 715 and so it means there are laws but I don't think they protect them because as a parent the situation of persons with disabilities in general is bad in this country. I think if there is legal protection their situation would have improved.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of people with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?

*I learnt there are some teachers who are special teachers for children like my son but I have not met him or her so I think that is good by the government. Apart from that the government should provide the materials he needs in school since the government said **FREE EDUCATION** parents should not pay anything especially for those of us parents that are poor.*

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

I think our cultural beliefs for persons with disability are not good for the children because the society feels they are not human beings. Culturally disability in Ghana is negatively viewed because my son goes through a lot in the school and society. I see people discriminate against him because of cultural beliefs. Society in fact doesn't understand why he should be in school because they believe persons with disability are not humans. Indeed cultural beliefs play a very important role in not helping persons with disabilities in Ghana. Cultural belief is a big problem and as a parent I think it is one of the problems that prevent my child and other persons with disabilities to be accepted.

Suggest ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disabilities in Ghana.

I suggest the government should help we the parents with such children so that we can also look after them well. The teachers should talk to the abled children to stop the teasing; materials for learning should be provided by the government because I provide everything myself which I find difficult.

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The main issues noted from Michael's narration are eight. These are the notion of disability, parental involvement, discrimination and stigmatisation in school, no knowledge of disability Act, government's limited support for children with disabilities in school, the cultural myth surrounding persons with disability, lack of resource materials for special children, and expectations of government assistance for parents.

Christel: Parent with disabled child

Sex: female

Study Area: New Juabeng

Occupation: Trader

What is disability?

> *Disability, I believe, is when someone is not able to do what everyone can do as a result of child birth or accidents, but at times the environment around can make a person with disability more disabled. I am saying this because they don't provide things to help people with disabilities but only the non-disabled people. I believe the word itself brings a negative idea into people's mind.*

Are parents involved in decision making concerning their children's education?

> *I do get involved but not very often because my work doesn't allow me enough time but I wish to do more to help my child.*

Please explain how you are involved in your child's education.

> *I normally attend PTA meetings because the time is flexible that is on weekends. I am a single parent and I have to work to take care of my children. I need work to earn income to be able to take care of my children because I don't have any support from any one.*

What are some of the major barriers your child encounters in the school?

> *The barriers my child encounters are many because it seems what it takes to help him are not there in the school. For example, my child's disability is got to do with his legs so he needs easy access to the school environment but unfortunately there are no ramps in the school and he always has to struggle on to get to his classroom. At times the friends have to carry him to the class. My child also complains of some few teasing here and there goes on which makes me uncomfortable so at times he does not want to go school.*

Do you think the nature of your child's disability will influence his or her educational progress in school?

No, I do not think so because I have seen some few people like him who have managed to go through education successfully and I think he can go through. I think the government should try and help when we take them to school because getting to school is even a problem. The school is quiet far like 20mins walk from this house and with his type of disability he gets tired.

Are you aware / familiar with the disability Act 715? How did you come to know about it? Could you please say what you know about it?

Yes, I have heard it but I don't know the details, may be after this interview I will go look for it and read.

To what extent has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily?

Polices! (She exclaimed) Then, the policies are not doing much for the disabled children because I don't see much improvement in their situation. Even those who go to school it is sad to find them struggle with their non-disabled peers to understand what is being taught. For example, my children can't join when there are physical education lessons because there are no planned sport activities for him when the other classmates are having their exercise. I think if there are policies to help them, those policies will show how to handle them when they go to school. May be the policies are written but doing what the policy says is a problem.

Do you think there is legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

Well for protection I believe since there are laws and policies legally on paper they are being protected because I don't see much help coming from the government. As I said there is not much coming from the government though they are trying to make children with disabilities part of the mainstream.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of people with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?

I will say not too supportive. As a parent with a child with disabilities, even though the government said they can join their friends who are not disabled it is not easy for them because they may need other learning aid to help them study. My child has physical disability and his disability makes it difficult for him to get to his classroom but the government and school authorities have not provided anything to aid him. I have complained many times but it seems the school is not helping because there has not been approved budget to construct ramps to make it easy for him to move around. Also my child at times complain to me that because of the sitting arrangement in the class he finds it difficult sit to write as a result he never complete assignment in class. In all this I have complained to the school authorities but it seems they also wait on government to come to help because it is beyond them. Even those out of school most of them you see them begging

for alms on the streets and I think if there are policies and programs for them they may leave the street.

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

Talking about culture, I believe since the olden days persons with disabilities are not regarded as human beings and even they were killed before they grew up, but those who get the opportunity to grow up are seen as gods and they are being worshipped. As a result of sensitisation I will say people are changing their mind and society is accepting them small but I think on the whole culturally they are not seen as human beings. These beliefs lead to hiding them and denying them access to education.

Suggest ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disabilities in Ghana.

Personally, I believe the laws and policies should be put into practice because they are done to help these children and all persons with disabilities. They should provide the resources they need to meet their learning needs. The school buildings should be made in a way to help these children. As I said earlier on, in my child's school there are no ramps so if they could provide ramps and other needed facilities to make these children also comfortable, it will help.

Basically the themes that emerged from Christel's case as a parent with a child with disability are mainly on the definition of disability linked to child birth, accident and environments. Again parental involvement is limited as a result of work task. More so the barriers mentioned in this story are architectural barriers, congested classroom arrangement, little teasing from other school and class mates. In addition, there is knowledge of the disability law but limitation to details. On the issue of government policies, it is not doing much to help with inclusive education and legal protection is indicated as being on paper and not put into practice. Culturally, the narration brings to light the historical perceptions of persons with disabilities by society. Finally, there are suggestions based on provision of learning materials and modification of architectural buildings to help children with disabilities in schools comfortable.

Ankuto: Parent with disabled child

Sex: female

Study Area: New Juabeng

Occupation: Maison

What is disability?

> *The definition of disability usually goes or comes with a negative mind set; disability is someone who is not able to perform activities without support. These are people who need support to perform an activity.*

What do you think about the word disabled?

> *As a parent with a child with disabilities the experience I have is that, literally the word disabled itself brings negative thoughts because we see them as not human beings or as people who always need help.*

Are you involved in decision making concerning your children's education?

> *I will say, yes, I get involved when I am invited to the school and also I attend PTA meetings which are quiet flexible: they are held on Saturdays. At times the school takes the decisions and I have to abide by them because I could not honour the invitation as a result of my work schedule which I could not afford to lose. I also help with my child's homework and I have employed a teacher to help her in her weak areas at least to catch up with the class since the school doesn't organise any extra class to help her.*

What are some of the major barriers your child encounters in the school?

> *The school needs facilities and resources to teach these children because they may need extra resources to involve them in the mainstream classroom. This is because my child is slow and needs attention with extra material to help her learn which is not available. Though the teachers are doing their best to teach, there is nothing they can do if the materials are not there to help her in classroom.*

Do you think the nature of your child's disability will influence his or her educational progress in school?

> *Yes, my child is a slow learner and may need extra classes to catch up with her mates. My child's progression is a problem because she has been repeated twice, she could not catch up with the class. I will say yes, but I hope she is able to complete. I don't earn much but I put in an effort to find her extra class's teacher to help her complete the basic level and find her trade to learn. It will help me to give more attention to my other children without disabilities.*

Are you aware / familiar with the disability Act 715? How did you come to know about it? Could you please say what you know about it?

> *I don't even know till today that there is law.*

To what extent has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily?

As for the policies there have been some policies and I think it is out of these policies that all children are to be sent to school. But I don't see the impact of those policies on inclusive education because there are a lot of things that must be done to help disabled children join their friends who are not disabled in the mainstream schools. My child is a slow learner, and there is no help from the school to help her. She has to learn with her non-disabled friends who can understand better the lesson.

Do you think there is legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

As for the legal protection yes because of the law you just told me about and the policies. That it is a document but the question is do they practice it to help children with disabilities? If there is then, it must protect them in school as well in providing their learning needs in school.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of people with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?

None, the only thing the government did was to attach resource teachers to the schools but these are special education teachers who lack resources to help these children and some of them have to improvise some things to help children with disabilities in the class. I met one of them but it seems these resource teachers cannot help much if the resources are not provided.

Suggest ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disabilities in Ghana.

I think the government should come in fully to support children with disabilities in the mainstream school because when they join the regular class they find it difficult to cope since the resources are not there. Even as a result, some schools don't accept them; they will tell you the school doesn't have the facilities and resources to get them in the mainstream. My child was turned down in two schools because they said they lack teaching materials for her to learn.

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

Culture, I will say, plays a lot of role in our society when it comes to persons with disabilities in general. Our community doesn't see them as "normal" beings. It has been there for a long time and I can say that is affecting the help they have to receive to get them accepted in the society where the school is situated.

The main issues Ankuto recounted from her story are the following: first, the word disabilities connote negative idea thus hindering the understanding of the word disabled. Second, parental involvement is relatively all right; third, there is the barrier of unavailability of resources and facilities; also, there is no knowledge of the disability law and limited knowledge of the policy. Further the story brings out the government's inability to help these groups of children in school

though there is the policy of free education. Lastly, culture is playing a greater role to some extent since people with disability in general are looked down on in the society.

TEACHERS

Annan

Teacher (JHS)

Study Area: Accra

Education qualification: Degree

What is disability?

I think that disability is something like if a person can't do anything that a normal person can do.

What do you think about the word disabled?

The word disabled is very degrading because it is not like the person cannot do anything but when left alone he/she can also use his/her talent to do something. Unfortunately in our Ghanaian society the word depicts negative ideas. The moment you mention disabled it means that person is sick and needs assistance.

What is inclusive education?

I think inclusive education is good but the concept should be embraced with the needed resources and materials to make education accessible to all. This school accepts all children in even with that some children are not able to come to school because they are not able to afford learning materials as a result of poverty. I believe one of the bases to having inclusive education is to reduce poverty in our society and inclusive education is used as poverty reduction strategy to reduce poverty by acquiring skills to get jobs to do. In a way, inclusive education empowers them economically. It makes children with disabilities to also come to school like the other children without discrimination of the law.

Are parents involved in decision making concerning their children's education?

Yes, upon invitation but not always do they honour invitations. For example, if the child is not doing well I inform the headmistress and we invite the parents to tell them we want to repeat your child because he cannot pick up in class. Sometimes too the parents get so much angry and tell us that we have been repeating their children and they are growing too old so we should let them go through. Apart from the parents getting involved in decision making I realised they help in doing homework because they sign the homework before the child brings it to school.

Does / do the child (ren) in your class type of disabilities have influence on their educational progression school (negative/positive).

Yes, to some extent because he finds it difficult to catch up with the class so I repeated him because he could not move with such performance to the next class. He is slow in learning

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even though at times the resource teacher intervenes to help explain the lesson to him. His progression to the various stages with his peers may delay as a result of his disability.
What are some of the major barriers children with disabilities encounter in the school?

> *Well, for the child with disability in my class the problem he faces is the limited access to the resource teacher because I don't have the expertise to help her when he does not understand the lesson. The materials for learning are also not available so that he can learn properly. My pupil with disability in my class doesn't have problem moving around the buildings. But I think if there should be a child with visual or physical disability he or she will find it difficult to move around. This is due to the architectural construction with long staircases without the provision of ramps and elevators.*

Are you aware / familiar with the disability Act 715? How did you come to know? Could you please say what you know about it?

> *I am not aware of the disability Act.*

To what extent has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily?

> *What I know are educational policies which have, paved the way for all children to come to school including children with disabilities. That is why we have children with disabilities in this school but it has not been easy because children with disabilities have to compete with their non-disabled peers who don't have any educational needs. I think that the education policy of free education is laudable.*

Do you think there is legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

> *Yes, I think there is legal protection for the disabled because for instance they have rules that protect them from crossing the road when they are with the white canes which I see as a regulation governing their movement around.*

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?

> *I don't think the government is supportive because children with disabilities in the regular school are not cared for; they are left alone in the name of inclusive education. Meanwhile, the educational needs are not being met. This problem has even made teachers not to pay special attention to these groups of children.*

How committed is the government with the implementation of the disability policy?

> *I cannot say much on the implementation because I have no knowledge about the policy.*

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

I don't know how cultural beliefs influence the disables' education but what I can say is that because sometime people think that they are disgrace to the family they don't want them to come out to associate with friends much more come to school.

What are your midterm objectives in practising inclusive education in the next five years?

The school's midterm aim is to accept them in school because it's a policy for them to come to school.

Suggest ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disability in Ghana.

I would suggest that the government and the disability council should provide all the needed structures and materials as well as trained special educators before accepting inclusive education. Also special education should be promoted because the mainstream schools are not able to accommodate them to provide their educational needs.

Annan's narration brings to light, eight important issues: the first is the involvement of parents through invitations; the second is lack of educational resources to accommodate special children; the third is the attitude of parents to their children being repeated; the fourth bothers on structural barriers to special children; the fifth is inclusive education is seen as not being in its right direction; the sixth talks about the negative effects of cultural beliefs on the education of special children; the seventh touches on lack of resource persons in mainstream schools to take care of the educational needs of special children, and the eighth covers the midterm aim to accept them in school.

Nkrumah

Teacher (JHS)

Study Area: Accra

Qualification: Degree

What is disability?

Disability is a person who is not normal or has a little problem in performing some activities.

How do you understand the word disabled

The use of the word disabled means the individual needs assistance or help.

What is inclusive education?

Inclusive education is the idea of educating both the disabled and non-disabled in the mainstream school. Now we are supposed to accept children with disabilities if they can study in the mainstream school. There are some who cannot learn in the mainstream school so the school refers them to the special school. Inclusive education I believe is bringing togetherness among the children in the school and even between we the staff, because of ideas we had about persons with disabilities in the society in which we live. Inclusive education is best but we need what it takes to practise it for children with disabilities to benefit.

Are parents involved in decision making concerning their children's education?

Parents generally are not very much involved in the decision making concerning their children's education. Parents don't care about their children with special needs. They just dump them in the schools and attend to their private businesses. Example, the disabled child I have in this class I have sent for her parents several times but they don't come. The school organises Parent Teachers Association (PTA) meetings and call on the parents to come and assist in their education some never show up. A parent coming to the school to discuss his/her child with disabilities educational situation is a big problem because they prefer to spend time to attend to work business.

What are some of the major barriers children with disabilities encounter in the school?

The major barrier is the required textbooks for their level of intelligence are not provided. That is the learning and teaching materials are not provided in the school for us to use to help them learn. I have a child with disability in my class and when I am teaching I realise she struggles to understand. Unfortunately I don't have any additional teaching material to help her understand the lesson and learn. The other barriers are architectural where those with movement problem find it difficult to use the school buildings and classrooms easily. In this school there are two children with disabilities, one in my class and the other one in the lower class.

Does the child (ren) in your class type of disabilities has influence on their educational progression in school (negative/positive)?

Well she could go further if she gets the necessary support. These children could advance higher in school to some extent but the support is not there for them

Are you aware / familiar with the disability Act 715? Could you please say what you know about it?

I don't know about the disability Act.

Do you think there is legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

Schools are especially designed for these disabled children so i believe there is legal protection for them. For example a child who is intellectually challenged will be assessed and referred to a special school for the needed education.

To what extent has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily?

Well I have not heard about specific policy for them but I know the education strategic plan 2003 to 2015 made mention of inclusive education and inclusion of children with non-severe in the mainstream school by 2015. So I believe this policy has helped children with disability to access education in the mainstream school.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?

The only support I am aware of is the special schools that have been set up to provide the required education for these challenged persons. Schools like the Akropong School for the Blind. Also is the capturing of inclusive education in the education strategic plan 2003 -2015.

How committed is the government with the implementation of the disability policy?

I think this my school we lack materials; we don't have desks for the students to learn. When we requested for the tables and chairs, we were given broken desks to repair for the students. Some students have to bring their own plastic chairs to use in the school. There is also not enough space in the classrooms and more students including children with disabilities are being admitted, but we can't give them the needed attention due to the large numbers. The child with disability who uses wheel chair finds it difficult to stay in the class room with large numbers. The benefit of free education policy could have impact if the necessary resources are provided by government.

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

Cultural beliefs have crippled the education of these disabled children due to their disability. The parents are not willing to help children with disabilities come to school, because they view them as worthless and prefer to educate their non-disabled peers.

What are your midterm objectives in practising inclusive education in the next five years?

The midterm objective I believe is to go by the free education policy to admitting them in school.

Suggest ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disability in Ghana.

Special attention and needed materials should be provided to assist children with disabilities because their numbers are increasing. More vocational education must be established to provide handy works and skills for the challenged persons.

Nkrumah's narration brings to light, important issues: first is the lack of parental involvement by refusing to respond to invitations; second is the understanding of inclusive education; third is the low knowledge on the disability law; fourth is the lack of attention to the provision of educational needs of special children; fifth is limited government commitment after the introduction of free education policy; sixth is the negative effects of cultural beliefs on the education of special children.

Irene

Teacher (JHS)

Qualification: Degree

Study Area: New Juabeng

What is disability?

> *Disability is when a person is not able to do normal activities like all other persons and needs assistance.*

What do you understand by the word disabled?

> *The word disabled I see it as normal or everyday usage. It is normally used when we're referring to someone who is impaired.*

What is inclusive education?

> *Inclusive education I believe it is very good because since it is a policy and it is seen as the right of the person with disability. This is when the disabled child comes to the mainstream school to learn together with their friends who are not disabled. Inclusive education helps these people to come to school to benefit from schooling and also acquire some knowledge to help them find something to do than having no knowledge or skills, economically if they are able to go through to higher they get jobs to do and help themselves than relying on people.*

Are parents involved in decision making concerning your children's education?

> *Parents get involved in their children education through PTA meetings other than that they don't come to the school to ask about their performance. For instance, the child with disability I have parents do not attend PTA meetings regularly. The parents prefer occupying themselves with activities that could generate income. Generally most of them are busy looking for money to survive. It is only a few of them that are interested in their wards progression in school. At times to get them at the PTA is a*

problem and most of them come because failure for them to show up their children will be punished.

What are some of the major barriers children with disabilities encounter in the school?

One of the barriers is what I have just said that parents don't get involved to help take decisions on their child's education needs; I believe they see the school as a dumping place for their disabled children. Again the tools to teach these children are not available, inadequate resource teachers to help them in the class, because the resource teacher has been assigned more than one school. The curricular is also not good for them and as a teacher i need to modify it teach all the children.

Does the child (ren) in your class type of disabilities have influence on their educational progression in school (negative/positive)?

Yes, it will influence because he finds it difficult catching up in class but I hope he is able to progress with his mate. I think retaining him in the class may not help because it will waste their time and he will grow older; it is better to let him move along with his peers.

Are you aware / familiar with the disability Act 715? Could you please say what you know about it?

I am aware a law has been passed but I don't know the details.

To what extent has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily?

Concerning policies and inclusive education to some extent I will say yes because it's as a result of the policies that these children are being accepted in school without complaints. The policies need to do more to have proper practice of inclusive education because the resources are not available.

Do you think there is legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

Obviously there are legal documents to protect these groups of children but in Ghana most of our regulation is on paper. Even given them access in the mainstream is in a way protecting them from future poverty through the acquisition of skills and knowledge.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?

The government has tried with the passage of the disability law and has attached special educators to the various schools to help with children with disabilities who get enrolled in the mainstream school; though not enough, there is room for improvemen.t

How committed is the government with the implementation of the disability law?

Well the policy I hear ten years memoratorium so I believe we have to wait and find out what happens after the ten years if its implementation will be done.

What are the schools' midterm objectives in practising inclusive education in the next five years?

The midterm objective I think is to get these children in school and to give them at least the basic education.

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

Culturally persons with disabilities are not regarded as part of the society: the need to educate them is not of importance to society and even some of the parents. The passage of the law has helped because society would understand persons with disabilities also have right. There is gradual change of attitudes towards persons with disabilities.

Teacher Irene's responses bring out very important themes such as the normal usage of the word and she sees nothing wrong with its usage; secondly, she stresses on the barriers with regards to parental involvement, inadequate resource persons, and TLMs available to teach. Again, knowledge on disability law is inadequate regarding details; children with disabilities may not have had access if not for the policies; government's role not enough to practise inclusive education, and finally, cultural beliefs which are inevitable in our society with respect to attitudes towards persons with disabilities.

Andrew

Teacher (JHS)

Qualification: Degree

Study Area: New Juabeng

What is disability?

Disability is functional inability of a person to perform normal activities and it limits them in life.

What do you think about the word disabled?

The word disabled personally I perceived it as always bringing some odd feelings and behaviour towards persons with disabilities in our society. The moment we mention the word disabled it means something is wrong somewhere.

What is inclusive education?

I personally believe inclusive education is something that came to help persons with disabilities because for a long time children with disabilities, they don't go to school and those who go to school are taken to their special school without interacting with their friends who are not disabled. I believe the children who are all right to study in

the mainstream school system should be accepted as the policy said because the very few ones who cannot join the mainstream school are to be taken to their special schools. Inclusive education is very laudable for those who have not been to school before because of poverty. But even if they get access to the school they find it difficult because we lack the materials to help them learn. This is because the curriculum and the materials provided are mainly for the non-disabled children. The parents must come in to help but most of these parents are poor who cannot afford so they don't benefit. So in a way the aim of inclusion is not achieved; they just come but participation is limited.

Are parents involved in decision making concerning their children's education?

Parents get involved in their children's education through PTA meetings other than that they don't come to the school to ask about their performance. The school invites them as well but only a few honour our invitation. The child I have in my class's father is unemployed and it is only the mother who takes care of the family, and the mother who sees herself as a single parent spends most of her time on the market. Inviting such a parent to the school is a problem. Myself with the help of other teachers in the school follow up to the home to talk to the parents but mostly you meet only one parent and are not ready to take a decision without the other. This happens usually when it is only the women who are home.

What are some of the major barriers children with disabilities encounter in the school?

Again the tools to teach these children are not available, inadequate resource teachers to help them in the class because most regular classroom teachers don't have knowledge on how to handle a child with a learning need. I don't have too much knowledge on teaching a child with disability in my class so I find it difficult to help. More so our curricular is meant for the non-disabled children and modifying it will drag the class and also inhibit my targets for the school term. That notwithstanding some of my colleague teachers tries to help by modifying the teaching material to help the child with disability get along with their non-disabled counterparts.

Are you aware / familiar with the disability Act 715? How did you come to know? Could you please say what you know about it?

I heard from a colleague but I am not aware of the contents of the law.

To what extent has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily?

Concerning policies and inclusive education, to some extent I will say there is more to be done because inclusive education needs total cleaning and change of the education system to enhance practice. The policies are there though, but how do we put it into effective practice, the law or the policy opened the way for disabled children to come to school but they are not benefiting much compared with the other children who are not disabled.

Do you think there is legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

> *I will say yes because of the passage of the law which confers a lot of legal rights on them, and these rights should protect them.*

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?

> *The government has tried with the passage of the disability law and doing it best to get all children with disabilities into the regular school system so far as the disability is not severe and can stay in the mainstream school.*

How committed is the government with the implementation of the disability law?

> *Well commitment I can say has been poor because despite government's legal responsibility to provide education for children with disabilities which is included in the Act, many of them are still on the street excluded from schooling.*

What are the schools mid-term objectives in practising inclusive education in the next five years?

> *As I said the midterm objective I think is to get these children in school and to give them at least the basic education by 2015.*

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

> *Cultural attitudes, I believe, are reducing towards persons with disability in our society even though there are few reported cases which are negative perceptions preventing their progress. For example, these negative perceptions could lead to denial of education.*

A number of very pressing issues emerged from teacher Andrew's account. Firstly, the word disabled is negative, parental assistance is very important, and also the issue of gender role was seen as a result of the absence of the male partner to help take decision. Secondly, other factors that prevent the practice of inclusion also emanated which include rigid curriculum, lack of learning resources, unavailability of resource teachers, and lack of knowledge of the classroom teacher to help children with disabilities. Thirdly, there is ineffective policy practice and lack of knowledge on content on the disability Act. The inadequate role of the government also came up and finally, the cultural beliefs and practices seen as a function of negative attitudes towards person with disability.

Emefa

Headmistress

Age: 48

Sex: Female

Level of education: Degree

No. of years taught: 25 years

Study Area: Accra

What is disability?

> *Disability is somebody who cannot perform well as a result of having a problem with a part of the body. That person can perform but the pace will be different from a child who is able-bodied.*

What do you think about the word disabled?

> *When I hear the word "disabled" it seems strong for me. It's like the person being labelled as ''disabled'' is not normal.*

Does your school welcome all children including children with impairments? If so, can you describe with examples how this is done?
> *Yes, we welcome all special persons. We give them placement and help them with the little resources. Some years back, these special children were isolated. So, inclusion means all children are mixed together in the school. They learn together, play together, and perform school activities together.*

What do you understand by inclusive education?

> *Inclusive education is a policy issue which we need to abide by it, and educating disabled children should be seen as a right and not a favour; they deserve to go to school like all the other children. We accept them to be part unless they may not be able to fit into the mainstream then I make them go through the process of diagnosis to prove he or she cannot fit in this school. We accept them but they go through difficulties because some of them may need extra help after the main class schedule which has not been part of our school practice. This makes it difficult for them to catch up with their non-disabled counterparts. I believe they have to be part of the class and the learning process and to move at the same pace. I believe there is the need for the government and Ghana Education Service to be clear on the practice of inclusive education to achieve success.*

How do you evaluate the current situation of inclusion of persons with special educational needs in your school?

The situation is not that bad since at least children with disabilities are able to join the mainstream to learn together. What the school needs is additional teaching materials to help. The child with disability in this school is a slow learner and it is difficult to help her. I mostly advise the class teacher to give fewer questions for testing and extra time to her.

What is the level of engagement of parents in the education of their child (ren) with disabilities? Can you give examples?

The class teacher and I invite parents for meeting on decision such as buying of extra materials like books, pencils etc to practice at home to catch up with the class and improve on their studies. The parents also help with homework given. We also have PTA meetings where we invite every parent to discuss school issues and children education in general. These meetings are held on Saturdays to allow every parent to attend due to time constraints on week days.

What are some of the major barriers children with disabilities encounter in the school?

Apart from being slow learners, we don't have the mentally retarded or visually impaired so there are no barriers in this school.

Curriculum development activities should address the participation of pupils differing in background, experience or impairments. How do you cope with such challenges in your school?

Well, all the children are taken through the same curriculum. Sometimes we take our own discretion to assist them or give them the level they can do. There is no special education for these special students as in additional learning material. We normally rely on special educators (resource persons) in the area to help but they are few so it becomes a challenge for us if we need their immediate attention.

Are you aware with the disability Act 715? How do you know about it? How do you assess its importance?

I am familiar with the Act through my colleague. The Act makes provision for education for children with disabilities in both the mainstream and special school. Again the Act makes health and employment provision for them as well. Basically it is there to protect them.

How committed is the government with the implementation of the disability law? What should happen more intensively?

It has ten years waiting period so it may be after this period that it will fully be implemented and the government will be more committed. At the moment it looks as their situation has not improved. For example most of our architectural buildings are not accessible to persons with disabilities, even this school the buildings are not accessible to children with disabilities. Fortunately the pupils we have don't have problems moving around.

To what extent has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily? What should be changed?

The policy has helped them to come to school but they are limited because there it is the same curriculum for both the able-bodied and disabled. Thus the policies bring them to school, personally I don't think all of them learn because the curriculum is difficult to twist and most teachers refuse. This is because teachers feel it will waste their time and drag the class by not meeting their target for school term. At times the special teachers help to change some few areas in the curriculum and manage it to teach them. E.g. the children with special need education in the mainstream do not have extra times during examination and the needed materials to learn. Those at the special education schools have the needed assistance and they can do better for themselves but those without the materials can't have proper education. As headmistress, I want the practice of inclusive education in the mainstream school should be assessed properly. I mean the government should develop clear operational educational policies on inclusive education for successful practice.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available? (Positive and negative aspects)

The only support I am aware of is the provision of special education teacher in the school who is supporting them with their learning limitations; I mean the resource teachers lack the additional teaching materials to work. The government is slow in responding to our request if the school needs resources to enhance work as teachers.

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

Parents with special children are not bringing their children out due to our cultural beliefs and practices. In the Ghanaian society persons with disabilities are seen as pitiful and worthless. This perception affects their opportunities in the society; those ones hiding are denied any form of education.

What are your midterm perspectives on inclusive education in the next five years?

This schools midterm objective is to see them participate in the school to achieve the policy objectives and also resources should be provided to help us achieve the aims of inclusive education.

Suggest most promising ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disability in Ghana.

There should be motivation in the form of funds set aside for their education to help provide material resources for them to go to school. There should be organization of schools to participate in exchange programs. Different curriculum should be provided to meet the learning needs of these special need persons. I suggest during examination such as Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) extra time should be allowed to children with disabilities to finish their work.

Emefa's narration brings to light, five important issues: the first is the need to give extra attention

to children with disabilities; second, there is the need for different curriculum for disable children;

third is the parents attitude to send their special children to school; fourth is parental involvement in education of their child with disability in school; fifth is the importance of a special educator as an indication of government commitment; sixth is to achieve the policy objective through the school's midterm objective.

Yaa

Headmistress

Age: 51

Sex: Female

Level of education: Degree

No. of years taught: 26 years

Study Area: New Juabeng

What is disability?

It is someone who is not able to function as all other persons.

What do you think about the word disabled?

The word disabled from my point of view should be changed or eliminate its usage. I think the word always bring negative mentality to people concerning persons with disabilities, having a disability can happened to anyone at any time however we need to understand what disability and persons with disability can do.

What do you understand by inclusive education?

Inclusive education to my understanding is the practice where all children come together and learn with their non-disabled peers irrespective of the disability. Though I said irrespective of their disabilities not all of them can or may be able to learn in the mainstream because some of them are severe and need to be sent to special schools to receive special education. Inclusive education involves a lot more than we are doing here because I think the overall system needs to change to accommodate and practice inclusion. This school welcomes and admits all pupils and students irrespective of who you are so far as you qualify and your disability is not severe.

Does your school welcome all children including children with impairments? If so, can you describe with examples how this is done?

It is a policy to get all the children in school and no child should be left out, so we welcome them. If they come we put them in a class based on their level to learn with their peers. Mostly before we admit them we make them go through assessment first to find out whether they can be placed in the mainstream. Those with the severe disabilities we refer them to the special school but some parents are reluctant to take them for fear of stigmatization.

How do you evaluate the current situation of inclusion of persons with special educational needs in your school?

To give a detail evaluation, I will say, we are not ready for inclusion; we lack many resources to practice inclusion. For example, the school environment regarding the buildings is not the best for inclusive education the worst of it is lack of teaching learning material (TLM). In fact I wish only children with very mild disabilities will be placed in this school which require no additional or special resources to teach them. I find it very hard to understand if the education is beneficial to them because they lack materials to learn and the school environment is not favourable which needs to be modified a bit to accommodate them.

What is the level of engagement of parents in the education of their child (ren) with disabilities? Can you give examples?

Parental involvement is relative in that they have activities that they get involved in concerning their children with disabilities' education. Most of them attend PTA meetings which are usually held on Saturdays as a result of the time flexibility, but generally most of the parents don't come to our invitation so we go ahead and take decision for them. The school becomes a dumping place for them to leave their child with disabilities and concentrate on their work and other domestic issues. Most of the children (both child with disabilities and child without disabilities) you see here come from single parenting home so parents spend most of their time looking for money to take of their needs. Also, majority of the children's parents in this school are low income earners and they prefer to spend most of their time working to make money.

What are some of the major barriers children with disabilities encounter in the school?

I mentioned earlier that TLMs to the children with disabilities is not available. Also, the curriculum has already been prepared however it's difficult to modify it but I know some teachers try to modify it to help meet the educational needs of the pupil with disability. On the other hand at times we cannot help it than to go ahead because we have to meet our targets with respect to the curricular. At the moment the child with disability in this school is a partial visually impaired pupil and I think braille could help her.

Curriculum development activities should address the participation of pupils differing in background, experience or impairments. How do you cope with such challenges in your school?

Yes it should but it does not because if we should have a child with intellectually challenge, the school will need to have other teaching and learning material to help him or her

understand what is done in the classroom. In fact this particular girl we have needs aids to learn even though she wears glasses the report I have from the teacher shows that we may have to provide braille for her to learn.

Are you aware / familiar with the disability Act 715? How did you get to know about it? How do you assess its importance?

I heard it on the radio during a political talk show. Unfortunately, I don't know the details so I can't say much about it but I am sure it helps persons with disability in the country.

To what extent has educational policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily? What should be changed?

The policy has helped to some extent because it has brought most children with disabilities into school and due to the free compulsory basic educational policy we are tied down to accept them in the school without any choice. This is because if you try to refuse a parent admission, it could go against us headmistress and it is seen as not abiding by the education regulations even though we lack the resources to teach them. As for change a lot needs to be done because we can't practice inclusive education without the necessary adjustment in the educational system. The current mainstream school system must change to suit the practice of education and to help respond to the educational needs of children with disabilities.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available? (Positive and negative aspects)

The government is doing its best to pursue inclusive education but there are limitations due to factors such as lack of resources, facilities, teachers' views of educating these children, funding and many more. The policy is general for all children including children with disabilities but there are not specifics. Programs I will say may be the attachment of resource teachers to the school.

How committed is the government with the implementation of the disability law? What should happen more intensively?

Government's dedication towards implementation of the disability law I cannot say much about it because I know it is still in its testing or waiting period till the tenth year of its passage where there will be full implementation. But I can say when it comes to inclusive education the government is helping with the provision of resource teachers to assist with special education needs in almost all the schools. The law was passed to help persons with disabilities; I think it should be able to meet their needs and protect them from any form of discrimination in the society in which they live.

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

Cultural beliefs in Ghana play a very important role for persons with disabilities. Almost all the ethnic groups have their beliefs concerning persons with disabilities. Some believe

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that they are reincarnated human beings whiles others believe that they are punishment to their parents as a result of sins committed. These beliefs could deny them education but these beliefs are changing but at a slow rate.

What are your midterm perspectives on inclusive education in the next five years?

One of my midterm objective as a headmistress is to try to educate as much persons with disability as possible through sensitisation and to lobby non-governmental organisations to help with TLMs for these children.

Suggest most promising ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disability in Ghana.

I suggest there should be more government involvement by providing the resources needed to practice inclusive education and sensitisation should be high in the societies to disabuse the negative perception of people's mind about persons with disabilities. I think because of these negative ideas children with disabilities some of them are not coming to school.

Yaa's accounts portray that the word disability brings negative feelings amongst people and her view on disability brings to the understanding that disability is a natural and artificial occurrence and it can happen to anyone at any time. Secondly, her school welcomes all people and inclusive education is all about mixing both the disabled and non-disabled children to learn and benefit from education in regular classroom. The third theme emanating from this account is the current situation of inclusive education which she said the circumstance is not too ripped for inclusion due to lack of resources, facilities and attitudes towards educating children with disabilities in our society. Also discussing curriculum, modifying the curriculum to meet the needs of children with disabilities in the class room has been a problem since it has already been prepared. Parental involvement is rated low since more attention is given to work for their survival. Deducing from her account issues of policy and government commitment looked gloomy, since policies enacted are not doing enough to meet the education needs of children with disabilities. Also, resource persons attached to schools are doing their best but are not able to execute their jobs effectively due to limitations of tools to work. As a result of lack of resources and attitudinal change, the midterm objective of the school is to sensitize people on educating children with disabilities and

soliciting help from Non-Governmental Organisations. Lastly, she suggested that government should be more helpful by providing the education needs of these groups of children to make inclusive education effective.

RESOURCE PERSONS

Dela

Resource Person

Age: 38

Education level: Degree

Study Area: New Juabeng

What is disability?

> *Disability is one who is incapable of doing something or activity that all normal persons do.*

What do you think about the word disabled?

> *The word disabled is too 'strong', for me as special educator because if you are labeled like that it means you are not normal. Personally as a special educator I hope to see that word fade out one day.*

What is inclusive education and what are your concerns regarding the practice of Inclusive education in schools in this area?

> *Inclusion education is all about bringing about the marginalised especially children with disabilities to join the children without disabilities in the mainstream school. My concern is that more resource teachers should be sent to the schools because teachers are handling over 5000 pupils in each school and this makes our work ineffective. There is practically nothing; there are no materials to do the work. I remember the last time I requested for a portable audio meter to test the ear, there is only one in the whole Ghana. Schools that we are attached to, the heads are not helping us. No, they don't because the curriculum is normally done with the non-disabled in mind.*

How does the teachers' education curriculum encourage development of inclusive education?

> *Teacher education curriculum encourages inclusive education since there is a component of special education. In the university, it is an area of specialisation but in the teacher training it is just an aspect of a course so it is not detailed. The problem is that most teachers after training don't come back to the classroom to help.*

In your perspective what are the main barriers to accessibility to inclusive education?

> *The barriers encountered in schools are many and the schools don't have what it takes to help and giving individual attention is difficult due to large class size. Apart from these barriers, we, the resource persons, are attached to different schools and access to transportation fees to visit the various schools is a problem which makes the practice of*

inclusion very difficult; there is practically nothing to do the work with as resource teacher. Parents are not supportive at all; when we identify these children and ask the families to take them to the hospital they don't and also other children are truant and we have to chase them to their homes at our expense. The parents of these children are also another problem we have to tackle; they don't care about these children when they finally get admission for them. Some of them when they managed to come to the school they make you aware they have to look for money to be able to take care of them since they don't have support. It is only a few of them that we get to discuss their children's needs with them and it's frustrating at times.

How do you assess the available financial resources for inclusive education and what financial resources would you regard as necessary for inclusive education in your district? And where would you set priorities?

There, I haven't seen any budget specifically for inclusive education; money allocated is for general education in the district. We are asked to use part of the money for running the general education in the district to provide the needs of the school and children with disabilities learning needs for inclusive education. Unfortunately, the money for even running the general education is not enough to use part. So head teachers don't use it and resource teachers have to use their own money to help. Inclusive education can be affordable if sufficient grants are available to support; in fact, one of our main problem is finance.

What kind of support services and resources are available to schools in this area included in the school?

There is provision of special educators in the various schools to help classroom teachers cope with the challenge of teaching a child with disability and also to help the child with disabilities to understand the lessons and learn.

What are some of the cultural beliefs in Ghana which influence the perception of disability?

Cultural beliefs influence a lot, because a parent who gives birth to a disabled child is assumed to have done wrong to the gods and she is being punished. So, most parents hide them. The problem is that there is not enough awareness or education to disabuse these perceptions; some even believe they are spirits or gods and don't want to do anything with them.

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

These beliefs as I said make the parents leave them to their faith so they don't get any form of education as a result of these beliefs. When a child is identified in the community and you ask why she is not going to school they tell you they don't have money to take him or her to school. But the other siblings who are not disabled will benefit more if they take them to school than their disabled sibling.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of laws, policies and programs available?

> *I heard the government gives money to support the visually impaired after registering with the government, but it is limited to only the visually, hearing, and the deaf. The government is more or less supporting the blind by providing them with Braille. The support is not enough.*

What are some of the challenges implementing the disability law?

> *I believe most people don't know about the law and there should be awareness creation and also the ten years moratorium is too much for the law to be taking full implementation. Also I think the government doesn't want to add burden to the already existing ones. They need support to have full implementation*

How do you think these challenges can be reduced or eliminated?
> *Government should be committed by voting funds to help put the ACT into practice.*

What are your midterm perspectives on inclusive education in the next five years?

> *The midterm objectives is to make more funds available as well as more trained special educators since one person cannot take care of six schools alone. Also to get government and benevolent organizations to help with the provision of more material needed to teach and learn should be provided.*

Six issues can be deduced from Dela's account: inadequate resources to help special education need children; too much work load on resource teachers since one is assigned to six schools; lack of co-operation from parents in helping their special education children; negative influence of cultural beliefs on the education of special children; and the low awareness of disability laws.

Elizabeth
Resource Person
Age: 35
Education level: Degree
Study Area: New Juabeng

What is disability?

> *Disability is when someone is incapable of doing something or activity that all normal persons do.*

What do you think about the word disabled?

The word disabled is negatively used in this country because it is seen as impure and abnormal. If you are labeled like that it means you are not fit to live amongst those who are not disabled and denied all opportunities in the society. I believe the word should be replaced with another word or should not be used again.

What is inclusive education and what are your concerns regarding the practice of Inclusive education in schools in this area?

Inclusive education concerns the acceptance of all children in the mainstream school. Inclusive education is mainly to help the excluded to come to school and also to add the persons with disability to those without disability to learn. All the schools I assist welcome all children including children with disabilities. In fact, this I view the concept of inclusive as a human right issue because it gives rights to all children to attend school irrespective of their background. It means serving all children in the mainstream schools. The situation of the inclusive education, in general, needs to be reviewed to help in the practice to be effective and efficient to benefit all children not only children with disabilities. Inclusive education is a brilliant idea but needs a change in the education system to take full force. The practice of inclusive education in Ghana, I will say, helps break the poverty these people face because as the saying goes "education empowers economically"; that is, when you go to school you are able to get good jobs to do and earn some income. I believe educating every child is good but the government should improve on the provision of resources to help them in school.

In your perspective what are some of the barriers to accessibility to inclusive education?

As a special educator, I see a lot of barriers being encountered in the practice of inclusive education in Ghana. Some of which include lack of parental involvement. Indeed it is difficult to get parents in the schools to discuss issues of their child's learning needs. The curriculum is very inflexible to modify and the regular teachers are not ready to change it to suit all categories of children in the classroom. They claim the education institution as a body has set targets for them to which it is a requirement for their promotion at work; however, they have to meet their targets for the school term.

What kind of support services and resources are available to schools in this area practicing disability?

The service available is the provision of special teachers attached to the schools to help mainstream classroom teachers with all the problems of teaching children with disabilities in the class. There is also regular eye screening for all the children to identify those with difficulty to give early assistance.

How does the teachers' education curriculum encourage development of inclusive education?

Yes it does because we have a course on special education in our university education as well as the teacher training schools. It is more detailed at the university for those of us that studied special education program.

How do you assess the available financial resources for inclusive education and what financial resources would you regard as necessary for inclusive education in your district? And where would you set priorities?

In fact there is no budget for practicing inclusive education; the district is asked to use part of the capitation grant to meet the needs of running inclusive education. It has been difficult for the district and head teachers to do that because the money allocated is not enough. Well, to set priorities is to get money to run the program, because most times as a resource teacher I have to use my own money to go round the schools in the district to help.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of laws, policies and programs available?

In terms of laws, we have the disability laws where sections are given for meeting the needs of children with disabilities. Also, we have various educational policies for all children including children with disabilities. There are eyes screening programs for them.

What are the main challenges implementing the disability law?
Government's commitment to implement the law is not too clear because 6 years of passage of the law much improvement has not been realized.

How do you think these challenges can be reduced or eliminated?

On the whole, the government is not doing too badly; it needs to do more by practicing what is on paper. I'm thinking funding is the major problem because well laid measures needs to be put to put the law into practice.

What are some of the cultural beliefs in Ghana which influence the perception of disability?

Children with disabilities are seen as little gods who need to be worshipped or children who are born as a result of punishment to their parents. Because of this some of them are killed or hidden away from the society.

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

These cultural beliefs are very important in educating children with disabilities because they have the belief they are not humans to live and participate in society preventing them from taking them to school.

What are your midterm perspectives on inclusive education in 5 years?

In the midterm, as a special educator, all special education need children should have at least the basic education and I suggest that government should do well to support inclusive education practice by helping with the provision of human resource, educational resource, and enough funding to enhance the practice of inclusive education. Culturally, I suggest there should be more education in our various localities to sensitize people on issues of disabilities to have more change of attitude. Teachers should improve on their services rendered to children with disabilities in their classroom. The law should be made known to all because I think most people have not heard about it.

Elizabeth's narration brings out issues such as the impure and wrong usage of the word disabled; inclusive education as human right concept and being the right of children; emphasis on the numerous barriers blocking the practice of inclusive education, such as inflexible curriculum; lack of parental involvement and many more. Again issues of inadequate government support and all children having basic education at least was drawn from this account. Lastly, there are suggestions such as awareness creation in our society should be encouraged to reduce the cultural perceptions of persons with disabilities in general.

Name: Martey

Education officer

Study Area: Accra

What is disability?

Disability is any impairment that does not allow the full functioning of the individual and needs aid to function properly; for example, if an individual is not hearing and needs a hearing aid to function fully in his or her activities.

What do you think about the word disabled?

In the lay man's view the word disabled means someone with a problem and one starts to think it's spiritual punishment in our society. May be we should stop using the word.

What is inclusive education and what are your concerns regarding the practice of Inclusive education in schools in this area?

Inclusive is bringing all children especially the marginalised one to join their friends in school. When people talk of inclusive education they feel it is only children with disabilities but every child who has been excluded from education; I believe the stress is on the child with disability because they are the worst among the excluded group in the society. My concerns about inclusive education in this area is a programme that is creating awareness in schools and the communities as a whole to reduce the negative attitudes towards issues of disabilities. We attach importance to learning disabilities and I believe there has been improvement through support we give to them in class. In fact some teachers go to the extent of adjusting curriculum to suit the level of the child. Bringing children with disabilities to join those who are not disabled proves to the community in which they live in that we are all one people and attitudes can change towards them.

What kind of support services and resources are available to schools in this area included in the school?

There are special education teachers attached to the various schools in the district to help the class room teachers. These teachers are also called resource persons; they go around the schools in the district to children with disabilities with their learning needs.

How does the teacher education curriculum encourage development of inclusive education?

In teacher education, there is a component of special education; however, I believe every teacher should be able to handle the learning needs of a child and to motivate them to come to school. I will say for university education the course under study is special education so teachers who decide to go and specialise have full course on special education. I think if such teachers are put in regular classroom they can help with the development of inclusive

education. I will say the curriculum yes it motivates them to come to school because in schools where resource persons operate they adjust the curriculum with the help of the regular class teacher. For instance, some resource persons take it upon themselves to get materials and organise extra classes for the child to catch up with the other pupils in the class.

In your perspective, what are the main barriers to accessibility to inclusive education?

There are a lot of barriers which need to be given critical look and some of them are awareness creation on the part of the parents to be part of their children's education; finance, that is resource teachers find it difficult to rotate the schools because budget for transportation normally don't come; Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs) are unavailable for these groups of children because some of them may need extra material to learn. The other problem too is that monies for the disabled children education are part of the District Assembly disability common fund and it is difficult to get it to the schools. They rather share it among the persons with disabilities in the districts without bringing the share of the disabled education fund to the schools. I believe they do it to solicit for votes, political attachment.

What financial resources would you regard as necessary for inclusive education in your area? And where would you set priorities?

In fact talking about financial resources for inclusive education, I will say it is one of the major key challenges to practice inclusive education in the district and the entire country. There is no specific budget for inclusive education; the funds are given out for basic education in general which is not even enough to have excess to help provide the needs of children with disabilities. In the District Assembly Common Fund, inclusive is 2% disability fund for persons with disabilities in the district; unfortunately, we don't get some for the children in schools. They share it amongst those who are not in school. My priority is to get financial support to help with the practice of inclusive education in the district. Also additional learning material for children with disabilities should be made available to help them because the current curriculum is not flexible for them to follow. I think coming to school without achieving learning due to rigid curriculum is time wasting.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of laws, policies and programs available?

The government supports with the laws, policies but it seems they concentrate more on those on the street than those in the school. Also the policy makers recognised more of special education than inclusion. In fact the policies need to be practiced properly if children with disabilities are to benefit from inclusive education.

What are the main challenges implementing the disability law?

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I see there will be problem with implementation because the law makers don't see that the disabled can perform like any other human being. Also readjusting facilities, amenities and policies to suit the problem is actually a big hurdle.

All the challenges I have said them but the major one is the 10 years moratorium which is delaying the full implementation of the law. Till the remaining next three years is over for its implementation we will face these problems of denying persons with disabilities their rights and even if the ten years past what is the guarantee the challenges will be reduced or eliminated.

How do you think these challenges can be reduced or eliminated?

Curbing these challenges, we need a practising policy to help regulate activities of persons with disabilities in general.

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

Personally, I believe culturally our beliefs affect or influence educating persons with disabilities. This is because our perceptions and attitudes prevent children with disabilities to go to school; they aren't regarded as "normal" leading to neglect. Teachers, administrative staff, children and other teaching staff carry their attitudes from the society to the schools, discouraging them from benefiting from schooling.

What are your midterm perspectives on inclusive education in five years?

The district office and the various schools in the district plan to get children with disabilities and other children who have not been to school before to get access by 2015 stipulated by the policy.

The above account indicates very important issues to the study. Firstly, it brought out the issue of spirituality attached to the word disabled which is very serious to their progress; secondly, the benefit of inclusive education which is serving as awareness creation to the local people; the third is the adjustment of the school curriculum to meet the educational needs to encourage them to come to school. The other issues noted stressed on the barriers to inclusive education and the challenges of implementing the disability law and the role of the government in disability issues. Lastly, another challenge to the practice of inclusive education that emerged from this case is the role of cultural beliefs, funding, unavailability of resources, and low participation of government.

Morro

Education officer

Study Area: Koforidua

What is disability?

> *Disability is a person having limitation which may need assistance for him or her to be able do an activity or daily task*

What do you think about the word disabled?

> *In Ghana the word disabled is negative due to our cultural beliefs and practice. Literally translated in the various Ghanaian languages it means a sick person.*

What is inclusive education and what are your concerns regarding the practice of Inclusive education in schools in this area?

> *Inclusive education is basically educating all children in the mainstream school not regarding their background especially, trying to bring the children with disabilities and children without disabilities together. Actually due to the cultural beliefs they think they should be outcasts. A lot of people don't understand what inclusive education means even at times including the teachers. What we often do is to organise sensitisation workshop for the teachers and at times the community members to educate them on the issue of disabilities. This has actually helped with the practice of inclusive education in this area. Apart from the educational workshop, we had philanthropists to support with some resources to keep the program running and to get the children with disabilities in school. They gave support in the form of provision of wheel chairs for the disabled children who cannot walk to school; trained resource teachers and provide some few TLMs to the schools. To a large extent, I can say inclusive education is not doing too badly and we hope to improve it for better. Inclusive education I think is good especially for children with disabilities who have not been to school before, it will make them join their friends who are not disabled, and it will create understanding between them and they will grow with it to change their inherent attitudes towards them.*

How does the teacher education curriculum encourage development of inclusive education?

> *It does to some extent because there are special education subjects which every teacher who passes through teacher training institution studies. Every teacher has an idea of engaging a child with disabilities in their classroom. In fact there are special educators also attached to the schools to help with the development and practice. Also in the university there is a full program for inclusive education.*

How do you assess the available financial resources for inclusive education? What financial resources would you regard as necessary for inclusive education in your district? And where would you set priorities?

Essentially, there is no specific funding but monies are given for education and we are expected to use it to run the system. The children with disabilities in the mainstream normally we fall on benevolent organisations to help them with their educational needs because government's funding is limited. I think there should not be any prioritising in funding for inclusive education because everything about inclusive is very important with my experience as an educator. So the right measures should be put in place for proper budget allocation and fund management for full implementation and practice.

In your perspective, what are the main barriers to accessibility to inclusive education?

In fact the barriers to inclusive education are numerous. First, some of the school environments are not disability friendly, that is, there are a lot of barriers in the schools; for instance, building design which do not help the child with disability. Secondly, funds for the disabled education don't get to the schools, it sits in the District Assembly and they disburse it in discriminatorily, TLMs are unavailable, lack of facilities and the worst of it all is the negative attitudes which hinder improvement. My concerns regarding curriculum is that it looked too rigid for children with disabilities; it is actually meant for the children without disabilities, and it is not disability friendly. Resource teachers have to go round and improvise similar curriculum to be able to teach the disabled child.

What kind of support services and resources are available to schools in this area included in the school?

The provision of expert attached to the school, resource centres to examine students with disabilities, and free eye screening for children to help identify those with visual challenges.

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

Culturally, disabled people are seen as curse on the family, especially there is the belief that some subsequent generations are cursed or punished for the misdeeds of their ancestors. Parents' sins are visited upon the children and that is the result of a disability. These beliefs in fact have effect on how these children are received in the society; thus, they see them as bad omen and they are left to their faith to struggle for survival. This denies them the privileges all children are enjoying including education.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of laws, policies and programs available?

The government has put in effort in the form of policies such as the passage of the disability Act, education strategic plan, and special educational need, 1992 constitution, FCUBE and many more. Most of these policies are on paper and are not being practised or not working.

What are the main challenges implementing the disability Act?

The challenge is that it has been in existence for about 6 years now and nothing much has been done to change the existing system to suit their situation. I think the challenges will be more when trying to have full implementation.

How do you think these challenges can be reduced or eliminated?

The government and other stake holders must be committed to help put the law into full practice by the 10 years moratorium.

What are your midterm perspectives on inclusive education in the next five years?

The midterm objective of the district for inclusive education is to create more awareness on disability issues through all means to change people attitudes towards them and have children with disabilities educated in the mainstream school.

Varied themes were noted from Morro's responses. First, there was strong spiritual attachment to the word disable in Ghana. Secondly, there has been awareness creation through workshop and support from Philanthropist; the third is the rigidity of the school curriculum which does not help inclusive education; the fourth is the revisit of cultural influence on education, bringing out the beliefs attached to having exceptional children in the society. Thus the birth of a child with a disability is seen as a curse from the sins of an ancestor which makes society look down upon them affecting their privileges. In addition, there are education policies which benefit all children but unfortunately most of them are not put into practice. Also, government support to the practice of inclusive education is minimal and needs to be improved; further, the challenge of implementing the disability act as a result of the ten years delay of the law; Finally, sensitisation on disability issues to change attitude is the main midterm objective of the district which they believe will pave way for children with disabilities to go to school.

OFFICER FROM DISABILITY INSTITUTION

Sex: Male

What is disability?

It is a human diversity or challenge; that is, the loss of any part of the body which an individual may need assistance to be able to perform an activity.

What do you think about the word disabled?

In Ghana, we have misconception about the word and it limits our understanding of the word as a result we don't even know the causes of disability. In Ghana, they attach negative thoughts due to our cultural beliefs. Our local language is a problem when trying to interpret the word. For example, the word means a sick person and they are being treated as such.

What do you understand by inclusive education?

It is when all children have access to education irrespective of their background and location. Whether that child has a disability or not, they access education in the same environment. This helps them to learn together, understand each other, and live together. Inclusive education I think is one of the best ideas that have come to help children with disabilities.

How do you assess the importance of the disability Act 715? How did you come to know of the Disability Act 715?

It is a good move to help persons with disabilities in the country to help them also participant in the society. So far I will say I have not seen much being done after the passage as the result of the 10 years moratarium. It is sad and frustrating that 6 years into the passage of the Act the government has not found it important to implement the law. Now the government cannot hold any service provider responsible for inaccessible facility and also denial of employment. The 10 years moratarium is just unreasonable, we have gone back and forth but no results so we have to wait for 10 years. The Federation of disability is the key stake holder in the passage of the Disability Act. The Act is there to promote the welfare of persons with disabilities and violation can be sanctioned.

What do you think about the disability policy and to what extent has it been supportive for children with disabilities to access inclusive education?

It has actually made these children to have access to education but the complaint is that it has limitation with regards to the lack of material resources and other resources. Also we have other education policies that made schooling free and compulsory for all children as a result no school rejects a child with disabilities admission.

How do you assess the legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

There is legal protection for them but unfortunately the protection they receive is inadequate and most of their rights as citizens are being violated. Even the law, it's supposed to promote and protect their wellbeing but it is still not being implemented.

How effective is the national legislation in making education accessible to children with disabilities? Which aspects should be developed further with priority?

Due to the various education policies and Disability Act, no child is rejected in school; it gives place in the school for children with disabilities to be part of regular school and have the same education with their peers without disabilities. The challenges that will impede their progress should be removed; for instance, the provision of the necessary things they will need to be in school must be prioritized.

How do you evaluate the current situation of meeting the educational needs of persons with disabilities in Ghana? (Strengths and weaknesses)

It is woefully inadequate; the schools that existed already are not accessible to children in terms of unavailability of resources, inaccessible facilities, and lack of funding to make it the practice of inclusive education successful. Despite that, Children in mainstream schools are provided with special education teachers and also there are free assessment centres for them to be assessed.

How do you assess the provision of funding from the government for promoting the concept of inclusion in school?

Education in general is poorly funded and I have not seen any policy for funding specifically for inclusive education. There is the need to have specific policy for inclusive education funding if it should be successful in Ghana.

How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of persons with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?

The disability law is there to promote and protect their well-being. There are general policies which cover persons with disabilities. An example is the Education Strategic plan which stipulates to get all children into school by 2015 and inclusive are children with disabilities. Again, there are vocational training centers for persons with disabilities to learn trade.

How committed is the government with the implementation of the disability law? (negative and positive)

No commitment so far because 6 years of passage of the disability Act there has not been modification to public buildings, health care provision and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Also, I think the 10 years moratorium was just too much to have full implementation.

How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

> *It is one of the problems when it comes to the issues of disability; culturally persons with disabilities are completely rejected by some ethnic groups whiles others see them as burden on the family. They are not regarded and respected in the society but those that are seen as gods who are worshipped and revered in the family. These perceptions affect the care given to them by families and services provided to them by the society. Most families for fear of stigma hide their child with disability from societal view. Hiding them prevent them from going to school.*

What are your midterm perspectives on inclusive education in the next five years?

> *Our midterm objective is to lobby the government to implement the law with proper measures put in place to meet the needs of persons with disabilities in this country.*

Suggest ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disability in Ghana.

> *I suggest all school environment should be made accessible that is physical accessibility (classroom, washroom, school environment etc). Again, material and human resources should also be made available; there should be accessibility to information, eradication of negative attitudes, and comprehensive inclusive education policy.*

The issues that came out from this interview are as follows: first, disability is seen as human diversity and in Ghana it is misconceived attached with negative cultural beliefs; second, inclusive education is laudable because it enhances understanding, togetherness and acceptance of persons with disabilities in the society; third, the law and education policy is doing well in getting children with disabilities in school but has limitations with regards to resources; fourth, the delay of the disability law into full implementation; fifth, cultural beliefs seen as one of main problems of persons with disabilities in Ghana, which prevent them opportunities and participation in the society.

From the 19 narrations above, seven broad issues emerge as characterising the experiences of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. These are: Acceptance in school and academic progression; lack of resources and attention to educational needs of Special children; attitude

towards children with disabilities; the involvement of parents; perceptions of the effects of cultural beliefs on the education of children with disabilities; low knowledge of disability and disability laws and lastly, the expectations from government. In discussing the emerging issues in the next section, narrations of the other respondents/interviewees were used where relevant to illustrate further the experiences of children with disabilities.

4.5.1: Discussions emerging from qualitative analysis

Acceptance in school and academic progression

Children with disabilities are entitled to education therefore they are being accepted in the regular school to join their non-disabled peers to learn together. Though some special needs education children could not tell whether they were welcome in the schools or not, accounts of teachers indicated that special education needs children are accepted unless their disabilities has been assessed and diagnosed by Ghana Health Service which requires the child attending a more specialized school.

Special education needs children recounted how they have acquired some skills of everyday living as well as some writing and reading from their various schools which they felt is to some extent helping now and also in the future. Others, on the other hand, were sceptical if the education they are receiving could help them progress on the academic ladder. Most special children however had difficulty understanding what they were taught without further help, affecting their academic performance. Most of them indicated they had been repeated before and in some cases, more than once. A few however said they had never been repeated. For some of those who had never been repeated it was not because they were doing well in class but for some their teachers felt they should also move with their peers or their parents resisted them being

repeated. There were indications by small number of special education needs children that they had been threatened before by their teachers to sit up in class or be withdrawn from the school.

Almost all of the children with disabilities interviewed indicated they were anxious and did not feel adequately prepared to move on to the next level or class even though in the quantitative result it proved that some of them said contrary. A student laid the blame of not being prepared to progress at the door step of his teachers: *I don't think the teachers prepare us adequately to meet the next class*.

Lack of resources and attention to educational needs of Special child

Although the inclusive education has been accepted and being practiced in most regular schools, most regular schools are not adequately resourced to accommodate the special education needs child. Regular pupils have their own concerns that have not been fully met such as the provision of study desks, text books, pencils, chalk and material for teachers and many more. Also, some schools are not easily accessible for children in wheel chairs. For instance, the desks are shared by two children but no provision is made for a child with a wheel chair. Such a child will not be comfortable in the wheel chair sharing one table with a colleague. Only one child in a wheel chair recounted being given a special table in school to use. Moreover, those who use assistive device found the classroom to be too small to move around easily.

There are also inadequate resource teachers to attend to the special needs of these children. In some areas, you will find only one resource teacher with the huge responsibility of attending to the disabled children in as many as six schools in some cases. This makes the movement between schools a difficult task for them. Also, their visits to schools to check on and help special education needs children are irregular. Thus children with disability have to contend with the situation as it is until a resource teacher comes around to assist. In schools where they are fortunate to have one

resource teacher assigned to that school, the resource teacher is seen as a nuisance in the school. Consequently, there is no cooperation and support from the school to motivate him or her to work efficiently.

The lack of training by regular teachers on the issues of disability and how to handle special education needs children meant that no extra tutorials were organised for these groups of children. In schools where extra classes are offered, it is organised for both special and regular pupil/students without taking due recognition to needs of the child with disability. These extra classes are organised in the schools to help that particular class catch up with the school term curriculum and syllabus and to prepare them adequately for external examination. A resource person for instance felt that regular teachers should be given some sort of training in special education so that they can help them a little more than they are currently doing.

Attitude towards children with disabilities

The narrations indicated that teachers were generally patient with disabled children and the children were generally satisfied with the attitude of the teachers towards them socially. Some went out of their way to further explain areas or lessons that the child was having difficulty in understanding and to ask of the child's wellbeing. The favourable attitude of some teachers to special children made them mention their names as their favourite teachers. The children reported that these teachers "will go the extra mile for them without hesitation". Some children with learning needs had this to say:

> *I always understand what I am taught at school because my madam is a good teacher. She always asked me if I understand what she teaches me. My madam always has patience for me in class. She sometimes even asks of me when she notices am not in class. I really like her (A child with learning needs).*

> *Teachers work hard for we disabled people to feel comfortable in class. They accept and talk to us sometimes to know what is wrong with us. Mr. Baidoo normally asks me if I feel okay or alright every time I come to school (A child with learning needs).*

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My madam always uses simple English and jokes to make me understand everything I learn. Madam always listens to me and also has patience in repeating whatever I didn't hear (A child with learning needs).

Teachers' account of the attention they give to children with disabilities also confirms what the children recounted in their interviews about some of their teachers. A teacher said:

When I give exercise to the class children, I evaluate those with special needs by giving them less questions for testing. Also, I make sure that I give extra time to children with special needs (Teacher, Koforidua).

While some teachers were patient and accommodating of special children's difficulties, others showed impatience and were sometimes mean to the children by choosing to ignore their presence so that they do not pull the class back. This was as a result of their inability to grasp what is being taught as easily as the other children. Regular teachers are not well informed or educated on issues of disability making it difficult for them to cope with the special education needs of such children.

A child with disability noted:

Normally, the Maths teacher will write very well for me to see, but my English teacher writes small so I can't really see from the board. So she always tells me to open my eyes to see. But if I don't she will cane me (A child with learning needs).

Sometimes, my teachers get angry with me when I ask questions and also when I ask them to repeat whatever they said again (A special learning need child).

My teachers don't mind me, they always leave me out of the class because they don't ask me to answer or ask questions in class.

This would explain why special children usually refrained from asking questions or actively participating in class activities. They feel that whatever they have to say or contribute will be considered *"stupid"*.

Despite the attitude of some teachers, their class mates or peers seem to have the most influence on special children. Most special children understand what their peers explain to them regarding the teacher's lesson than understanding directly from the teacher. They served as escorts and

teaching assistants to special children so they can move around the school easily and feel comfortable. Two of the children recounted:

> *My friends also motivate me to come to school because they accept me really well (A special learning need child).*

> *My mates do help me in class; they help in writing my notes for me, and also they explain some topics I don't understand in class for me. This is because I sometimes get tired when I write too much. My friends play with me all the time. Sometimes, they even look for me when it's time to play. I have never experienced any rejection from my friends or classmates because I am always ready to do anything even if am not asked to do it (Anthony, special learning child).*

On the other hand, children with disabilities were also however often the target for teasing and bullying by their peers. This makes it difficult for them to fully associate themselves with their peers. While some help them in one way or the other, most of their peers ridicule them and make them uncomfortable and sad. They were not involved by their peers in their talks and play. A child with learning needs narrated:

> *Some of my classmates sometimes worry me very much. Some even insult me and I don't say anything to them. They also bother me with lots of questions but I also don't like talking. Some of the students laugh at me because of the way I walk. However, some of them play with me. Other times, when I take my work to them for assistance they sack me and tell me to go away because they won't help me (Emmet, special learning needs child).*

> *My friends sometimes laugh and tease me because I can't see. This makes me feel sorry....They have been throwing things at me because I can't see them (Isaiah, special learning needs child)*

> *My friends sometimes play with me; others also sack me and tease me around. Also some call me names like ''akek3duro'' that is ginger. Some of my friends are rude to me in class and do not want me near them (special learning needs child).*

A teacher's account confirmed the narrations of most special learning needs children:

> "*The other children mock at them because they believe that they are not sensible, and again they believe they are not mature to be amongst the normal human beings*".

These attitudes one child reflected made him feel '*'lonely*". Some teachers also recounted that special children were usually reserved and kept to themselves even during play times.

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One child narration also showed that treatment of special children was worse for those with intellectual difficulties than those who are physically deformed but can reason on the level of regular pupils/students. Special children usually perceived this negative attitude to be as a result of their disability. In response to all these frustrations that they experience, one special child suggested that:

> *The disabled person should not come to school and also I have no idea about how they can be achievers.*

The involvement of parents

Parents were provided opportunities to get involved mostly by the schools to help their children cope in the mainstream school. The schools interviewed involve parents by inviting them for Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A) meetings and sometimes for specific reasons such as the academic performance, the need to repeat the child, or the provision of their learning needs and disciplinary measures. This is what a teacher said:

> *Yes, we involve parents in the education of their children. For example, if a child is not doing well we call the parents to tell them we want to repeat your child, because he cannot pick up in class (Teacher)*

One parent recounted how he is involved in his child's education in a regular school:

> *Yes, I am involved in my child's education. Sometimes the teachers call me and give me some of the syllabus so that I can assist him with school work at home. I am made to check constantly his homework so that he can practise. Also at the end of the every term, I am invited to the school to go through his exercise books so that I can look for his weak areas to assist him.*

While some parents actively participated in the care of their children in the school, others did not make themselves available because of their work. Commenting on the attitude of parent's, Nkrumah a teacher complained that:

> *We hold PTAs and call on the parents to come and assist in their education, some never show up….Parents don't care about their children with special needs. They just dump them in the schools and attend to their private businesses.*

Another teacher confirmed the lack of involvement of some parents by saying that,

"Parents do not get involved themselves in the education of their children. We invited the father of one of the disabled child many times but he never showed" (A teacher).

A parent confessed that she tried to go to the school to check on her child once in a while because she was a trader and did not have time so could not do it on a regular basis. This one teacher confirmed affected how the children were treated since even their parents did not take them seriously. Much of the suggestions given by children to government involved the government helping their parents to either secure jobs or loans so that they can take care of them, giving an indication of parental poverty which can be said to be a factor of non-involvement by some parents

Perceptions of the effects of cultural beliefs on the education of children with disability

From the data presented, disability was perceived in three ways: first as a punishment from the gods on the parents; second, the children are seen as gods who have visited the earth for a short while, and third as children who were requested from the gods by the parents even though few respondents perceived it a medical problem without attaching spiritual perceptions. The way people perceived disability was from their own thinking probably as a result of the traditions that have been passed down or what they have heard people say. This is what some parents said:

> *At first, people have the perceptions that children with disabilities were gods but with this new trend of educating the children now they are getting off the systems of exclusion (Parent).*

> *People say they are gifts for parents who have child bearing problems and went to a fetish priest to receive help. Also, people think they are cursed (Parent)*

Referring to one parent's account from the narratives it confirms the belief in spiritual causation of disability, where she was told by her friends that someone she fought cursed her child and that is why she gave birth to a disabled child. As a result of these perceptions, some parents are not willing to bring their children with such conditions out to be seen and possibly made fun of or

shunned by the society. Families saw their disability as a disgrace to the family. One teacher complained that:

> *The parents are not responsible and don't care about the welfare of their wards. I believe they don't even want people to know that these children are for them.*

This some respondents recounted affected their education since some parents will not send the children to school but keep them at home where nobody will see them to ridicule. Some parents also felt there was no need to waste money on such children since they cannot really achieve anything as adults with their disability.

> *I think cultural beliefs could have effect on education of children with disability. If culturally we believe it is a curse and these people are gods then what will be the use taking them to school. There will be no use again educating them at all; however, there may be influence deciding to educate them (Parent with a special learning needs child).*

> *It is very important because mostly it's our cultural beliefs and the way people accept it that influences their survival. Mostly they are seen as curse to family or gods in the form of human beings who may live shortly on this earth and go. This in fact doesn't help the family to help their children with disabilities but to neglect them (Parent with special learning needs child).*

> *I don't know how they influence children with disabilities education but what I can say is that because sometime people think that they are disgrace to the family they don't want them to come out to associate with friends much more come to school (Teacher).*

> *The perception is that witchcraft is what these children are made up of, so parents hide these children and don't want them to come to school (Teacher).*

Some people and teachers are however coming to the realisation that disabilities could be caused by other factors that are not even related to spiritual issues. That is, they could be caused by a whole lot of factors like biological factors or even accidents.

Low knowledge of disability and disability laws

Majority of the respondents did not have a good understanding of what disability was especially the parents of children without disabilities. Even though they were able to identify

disability as the inability for one to function to his/her maximum without assistance, most of them restricted disability to physical disability. From the quantitative data, it shows that majority of the children with disability interviewed had intellectual difficulties but this is usually not considered as a form of disability by most parents. They consider such children simply "stupid" without acknowledging it as a form of disability. This could be because of the perception that such children are not normal or natural.

Most of the respondents, and even some teachers, had not heard of the disability law. One respondent said he:

''heard they are protected and also have equal rights but I don't know of any Act 715''.

For those who recounted ever hearing of the disability law, they were not sure of what it entails. Some had this to say:

> *Yes, I think there is legal protection for the disabled because for instance they have rules that protect them from crossing the road when they are with the white canes (Teacher).*

> *I have heard about the Act and what I know is that they should be provided with equal right and be treated as normal because they also contribute to the nation (Teacher).*

> *The disability law says that there should be no discrimination, so that they can also feel loved and be part of the human populace (Teacher, Accra).*

This was surprising especially in the case of the teachers who are supposed to have at least some basic knowledge about disabilities and the legal rights protecting children with disabilities that they are in charge. The possible conclusion could be attributed to the fact that they are not special education teachers thus they do not consider disability issues too important.

Expectations from government

From the narratives that were given, the expectations of the children, parents, teachers and head teachers from the government were quite high. Among other recommendations, respondents suggested that government provide the necessary infrastructure and learning materials that children

with disabilities needed to make learning much easier for them. This goes to confirm what has already been discussed on the inadequate resources available in inclusive schools for children with disabilities. Children also recommended that the government should educate their parents and teachers on how to take care of them. Which suggest that children are not satisfied with the treatment that they get both at home and in school. The recommendation that was most common among the narratives of children and parents was for government to give financial help or provide jobs to parents with special children. A child with disability had this to say: "*I want the government to give my parents money so that they can buy me books to learn*". Another child with disability also had this to say*: "Government should support my parents with money to help in my education*".

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

Education has long been recognised as central and it is critical element for economic and social developments in Ghana. The challenge of getting all school going age children into school has been on most countries political agenda and it is reflected in Education Strategy Policies in Ghana as well. In Ghana, approximately 10% of Ghana's 20 million citizens are persons with disability (Annor, 2000). Although their rights are guaranteed both by Ghana's Constitution and international conventions, in reality these provisions have offered them very little actual protection against discrimination, (Disability Act, 2006). Despite several debates towards inclusive education for persons with disabilities, Ghana face multiple challenges which often result in denial of the rights for education of persons with disabilities.

This study sought to investigate the accessibility to inclusive education to children with disabilities in two selected areas in Ghana. That is to examine the factors that affect accessibility and practice of inclusive education in Ghana. However to put the research into contemporary information seeking context, respondents were asked various questions but one general question that emphasised the issues was whether children with disabilities should be educated in the mainstream schools. Specifically the research objectives that guided the study includes: finding out the level of professional competences (qualification) and teacher's attitudes towards inclusive education, the effect of parental involvement in their child with disability's education, the sociological barriers such as stigmatization and discrimination and its effects on educating disabled children, the availability of material resources such as physical accessibility and facilities, teaching

learning materials, for educating children with disabilities, the effects of cultural beliefs on educating children with disabilities, and lastly the progress of educating children with disability.

This chapter provides detailed discussions of the main findings of the quantitative and qualitative data interviews that were analysed with regards to the objectives and the themes of the literature review of the study as it relates to the experiences of children with disabilities in Ghana, specifically in the two selected regions. In addition, it aims at bringing out the issue studied and reflects on how these issues affect the practice of inclusive education in Ghana. Each objective and theme is discussed succinctly in the following paragraphs. This report is a contribution towards knowledge of educational accessibility to children with disabilities.

5.1 Demographic Variables of Respondents

The background information of the respondents was very important to the study; thus, some of the demographic information of the participants were analysed to provide insight to the characteristics of the participants and the issues studied. First, teachers' demographic variable is very important to the study with respect to its influence on inclusive education. Teacher characteristics, such as gender, teaching experience and professional qualification were other variables the study delved into, to find out if it has significant influence on teachers' attitude and perception towards inclusive education. Regarding gender, report of the study showed that male teachers attitude towards integration are more negative than female teachers. In the qualitative interview conducted, most male teachers are just not ready to accommodate or accept these groups of children in their class. This may be as a result of inherent societal beliefs about persons with disabilities. Again, it may be related to the gender roles in the Ghanaian society where the male is trained to see the care of the child as the role of the female. Therefore the male teachers may not have that sensitivity towards the child with disabilities in their class to help provide their

educational needs. Female teachers were more accommodating teaching children with disabilities. Thus, the gender roles in the society tend to reflect in their attitudes towards pupils with disabilities which contrast with their role as teachers in the classroom. Interestingly, the interactive effect of gender in the Ghanaian society has found to affect attitudes of educating these groups of children in the class room. Literature reviewed showed that, studies by Mushoriwa, (2001) and Avramidis & Norwich, (2002) support this finding. Thus their studies revealed that gender had an influence on educators attitudes towards inclusive education, female educators had a positive attitude towards inclusive education than their male counter parts.

In terms of teacher's education and experience, with respect to number of years taught it suggests that both training and experience with pupils with disabilities affect inclusive education in a positive direction. This means that teachers with training in special education or experience working with pupils with disabilities are more likely to understand the situation of children with disabilities in their class and use other strategies of teaching than teachers without special education training and experience. In reference to table (41) teachers who have taught for 31 to 40 years gave an approval mean score of 4.13 indicating a moderately high acceptance to teach the child with learning needs. There was strong positive relationship between the number of years taught and views of accepting the child with learning needs, ($r = 0.96$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that the total number of years taught influenced teacher's attitude towards inclusive education. thus the number of years spent in teaching children with learning needs in their classroom seems to have positive influence on attitude. For instance, interaction with young teachers from the qualitative studies indicated that those with less teaching experience are less likely to accept children with disabilities in their classroom as compared to older teachers with more teaching experience. Teachers with more years of teaching have experience teaching children with disability. Also, they

have realistic belief towards educating children with disabilities and inclusive education. This finding is in contrast with the writings of Clongh & Lindsay (1991) and Leyser, et al. (1994) in the literature reviewed which indicated that teachers with less years of teaching experience are more likely to accept children with disabilities. Most heads of schools accept and practice inclusive education irrespective of their professional experience and their level of education. They perceived it as an education policy which needed to be adhered to despite the challenges.

Children's views on teachers' attitude towards children, particularly children with disabilities, the results indicated moderately unfavourable attitudes on the part of some teachers towards them with overall summary indicator values 3.24 and 3.27 for children with and without disability, respectively. (See table 18 and 20). On the hand, results from the parents and teachers involved in this study depict that teachers' attitude has been moderately acceptable with overall rating of 3.24. (See table 40). Generally, quantitatively, all issues raised under teachers' attitude towards inclusive education were moderately supported since respondents to some degree agree on the issues raised concerning teachers' attitudes. Generally few teachers will accept children with disabilities in their classroom from the qualitative study interviews conducted. In all, it is obviously clear that teachers who have had relationship with teaching pupils with disabilities have positive attitudes. Thus having relationships and teaching people with disabilities promote positive attitudes towards inclusive education.

In addition, statements analysis of parents' occupation with respect to the type of occupation and number of children shows that parents with more children may not be able to take care of their children. In effect, it has implications on their children's educational outcome and progress. Essentially, parental poverty and more mouth to feed particularly for parents having children with disabilities make it impossible for their children to have access to education.

Interviewing parents particularly concerning marital status, single parents find it difficult to take care of their children in school; this has effect on the child's school completion and future generations.

More so, on the issue of definitions, to find out respondents' understanding and perception of disability in the two study areas, it was evident that the majority of respondents understanding of disability is limited to the physical disability with few ones defining the intellectual disabilities. That is to say, most of the definitions of disability were limited to physical disabilities which could explain why some teachers were more comfortable with children who had physical deformities than those with intellectual challenges. However, almost all the definitions the respondents gave include cultural aspects which show the historical perceptions of persons with disabilities. Some other aspects that emerged include the causes and how society views persons with disabilities. Both negative and positive definitions were given: negative with regards to how they are pitied in the society and positive as people who by accident became disabled therefore they should be treated positively like other persons. Negative perception of persons with disabilities leads to maltreatment and marginalisation as a result of lack of understanding of their importance or value in the society; hence, disability generally is viewed as inability. Culturally, the word disability is frown on in the Ghanaian society but irrespective of that majority of the definitions given was positive. Respondents emphasised on both the medical and environmental causative of disability and also the cultural aspect which they believe is one of the bane (non-progression) of children and persons with disabilities in Ghana.

The medical perspective of disability could limit policy development and access to education for children with disabilities. It is clear from the findings that disability is experienced differently depending on the nature of the disability. In effect the definition, explanation and

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understanding of disability relate to how persons with disabilities are accepted, treated and their rights recognised in the Ghanaian society. Further, the definitions and meaning of disability may influence the services and support children with disabilities receive in the Ghanaian schools and society. Thus the national perceptions about definitions of disabilities have implication for educational opportunities for these groups of children. Lastly, the meaning of disabilities helps to understand marginalisation and exclusion of children with disabilities in schools and provides ways of addressing the issues of marginalisation and exclusion of children with disabilities in the mainstream schools.

Briefly, the demographic variables' analysis helped to ascertain some of the assumptions raised in the studies in which some proved to be right while others indicated less right from the empirical studies.

5.2 Attitudes of Teachers

To find out about attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education is one of the objectives of the study. Therefore the study sought to find out the effects of teachers' attitudes and their professional competence (qualification) towards educating children with disabilities. In all, a total of thirty eight teachers were involved in the two selected regions, that is Eastern and Greater Accra regions respectively. Demographic factors and other related variables were examined to find out their influence on teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. The finding of the quantitative results generally indicates that teacher's view on educating children with disabilities had overall approval indicator value of 3.24. The twenty three item scale or questions from tables (18), (20), (40) on attitudes of teachers which form an integral part of the work rated moderate on the part of teachers as it is suggested that it will definitely influence the educational progress of children with disabilities. In sum, quantitatively issues or statements raised under teachers' attitude were

moderately supported. This means that the teachers' attitude is to some extent considered as a barrier to children with disability's education.

Teachers may have developed understanding of children with disabilities conditions and have become moderately supportive of their special education needs in school to some extent. This finding refutes Obeng's (2005) assertion that examined the views of teachers on educating children with disabilities in Ghana. The result of his findings shows that teachers had completely negative attitude to including children with disabilities; although they show love and affection towards them, they are unwilling to include them in their mainstream classroom. The findings of this study disagree with Obeng because teachers attitude towards including children with disabilities was moderately accepting in this study and not completely negative as found by Obeng. Therefore the number of those who think the incidence of the issue is moderate as well as those who said it is high were more than those who discard them. This means that only a simple majority plays down the concerns and that somehow the cases raised are credible. In effect positive attitude of teachers ensured the right educational atmosphere for children with disabilities to progress well in school. It is also a strong factor for successful inclusion of special education needs children in regular schools. Although teacher's attitudes towards inclusive education rated moderately favourable in the two regions, critical data shows that most of the respondents were not too sure of teacher's knowledge or competences on teaching children with disabilities. In spite of the fact that teacher education has the component of special education, it may not be detailed and little attention is focused on that aspect of inclusive education to guarantee their practice of inclusion. Thus training and acquisition of knowledge is termed very important in teaching children with disabilities.

However there is somehow limited knowledge on issues related to inclusive education with 3.47 and 2.93 rating response from children and adults, respectively (See tables 20 and 40). As a

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consequence, teachers may lack the courage in teaching these groups of children in the mainstream class room; lack of knowledge is in fact a barrier to inclusive education. Clearly, limited knowledge of teachers has implication for teaching the child with special education needs and to support inclusive education. Teachers who lack the skills tend to have negative attitudes towards educating children with disabilities and have low expectations for them, hence unwillinging to have them in their classrooms. Evidence from literature reviewed agrees with this finding on knowledge, For instance, Ackah (2010) asserted that generally mainstream classroom teachers do not support inclusive education as a result of teachers lacking the necessary equipment and training to handle disability issues they encounter in the classroom. Also according to (Kuyini, 1998; Ofori-Addo, et al., 1999; & O'Toole, et al., 1996) reports on Ghana's inclusive education initiative raised several concerns, including limited teacher knowledge and skills to provide instructional adaptations towards meeting the needs of including students with disabilities. Again, Wamae &Kang'ethe-Kaman (2004) writings supported this finding by suggesting that professional training of teachers is one of the key factors of successful inclusion or educating children with disability. Equipping teachers with the relevant knowledge and appropriate skills with regard to their different responsibilities must be regarded as a crucial element of successful inclusive education. Moreover the success of inclusive education for children with disability depends to a large extent on teachers' acceptance of challenges in teaching children with disabilities.

Even though the quantitative results moderately supported the issues raised concerning teachers' attitude and inclusive education, the qualitative studies through interactions highlighted the issues in depth. In this study, regular teachers were in most cases patient with children with disabilities but were ill equipped to handle their special needs; this was evident from both the qualitative and quantitative studies. This meant that the special education need child had to go

through the same curricular with children without disabilities without any extra attention. The quantitative studies proved that there is remedial or instruction given to children with disabilities but in depth interview from qualitative studies proves that these are extra classes organised for the whole class. Thus, no special classes were organised for children with learning needs to catch up with their regular mates. The effect of this was that the education of children with disabilities could not be improved and so most special children ranked low in their class. Studies by Martson (1996), for instance, showed that for the education of a special child to progress, there was the need for a combination of resource and regular classroom teaching. Teachers exhibited signs of impatience and frustration at times when a child with disability required them to give extra assistance, evidence by qualitative report. There was the general perception that since special education need children could not really contribute much in class discussions, there was no need asking them questions in class. This led to teachers in most cases ignoring the pupil/students by not including them in class activities.

Again, in support of teachers' attitude, Agbenyega (2007) examined the beliefs, attitudes and perception of teachers and concluded that the attitudes and the concerns of teachers affected their commitment and acceptance of practicing inclusive education thus confirming findings in this study. Some teachers said that they would prefer special children being sent to special schools than regular schools. For example, a teacher said:

"*I feel these children are supposed to be taken to special schools and taught by their special teachers or specialist*".

This suggests teachers will prefer children with physical disabilities than those with intellectual disabilities since they do not require additional task and specific skills to handle them. Agbenyega (2001) study again is in supported of this finding by arguing that teachers were more

comfortable with children with physical disabilities such as those in a wheel chair or having a limb missing because they could still reason on the same level as their peers, making it easier to teach them or cope with them. Further, support can be found in the work of (Rainforth, 2000; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2000) in the United State whose results indicate that teacher support for inclusion varied with the severity of the disability, and this has been consistently reported in studies in the United States.

Moreover special needs children were usually behind their counterparts in class and so had to either be repeated or just made to join the class ahead even if they are not performing. This is similar to findings by Das and Kattumuri (2011) who found that students with disabilities ranked low in their academic performance. This shortcoming, according to Das and Kattumuri (2011), was perceived by the children as their non-progression and not completing their education. Generally, negative attitudes and perceptions make the plight of children with disabilities worsen which justifies the act of stigmatisation and discrimination against them. Further, so far as negative attitudes persist, the entitlements and the rights of children with disability will be difficult to realise. Findings of results showed that most teachers' views on inclusive education was almost the same, commonly they explained inclusive education as educating all children including children with special education needs in the regular classroom. Even though they understand the concept of inclusive education, many of them complained about additional task for them as a result of adding the child with special education needs. They express worries that children with disabilities will impede on their promotion and they may not be able to meet their targets for the syllabus for the school term. Some of them felt these groups of children cause distractions to their class and delay the completion of their syllabus. As a result, they decide not to acknowledge them

and give more attention to the children without disabilities to be able to complete their lesson plan. This is what one teacher said:

adding these children to my class becomes a burden for me because their presence drag the syllabus and retards my promotion in my career as a teacher because completing the syllabus for the term is a major requirement for progress in my teaching career.

The above statement is in line with the views of Lopes, Monteiro & Sil (2004) in the literature reviewed which stated that teachers apprehension was related to behaviour and not having the extra time to supplement the curriculum utilised in their regular classes at the time of study. In fact, most of the teachers do not see the special education needs of these groups of children as their problem, but the special education teachers' responsibility. However, with all the schools visited during the study, administrative structures had been put in place in the form of provision of special education teachers, known as 'resource persons', to assist and ensure inclusive education practice for all children especially children with disabilities.

Thus, the resource teachers are attached to the schools to help the regular class teacher but some of these regular teachers saw them as problem at times. This is because they need to adjust the curriculum and syllabus to suit and help children with special education needs in the class. Even though resource teachers are attached to the various schools, only a few of the schools actually had resource teachers who came in to help special education needs children. Unfortunately, they are limited and their work load is huge since the few ones have to go round the various schools in the district or municipal to assist the regular class teachers. The limited resource teachers lead to denial of provision of special education needs to children with disabilities in the regular class; thus, the level of educational support is minimal. More so the impact can be non-progression of children with disabilities which makes teachers' expectations for them to be

low compared with their non-disabled peers. In all, many heads of schools and teachers, nevertheless, favoured inclusive education since it is an educational policy but the teachers were concerned about the increase in workload as a result of inclusion of children with special needs in their classes.

The above discussions indicated that teachers' attitude was generally moderate both from the qualitative and quantitative analysis though there were teachers whose attitudes were not favourable and may not like to accept children with disabilities in their class. To some extent, special education needs children were critical of the attitudes of their teachers towards them which made it difficult for them to fully come out to express themselves in class. The peers of children with disabilities that are their class mates also play an important role in the lives of these children. Special education needs children generally relied on their mates more than their teachers to understand the lessons taught in class. They spelt out words they could not see well on the board; repeated words that they could not hear from the teachers; helped those who cannot move around easily to do so; and sometimes even wrote notes for those who could not do so on their own. The attitude of teaching staff is very critical to the education of children with disabilities and the concept of inclusive education. Teachers could work harder to make the school more attractive for children with disabilities. In fact, if teacher education for regular school is well prepared in the special education component of their studies they will be more effective and efficient in teaching children with disabilities with less assistance from the resource teachers. Also, teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education could be more positive or better if the needed support is provided to practice inclusion.

5.3 Policy Environment and inclusive education

Education is an issue of policy and cannot be successful without practising policies. In Ghana, the process of developing a policy on disability has been an issue discussed for long; however, the national disability policy document was published in 2000 and in 2006 the Act was passed in parliament. It is a great achievement for Ghana to have these instruments developed to support persons with disabilities because there are few countries that have disabilities policies especially in Africa. The Disability Act confers a number of legal rights on persons with disabilities. It guarantees People with Disabilities (PWDs) protection, access to services and entitlements as any other person will enjoy. Basically, it seeks to protect the rights of persons with disabilities in the country. In Ghana, the desire and plan to make education inclusive date back to 1951 under the Accelerated Development Plan, with the introduction of "Free Compulsory Basic Education" for all children of school going age. This plan was later enacted into law under the Education Act of 1961 (Act 87) (Achanso 2010; Thompson 2008). It aimed to expand access to education to all to bridge the gap between the marginalised and non-marginalised in Ghanaian society. After independence, a series of concerted efforts by successive Ghanaian governments and its development partners have consistently pursued policies aimed at expanding access to non-disadvantage and disadvantaged groups to limit educational exclusion in Ghana. Ghana has ratified several international conventions on the right to education. Some of which include the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, UN Convention on Rights of Children, the Education For All (EFA) goals, MDGs and many more which have been absorbed into national law.

The latest available statistics (2001/2002) shows that there are 24 public institutions in Ghana dealing with special education, which caters for approximately 5000 students. In addition, there exist 6 institutions that basically are mainstream in their administration placement and offer

education on a second cycle and post second cycle level (Education strategy policy 2003-2015). These institutions' relevance to PWDs mostly relates to education towards visually impaired students. Apart from these schools, all schools in Ghana are supposed to practice inclusive education captured in the 1992 constitution. The education strategy lists among others, a number of goals for inclusive education, and the need for equitable education which will be incorporated into mainstream schools by 2015. Overall, however, the budget for implementation of the education strategy policy is showing large funding gaps that might be difficult to meet. Thus efforts are being made in Ghana to include persons with disabilities in education services provision but it seems there is little evidence of inclusion.

Consequently, the practice of Inclusive Education in Ghana has suffered many challenges due to lack of policies to regulate its implementation and practice. Therefore results from this study showed that, most of the respondents and even some teachers have limited or no knowledge of the disability Act. Even those who said they have heard about it claim they do not know the details of the documents, one respondent said:

> "*I have heard they are protected and also have equal rights but I don't know of the content of the Act 715".*

Surprisingly, teachers who are supposed to have a basic knowledge or a firm grip of the law to help them in their professional duties exhibited low knowledge of the law. This could be attributed to the fact that they see the responsibility of pupils with disabilities as the duties of the special educator (resource teachers) and could not be bothered too much about their wellbeing. Again the low or lack of knowledge of the disability law and policies may also be as a result of non-implementation of these legal frameworks and low priority placed on disability issues. In addition, as a result of lack of knowledge, children with disabilities and their parents are mostly

not aware of their rights. This situation makes them become vulnerable to maltreatment and violation of their rights as citizens of Ghana. Thus the prime challenge of Inclusive Education in Ghana is the issue of policy.

Further, in Ghana, the implementation of education policies is often done through the district or municipal education office to the various schools, heads of school, and finally the classroom teachers. The role of the teacher specifically the Ghanaian teacher in the implementation of educational policy is in line with the views of Ainscow (2007). To him, teachers have a key role in the change process as they have to change their attitudes, ways of thinking, materials used and their cooperation with other professionals in and outside the classroom, among other things. Teachers are to be part of the decision making process to have at least basic background knowledge of these policies to guide their professional duties with regards to having contacts with children with disabilities.

Inclusive education is approved and supported by the UNESCO Salamanca Statement (1994) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006). Many countries signed and supported the Convention, committing them to carry out changes; therefore, it is the responsibility of all signed nations to help improve the lives of handicapped children. In addition, one major issue recounted by respondents from the interview conducted which is seen as a challenge to the disability law implementation is the transitional period of the Act 715. The Act makes provision for 10-years moratorium for compliance because of substantial investment needed to make all existing public schools disability friendly. This transition they see as delay in full implementation of the Law which prevents persons with disabilities to have their full right as any other citizen of Ghana. Also the moratorium gives the government the opportunity to drag its feet to come up with programmes and commit itself to implementation. Government commitment to

formulation of specific policies for children with special education needs is lacking or limited; as a result, there is absence of policy reforms in the various schools to help practise inclusive education. Politically, education has become a campaign theme for politicians to win votes after which they alter the existing policies to correspond with their campaign message. This in effect stops the existing policy reforms due to their different priorities in education reform and the absence of clear strategic planning for education leading to inconsistency in the total education system since they are out of touch with class room realities.

More so, there is a little evidence of any strong political will from governments to provide the resources needed to make inclusive education feasible. Mostly, the schools are left alone to find solutions to problems that may have arisen as a result of provision of special education needs and practice of inclusive education. However, these solutions become a point of discontents and unwillingness to accept and practice inclusive education on the part of the educators who tries to find solution to the problem. In fact there is a big gap between law and practice because though the educational policies and disability law is in its right direction, the implementation leading to the final practice which will reflect the results of the importance of the law to persons with disabilities is absent. This may be as a result of negative attitudes and discrimination towards children with disabilities in the Ghanaian society since laws and policies reflect the culture, religion and political traditions of Ghana.

Moreover inclusive education is to make it possible for every child of school going age, whatever special educational needs they may have, to attend school, and to achieve their full potential. In Ghana, there has been little impact of policies and programs to include disability issues and persons with disabilities. Although efforts are being made to include disability dimension in national poverty reduction strategies and programs (PRSPs), such as cash transfers

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free education and many other programs, there is little evidence of effective and successful inclusion. Again, despite the growing awareness that persons with disabilities have been marginalised in Ghanaian society as a result of negative attitudes which prevent them from benefiting from opportunities, their standard of living has not improved. In addition, the lack of data on persons with disabilities prevents the governments from formulating and developing comprehensive programmes for these groups of persons. Thus most statistical data exercise undertaken in Ghana usually produced block data without categorisation of the various types of disabilities. Consequently, there is little relevant data to identify the number of children with disabilities in Ghana. Therefore, developing policies based on one set of categorisation creates challenges in the provision of any effective, efficient and meaningful special education needs provision for children with disabilities in Ghana. For instance, the Disability Act 715, even though is highly commendable for changes in the society to improve upon the standard of living of persons with disabilities, the various categories are not clearly stated. The policy is not categorised into various types of disabilities regarding service delivery. Consequently lack of categorisation leads to disregard and denial of services provision and interventions for the various groups of disabilities. Hence there are no effective policies to address their educational needs and to provide them quality education. Decisions about policies, programs and services based on firm evidence of reliable data could lead to positive benefits for children with disabilities in Ghana. However, it remains very important to categorise children with disabilities to develop policies to distinguish those needing more educational support.

It is worth noting that, despite that, Ghana ratified the UNCPRD, it is clear from the qualitative analysis that national legislation needs to be revised to be in line with the provisions of its prescriptions. Even though the Disability Act of 2006 is in line with most of UN conventions

concerning disabilities issues, there is the need for the Ghana government to commit itself by holding stake holders responsible for disability issues to the people of Ghana to understand the Act 715. The Disability Act provides the basis upon which children with disabilities are protected from marginalisation and promise to provide services developed to meet their education and other related needs. A focus of the law is to help children with disabilities access education but there have been difficulty fulfilling this goal of providing access to education for children with disabilities in Ghana. This is because the existing policies for all children where children with disabilities are included are written widely on paper without being really translated into practice. In fact, most of the education policies are general rules that regulate the provision of education services to all children of school going age and the education system as a whole. Specifically, there are no effective policies tailored towards to the provision of educational needs for children with disabilities. Indeed, the development of policies on inclusive education or education in general should not be viewed and understood as the whole efforts in favour of specific groups but to all pupils with diverse educational needs. This is in line with Tutt's (2007) writing in which he stated that the main challenge is to provide inclusive settings in all schools, through the provision of a diverse continuum of services that are part of a school network linked to other social policies or other services in the community.

It must be acknowledge that, the formulation of policies should not only be based on the provision of needs but should be seen as rights, for governments to commit itself to develop consistent, effective and efficient policies in relation to the rights of children with disabilities in Ghana. Thus the general lack of government commitment and political will to implement a right-based policy for children with disabilities is proved by the unavailability or scanty designated educational budget allocation for children with disabilities in the mainstream schools. For instance,

the World Report on Disability noted that the success of inclusive education depends largely on a country's commitment to adopting appropriate legislation, developing policies and providing adequate funding for implementation (WHO & World Bank, 2011).

Most of the budget allocation is designated towards children without disabilities because, the allocation of funds is always short in relation to demand. It is estimated that educating children with disabilities need extra financial support to meet their basic needs in school, and hence resources allocated and spent within the education system must be reviewed to meet their needs. Thus most government policies and programmes to improve education to some extent are limited to children without disabilities meanwhile these policies are developed to be accessed by all school children. The Government of Ghana (GoG) has made several attempts to make education inclusive particularly at the basic education levels. The Ministry of Education's Strategic Plan (2003 – 2015) envisions the achievement of an inclusive education system by 2015 (SpED 2005). As a result, government, donors, and NGOs have supported inclusive education and special needs education programmes in the last decade; however, limited funding remains the key challenge to policy implementation, (Thompson, N. M and Casely-Hayford, L., 2008). In line with the key challenges to funding, separate specific funding policies developed for the provision of special education needs in the mainstream school will certainly have impact on inclusive education progress in Ghana.

On the basis of the responses from the respondents, it is possible to infer that, the views on the definitions of disability provide the conceptualisation of disabilities in the Ghanaian society which translates into policy formulation and practice. Conceptualisation of disability has effect on policy development for educational policies for children with disabilities and persons with disabilities in general. As a result of negative attitudes formation in the society towards persons

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with disabilities, policy makers translate it in the formulation of policies. Hence, clearly defined policies and programmes for exceptional children in Ghana are limited by this different thinking and attitudes entrenched in Ghanaian cultural beliefs. That notwithstanding, in order to succumb pressures from international community as a result of commitment to adapt to international conventions and laws, most of the policies including inclusive education policies in Ghana are modelled along inclusive policy programs of the Western countries without considering the local context. Mostly, policies and practices have either been imported or imposed by donors such as International Monitory Fund (IMF). Although the intentions may have been good, in practice, the result and progress is far because it is not imitated rightly to suit the countries' situation since Ghana has to adhere to the international conditions and pressures.

Lastly most of the evidence from the above policy discussion indicates that, unclear direction of policies in Ghana for satisfactory and successful Inclusive education confirms a great concern for the practice of inclusive education. The findings of this study proved that there are limitations within policy provisions which make inclusive education impossible for children with disabilities to benefit. Thus formulation of appropriate legislative instrument is needed for full implementation of the Disability Act, attached with comprehensive programmes and plan to enhance effective inclusive education practice. Moreover, the low knowledge on disability issues implies deficit in stakeholder's role to create awareness to bring attitudinal transformation in the society. Consequently, inclusive education has suffered many challenges due to low knowledge and negative attitudes in the Ghanaian society. Also, government political commitment in the area of inclusive education has failed to some extent to provide the special education needs of children with disabilities in the mainstream schools. Ghana, operating within the current policy

environment with key modifications or new development of inclusive policies, cannot accommodate the large education diversity amongst children with disabilities.

5.4 Parental Involvement

Parents' levels of engagements are one of the important and strong factors in the education of their child with disability. Therefore parents' participation in education of their children with disabilities is one of the objectives of the studies. It is to find out the function of parental involvement and their disabled children accessing education. Parental involvement in their children education is very critical to the practice of inclusive education which should not be underestimated. Successful implementation of inclusive education programmes requires the involvement and support of the parents of children with disabilities at all school levels of progression. For example, Ebesold (2004) suggested the kind of relation between school and family could be seen as an opportunity to reduce stigmatisation distinction between disability and normality, to recognise the rights of person and his/her family to experience in situations that reinforces the possibilities of choices and to express and emphasise the person's rights and needs. Parental involvement in this study is defined as a multidimensional task with regards to home base and school base involvement.

Firstly, the impact of social economic background of the parent is very important to the child access to education and progress on the academic ladder of education. Inferring from the quantitative results, parents' demographic variables such as occupation and number of children show that a majority of the parents were not able to take care of their children both in school and at the house-hold level. This may be as a result of low income and many mouths to feed. It is evident from table (32) that those who said "yes" were 46.2% of the parents as opposed to 53.8% who were not able to take care of their children appropriately in school according to parents and

the school standard. This means that inaccessibility to education for children with disabilities can be a cause of parental poverty though every school going child is supposed to be in school as a right. This indicates that the provision of their educational needs is borne by the parents which defeats the core focus of capitation grant policy aimed at reducing the cost of education to ensure children stay in school. Parental inability to pay schooling costs increases child vulnerability to exclusion and drop out, particularly at the JHS level of education where some direct school fees are still paid (Casely-Hayford et al., 2009). Likewise, parents' financial status reflects in their responsibilities in the home with regards to the provision of basic needs for the children to survive. Thus, some of the children with disabilities' problems can be attributed to result of poverty based on the kind of work their parents are involved in, whether formal or informal.

Parents with children having disabilities who worked in informal sectors were the majority that is, 22 persons which is 52.4% as opposed to 15 people which is 53.6%, (see table 31). Out of these figures, 73.3% of parents in the formal sector are able to take care of their children as opposed to 26.7% informal sector workers (see table 33). A significant number of informal sector workers in Ghana are trapped in poverty as they do not earn enough to lift themselves and their families out of poverty (M. Robinson, 1995). Poverty amongst informal sector workers can be associated to the lack of access to productive resources especially capital to help them work. This is due to limited or unavailability of credit facilities since most of them rely on family members and friends for support and credit facilities.

In addition, informal sector workers are self-employed workers whose income is irregular subject to many challenges including demand and supply. For example, where there is unavailability of demand it affects supply leading to no income or low income for the period. However, parents will prefer to use their little earned income on their children without disabilities

and to provide needs in the house. This means that the better the parents occupation and income the more their children with disabilities get access to education. Most of the parents responded their handicapped children may not be able to progress in school and the school does not have the resource to help them benefit from education. This suggests that some parents view the public schools as a failure to meet the educational needs and prepare children with disabilities for career adequately. As a result of failing to meet the educational needs of children with disabilities they become unsuccessful in schooling and unable to meet the demands of the society and labour market. Thus some parents perceive it as waste of time and resources educating their exceptional children, as a way of prioritising their responsibilities.

Again, some parents have the feeling that their child with disability may not be productive even after receiving education. This implies for some parents till their child with disabilities progresses to an appreciable level in school, they will not invest in them at all or they may let them drop out of school. Equally, some parents from poor background may want to educate their child with disability but the opportunity for the child may not be available due to cost involved in educating the child with disability. In Ghana, schooling is officially free for all children of school going age at the basic level with the introduction of the Free Compulsory Basic Education policy (FCUBE). Despite this policy in practice, every child must purchase his/her own school uniform and all learning materials (pens, pencil, eraser, text books, chalk, slate and many more)**.** Children who are unable to provide these needs in school are not able to go to school therefore achieving the objective of FCUBE is difficult. Parental poverty was evident in the narratives of children; most of them recommended that government either assist their parents find jobs or assist them financially to be able to cater for their educational needs. This is what one child said:

"My mother is poor and I want the government to provide us with our educational needs since my mother is not able to provide".

That is parents' financial incapacity makes it difficult for them to get involved in their children's education, therefore the government should help to overcome the poverty situation. Several studies have analysed the inter link between parental poverty and children with disabilities in Africa. For example, (Lukemeyer et al, 2000; Warfield, 2001) have found lower parental involvement in paid work especially for mothers of children with disabilities. Also Knapp et al (2001) attributed the time paid worker that parents spend caring for their special children. Lukemeyer et al (2001) in their study on parents' welfare found that families with disabled children spent more ($100) out of their pocket on their child with disabilities than those without children with disabilities. This means that, the families with disabled children had lower income levels than families without disabled children. Also, it could explain the findings of parental poverty and their child with disability with respect to not being able to take care of them from this study. To a large extent, due to parents' poverty, children with disabilities may not have access at all to school or those in school may drop out with little knowledge and perhaps no qualification. For example, Neufeldt, cited in a World Bank (2005) literature, "poverty and disability" by Groce & Chamie (2000), found children with disabilities are more likely to leave school earlier with fewer qualifications. Therefore the cycle of poverty becomes difficult to break hence the generational poverty on the part of the disabled child trickling down to almost all generations.

Furthermore, support from literature can be found in the work of Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Mariato, (1997), Conger, Conger, & Elder (1997) indicated that, financial hardship which is more prevalent in single-parent families do not only circumscribe options for leisure time activities and investments in education, but also normally brings about strains in the family system that

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undermine parenting. These strains in the family could therefore serve as a disincentive for the parents to be engaged in the education of their children.

Basic education is a fundamental human right and an essential factor for reducing poverty and improving the living conditions of children with disabilities. Unfortunately, children with disabilities are confronted with a lot of challenges as a result of their disabilities and many barriers they face in the society. Parent's financial incapacity disorients them to make time to get involved in their children's education, which is beneficial. Parents often have to work longer hours to earn more income and this leaves less or inadequate time for parents to get involved in their children's schooling and learning process. From the literature reviewed, Lee and Bowen (2006) study is in line with this study's findings by noting that parents from less privileged backgrounds may not have the resources or time to become involved in their children's schools in ways that are valued by the school. Conversely, parents in the formal sector are able to take care of their child with disability may be due to constant income guaranteed. Parents in the formal sector may have been more accommodating regarding shared obligation of their child with disability education. They may be more involve in their child's education because of their formal time of work schedule and guaranteed income.

Most of the evident indicates that children with disabilities living in poverty are amongst the least likely to enjoy the benefits of education and other opportunities in the society. This possibly means that access to education for children with disabilities is very important to improve on their standard of living and future development. Educating children with disabilities reduces the long term consequences of disability and poverty and its future dependence. More so, other members of the family will be free from caring and being responsible which allows them to increase their productive activities and create wealth leading to poverty elimination.

Moreover, it should be noted that school based involvement of parent may be beneficial to the child's progress due to their involvement in the decisions concerning their child's education. The overall rate of involvement from the quantitative study was 3.24 (See table 43) indicating that parents were somehow involved in their child with disability school welfare. Thus parents get involved in certain decisions concerning their children with disability's education. Getting details to the extent of parental involvement, the qualitative interviews results proved that some of the parents get involved while other do not because of the nature of their work and yet others are not interested at all. Most parents who have their children in the public schools where the research was undertaken were mainly informal workers who will not sacrifice their work a day to attend to the educational issues of their children with disabilities. They will prefer to go to work to bring some income home to provide for the daily meal. Also, some of the parents do not show interest at all because they feel these groups of children will not bring any qualification home hence they just take them to school and leave them. Again, the stigma of having a child with disability in the family is seen as a curse and the child with disability is viewed as unworthy of life; however, some families abandon the child to the care of the school. One teacher recounted:

"*Parents don't care about their children with special needs. They just dump them in the schools and attend to their private businesses*".

Furthermore, interview with teachers revealed that only small majority of the parents have actually taken advantage of opportunities presented to them to get involved in their children's education. For example, educational activities such as school cultural activities and opening day where parents are invited to assess the academic progress of their children are not perceived by many parents as important. Some of the parents assumed that such activities would not benefit the children. Parents choose the school activities of their children which they view as important such

as Parent Teachers Association (PTA) meetings and attend. In Ghana, most parents choose to attend PTA meetings because it is compulsory for all parents and it is usually held on weekends to allow all parents to participate in the general decision making of the school. Turnbull and Turnbull (2001) agree with this position of some parents to choose, as they noted that some parents are more comfortable with certain types of involvement than others. Again, the finding of parent's choice is in line with Hoover, Demsey & Sandler (1995) writing in the literature review. They stated among others that parents will often be influenced to choose involvement through self-perceptions of specific skills and knowledge, and they will choose not to be involved in something they do not feel it is important and they can personally be successful at doing.

In addition interviewing parents, it was realized that often times the demand parents have such as time and work, house chores, and many other commitments impede their preference to be involved in their children's education. Therefore the most involved school activities by parents in Ghana are the Parent Teachers Association, (P.T.A.) meetings. The possible reason for participating in PTA meetings more so than any other activity may be that parents do not see themselves as having the interest for the many of the other activities. However, P.T.A are generally expected of them so they make the effort to become "involved" twice a term. Again, P.T.A meetings are usually flexible enough to accommodate work schedules, unlike many of the other activities. From this study, even though some parents could not afford the education of their children with disabilities, generally parents supported their children financially by paying their fees and attending Parent Teacher Association meetings (P.T.A). However, this involvement was not up to the level that was required where children with such special needs are involved according to teachers. Parents did not always make the time to check on their special children in the school on their own unless the teachers requested that they do so for one reason or the other. This shows

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that even though they are involved, it is on a superficial level making teachers feel that parents just dump the children on them and do not care much. Results of this study have shown that students achieve more when their parents are involved in their education. This could explain why most of the special children are behind their class academically.

On the other hand while some parents recognise the importance of getting involved in all school activities of their child when given the opportunity, there are others who make their preferences. Implicitly, some parents do not perceive the value of their child with disabilities education; this may be due to lack of understanding and attitudes towards educating children with disabilities. Parents should see themselves as stakeholders in educating their children with disabilities, largely because acceptance starts from the home and failure to provide this care would lead to negative self-image, where the child would not have any feel of belongingness. Likewise, the success of the child depends mainly on how the parents positively feel about the situation and their readiness to get involved in their disabled children's education with their opinions consulted regularly. When it comes to placement of their children in school, most parents involved in this study preferred the regular schools. The main reason for these preferences was that their disabled children would obtain a better education in an ordinary school and would find it easier to come to a socially balanced life. Some parents gave additional information saying that the school met only few of their children's education needs because they realised the school has limitation in the provision of special education needs. Second, they believe the provision of few special teachers in both districts to assist in the class is inadequate. Third, they think many teachers do not understand the issues of disabilities limiting the provision of the children's education needs.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that parents of pupils with special educational needs have important roles to play in identifying the academic and social needs of their children. Parental

involvement assumes central role in their child with disability accessing education and attaining higher academic achievements. Moreover, parents' school based involvement makes children with disabilities feel important and provides an environment of working relationship between the school and the parents. More importantly, the school in a way advises parents on the importance of education to their exceptional children. Thus it helping parents to develop a positive attitude towards the child and conveys the importance of education to the child despite societal perceptions of educating children with disabilities in Ghana. Again, parents' positive attitude will have the potential to reduce or perhaps eliminate negative perceptions and ultimately improve and modify the special education needs service delivery in the school. Implicitly, parental involvement helps parents view their children with disabilities in a more appropriate and positive way. Alternatively, parents' home based involvement is also very important because it creates a parent-child relationship and home learning environment, boosting the child's self-image in the society. Parents who get involved directly in their child with disability's education have effect on the teacher's attitude towards the child's situation and education. Thus, the teacher knowing that the parent is actively involved makes them devote greater attention to relationship with the child and improves the child's school outcome.

As a consequence of the findings of parental involvement it must be noted that in the traditional Ghanaian society parenting involves every member of the family and the family usually suggests both the nuclear and extended family. Therefore parenting or caring for members of the family becomes the responsibility of all the members especially the elderly. In the traditional family system men were considered the bread-winners whiles women took responsibilities of the home. This arrangement has gone through changes and continues to undergo considerable changes in the past years with increase family demands; break down of the extended family system and

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educational opportunities. Traditionally looking at the role of women and their income generating activities which was mostly confined to the informal sector, it will have offered them flexibility to get more involved in the education of their children. Unfortunately as a result of family demands, economic hardship and economic transformation both parents have to work to earn wages to support the family. These lead to changes in gender roles in the family which poses challenges to the parents in meeting their parental demands such as getting involved in their children's education for better educational achievements. Traditionally the responsibility to provide support to members was the role of the whole extended family, now the burden had shifted towards the nuclear family placing additional burden such as time demands to work extra hours to earn income. Thus the extended family bonds which support family members has become less emphasised depriving the nuclear family of care with few resources and inability to help their children. In Ghana there is limited or absence of family support from government for parents not employed and those earning less income restrict them from taking care of their children.

By logical extension, there would be negative effects on children with disabilities whose parents do not get involved in their education which may have long term consequences. Thus they may not value the importance of education as a route out of poverty, reflecting in the child receiving less of it or being denied. Consequently, parents' involvement in their disabled children's education should be a priority, perceived positively and balanced to help these children to improve on their economic and social wellbeing in future. Over all, parents' role in their child with disability education is usually a passive process because most of them see it as the responsibility of the educators.

5.5 Cultural belief, Discrimination and Stigmatisation

In Ghana cultural beliefs and practices permeates daily life which influence attitudes and behaviour towards children with disabilities. Thus spiritual explanation to the causes of disability has eaten into the social fabric of Ghanaian society affecting the provision of services to them. Understanding discrimination and stigmatisation towards person with disabilities demands the exploration and appreciation of Ghanaian cultural beliefs and practices. Therefore it is important to acknowledge Ghanaian cultural beliefs and practice in the provision of education for children with disabilities. Discrimination and stigmatisation of is one of the objectives of the study to find out it effect on accessibility to education for children with disabilities. Discrimination on the basis of disability is defined by article 2 of the UNCPRD as "means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation". It is also refers to the way persons with disabilities are treated, intentional or unintentional due to stigma (Goreczyny et al, 2011). Stigmatisation, on the other hand, refers to the negative and prejudicial ways in which people living with disabilities are labelled (Agbenyega, 2003). The stigma arises from a number of factors; some of which include superstition, ignorance, lack of knowledge and empathy, old belief systems, and a tendency to fear and exclude people who are perceived as different (Avoke, 2002).

Stigmatisation and discrimination against children with disabilities and persons with disabilities in general have existed throughout history in Ghana. Thus, it is deeply rooted in shared attitude, value and beliefs. Disability in Ghana is to some extent still surrounded by stigma and

discrimination and having a child with disabilities is often perceived as curse and punishment from the gods. Discrimination and stigmatisation experienced by children with disabilities is assumed to be a factor for inaccessibility to education. Various conceptions and misconceptions are held by people; for instance, there are such opinions as these group of persons are not human and do not deserve to be educated and many more.

Results from the quantitative study indicate act of discrimination and stigmatisation exist and it is being experienced by children with disabilities in school. This is evidenced by tables (21), (22), (23) and (39). In all, both children and adult respondents indicated that, children with disabilities experience, both directly and indirectly, discrimination in school. Thus, special needs children experience discrimination from their fellow mates through unacceptable attitudes such as shunning their company and incidence of picking on them. It suggests that special education needs children were often the target for teasing and bullying by their peers. This makes it difficult for them to fully get closer to their peers most of the time. While some show support for children with disabilities in one way or the other, most of their peers ridicule them which make children with disabilities feel uncomfortable and sad. Interacting with the children having disabilities, it came out that the stigma they experience was on the low to moderate level. Teachers agree that children with disabilities are only teased occasionally with name calling as the most common form. A teacher's account confirmed the narrations of most special children, "*the other children mock at them because they believe that they are not sensible, and again they believe they are not mature to be amongst the normal human beings*".

These attitudes, one child reflected, made him feel *"lonely"*. Again, they reported that there is more teasing outside the school than their classmates would do. It was noted that the incidence of teasing and bullying comes from the Junior High School (J.H.S) section but rarely happens in the

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lower class. Though teasing was on the moderate level, those who encounter it felt uncomfortable. Discriminatory attitudes reported by some of the children may result in social exclusion. They underestimated their abilities and capabilities and this may be possibly a result of lack of knowledge on the issues of disabilities by teachers, school mates and classmates. Discrimination, though found to be subtle and mild in this study, seems to be pervasive which may discourage children with disabilities and later stop them from attending school.

The school environment is a complex one and if these children are not well accepted emotional problems could set in or be expected. The acts of discrimination and stigmatisation may be a result of negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities in the society. Culturally, negative attitudes may prevent parents from bringing their children with disabilities out to attend school. Historically, exceptional children are perceived as gods, or gift from the gods who are here to stay for a short while, or witches, and also as a curse that has been brought on their families (Avoke, 2000). Therefore, parents do not want to waste their resources on their child with disability since they will not grow to take up any important position in their lives. Consequently not much attention is given to those who are sent to school to acquire knowledge, and develop special skills. These negative perceptions in the society influence the peers who come from the society to school.

Stigmatisation which leads to discrimination may be linked to poor understanding of disability and also inability to relate to the experiences of the children who are affected. This is because the society with the held negative attitudes may empathise with these groups of persons if they understand their situation. In Ghana, there is a history of children without disabilities distancing themselves from those with disabilities and these attitudes reflect in daily relationships with children with disabilities. Stigmatisation and discrimination by peers and lowered expectations from teachers compounds children with disabilities situation by developing low self-

image and negative perceptions thereby defeating the concept of inclusive education which aims at leading to an inclusive society. As a result, children with disabilities are less likely to stay in school due to discrimination and stigmatization. Also some of the children with disabilities are not taken to school at all with the fears that they may not be able to cope. More so, the social stigma may discourage parents from sending their children to school. In response to all these frustrations they experience due to stigmatisation and discrimination, one Special Education Need child noted,

> *"The disabled person should not come to school and also I have no idea about how we can be achievers''.*

This means that, stigmatisation and discrimination being a barrier in school leads to significantly non or lower completion for children with disabilities. This finding is consistent with Kristensen et al (2006), UNICEF (2008), UNESCO (2010) writing which stated that many disabled children do not enrol in school, the social stigma and prejudice may discourage parents from sending their children to school. Likewise, marginalisation and exclusion as a result of stigmatisation and discrimination place these groups of children or people at the lowest part of the society due to denial of equal opportunities such as education.

It can be stated that culturally, in Ghana, the negative attitudes towards disabled individuals are as a result of societal beliefs which undeniably being the main or biggest barrier to children with disabilities accessing education in the mainstream school. Cultural bias is what is translated into stigmatisation leading to discriminatory actions towards children with disabilities. Persons with disabilities in general are considered a curse to the family and society. As a result, most families ingrained in these cultural biases view the birth of a disabled child as disgrace and shameful to the family. These children are hidden and denied the benefits of education as a welfare need. On the other hand, those who are offered the opportunity to attend school possibly may have

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made it through with experiences of cultural biases. Culturally, the quantitative result from table (44) noted that there is quite a high cultural belief system which discriminates against children with disability with overall rating of 3.50 indicating the extent of cultural beliefs being a barrier to educating children with disabilities. This result can be explained by the idea that it is one of the major factors responsible for inaccessibility to education for children with disabilities. Consequently, these beliefs are translated into attitudes which guide the provision of welfare services such as education to include children with disabilities.

From the qualitative interviews, some parents recounted that, at times due to cultural beliefs they find it difficult to bring their disabled child out to go to school because they believed it becomes a source of relief to send them to school. Implicitly, cultural beliefs marginalised children with disabilities preventing them from accessing opportunities meant to be enjoyed by all persons in the Ghanaian society. Understanding disability in a cultural context is critically important subject that deserves serious consideration. The knowledge of traditional beliefs and practices towards disability is important if we are to talk about their education. Every effort is being made, however, to demystify such cultural beliefs to enhance the education of children with disabilities. This is evident by some of the responses given:

"Talking about culture, I believe since the olden days persons with disabilities are not regarded as human beings and even they are killed before they grow up, but those who get the opportunity to grow up are seen as gods and they are being worshipped. Recently as a result of sensitisation I will say people are changing their mind and society is accepting them small but I think on the whole culturally they are not seen as human beings.

Additionally, even though children with disabilities experienced discrimination and stigmatisation in school, the results on stigmatisation and discrimination in the study proved to be

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mild to moderate. The possible conclusion may be that children with disabilities have developed strategies for coping. These coping mechanisms depend on individual child. Some of them use coping strategies such as reporting to the teachers and parents. Children with disabilities face the responsibility for their own adjustment to the school by establishing new relationships to prevent possible or any kind of negative experiences from the school. Gingras et al (1964) pointed out that it is then that the child has to face the responsibility for his own adjustment to the school world. He/she has to establish a new type of relationship with adults; he has to ward off possible attacks (verbal or otherwise) of classmates and to make him or herself acceptable. Also, in Ghana, there has been a very strong national movement to mainstreaming all the children in regular schooling irrespective of attitudes of people. There are legislative framework documented to provide support for implementing inclusive education to end stigmatisation and discrimination in the schools and the larger society. In addition, various educational research and findings, ethical issues, and legislative actions are in the forefront for providing strong support in the implementation of inclusive education and to have inclusive society although there are challenges. Significantly, the essential message of inclusion is to end stigmatization and exclusion of children who are in need of special support services. By law despite stigmatisation and discrimination children with disabilities are at least formally accepted in school irrespective of the negative experiences they encounter. Thus the 1992 constitution of Ghana, spelt out clearly all children must have access to education irrespective of their backgrounds. Equally important are the provisions of the Convention of Right of the Child (UN, 1989), such as the Right of children not to be discriminated against, stated in article 2 and article 23. Article 23 stipulates that children with disabilities should have:

"Effective access to and receive education, training, health care service, rehabilitation service, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development".

From the above findings and discussions on cultural beliefs, discrimination and stigmatisation, it can be concluded that, the traditional cultural beliefs and practices of Ghana contribute to the understanding and explanation of disability and its effect on those affected such as the individual and the family. Therefore, although there have been moves to substantially reduce these barriers violations of the rights of children with disabilities still persist. It is clear that, society must be sensitised to view children with disabilities as part of the society and needs societal support based on reduction in inappropriate cultural beliefs and practices. Thus public information and advocacy is still necessary to increase acceptance and access for persons with disabilities in general.

5.6 Perspective of Inclusive education in Ghana

Inclusive education practices are built around the concept of accessibility and it is essential if children with disabilities are enjoying their right to participation in education. Ghana, since the inception of education many years has provided special education and regular education separately. Education is however said to have improved if a system of education moves away from special education for persons with disabilities towards Inclusive education.

It is worth noting that inclusive education practice in the formal school system in Ghana started as far back in 1961 with the passage of Free Educational Act which increased basic education enrolment. Again there are other legal frameworks such as the 1992 constitution which encouraged and improved inclusive education in Ghana. The passage of the Salamanca Statement

(1994) and Dakar conference (2000) which Ghana signed emphasised more on inclusive education in Ghana. Ministry of Education pursued those rights and the Ghana Education Service in its Education Strategic plan 2003-2015 adapted inclusive education. The Ministry, thus, envisions the achievements of an inclusive education system by 2015. (Special Education Division (SPED), 2005). As a result, both government and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) have supported inclusive education and special needs education in Ghana. In 2003/2004 academic year, the Special Education Division (SpED) of Ghana Education Service (GES) in addressing the policy objectives initiated the implementation of Inclusive Education on pilot basis in fourteen (14) districts of five (5) regions namely, Greater Accra, Eastern, Central, Volta and Northern. Consequently, inclusive education in a developing country like Ghana could be explained as being at its embryonic stage of practice. This is consistent with the notions of WHO and World Bank (2011) which stated that although inclusion is gaining roots in Western countries, the move towards inclusive education is at its early stage of adoption and implementation in developing countries.

Empirical results of the study indicated children with disabilities are included in the mainstream education as a result of general education policies but, there are challenges that needs to be faced before full inclusion can be considered and realised in the Ghanaian school system. This is evident from the result of the interviews conducted. It was realised from the interviews conducted that, inclusive education is not just placing children with disabilities in the mainstream schools but involves the provision of special education needs for them to benefit from education. The understanding of inclusive education in the two study areas suggest that some teachers and head teachers involved in the practice of inclusive education view inclusive concept as a right based approach. Thus their understanding is that inclusive education is a policy issue captured in the Free Compulsory Basic Education policy in Ghana and no child should be denied especially

children with disabilities. They believe every child has the right to attend school and should be given that opportunity without any denial. This is what one teacher said:

Inclusive education, I believe, is very good because since it is a policy, it is seen as the right of the person with disability. This is when the disabled child comes to the mainstream school to learn together with their friends who are not disabled.

Thus head teacher's involvement in inclusive education was being informed by the numerous general legal frameworks of education in Ghana which gave them no option but to accept the practice. Interviewing the core people such as the Education officers, it was evident that they attach importance to the practice of inclusive education in Ghana because they perceive themselves as one of the main implementers / stakeholders. The Education officers' perception of inclusive education is in line with both international and local education policies concerning persons with disabilities in general. The Education officers gave a detailed meaning and understanding of inclusive education relating it to all marginalised children and not only to children with disabilities. They further emphasised that attention should be given to children with disabilities because they are the most marginalised in the society. According to head teachers interviewed, inclusive education has helped both children with disabilities as well as children without disabilities with regards to learning to respect and accept different individuals in the society. In addition, they believe inclusive education may lead to more inclusive society if preconceived ideas concerning persons with disabilities are eliminated or removed. Therefore head teachers' expectations of teachers to implement inclusive education practice were high not regarding the unavailability of resources or the numerous challenges. This finding disagrees with Kuyini, (2006,2007,2008) indicating head teachers' expectations of teachers to implement

inclusion activities were quiet low or organisational approaches adopted by schools did not promote inclusion. It must be noted that the role of heads of school is central and crucial as they are part of the main stakeholders in developing successful inclusive practices in the schools. For example other researches have highlighted the critical role of the school leaders and there is wide agreement on the key dimensions of leadership, including, setting out values and vision, providing institutional leadership, promoting teacher learning and development, improving the curriculum, managing resources and building collaboration both within and beyond the school, in particular supporting the development of other schools and leaders to improve the entire system, (Leith wood & Levin, 2005; Day et al., 2006; McKinsey, 2007; Robinson, 2007, and Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009).

Besides, some teachers' attitudes related positively towards inclusive education, evident by field report. On the whole, there were few negative attitudes towards having children with disabilities in their classroom. The possible conclusion may be as a result of educators submitting to and pursuing the general education policies of Ghana which requires educating all school going age children irrespective of their background. More so, training workshops for resource teachers may have helped by sensitising the regular classroom teacher on the issues of disabilities. Thus, the districts run 'train – the – trainer' programs for resource persons to assist and sensitise teachers in the various schools on how to handle children with disabilities in their classroom.

It is worth noting that, these educational policies that head teachers and teachers recognise as the rights of children including children with disabilities are not able to meet the special education child's needs. Therefore, the insufficient education policies could prevent children with disabilities from accessing and benefiting from education despite the free education for all children. This suggests that these policy provisions are so far inadequate

and inappropriate in addressing the educational needs of children with disabilities in school. That is there is limited implementation of policies for successful inclusive education. Schools fall short in their practical implementation due to a variety of reasons many of which are outside the school control. An example of a major challenge has been difficulty in changing the established attitudes and behaviours acting as barriers to any change in the school and the larger society. More so failure of the community to change their attitudes may be due to lack of deeper understanding of inclusive education being a process of systematic and structural change. Again, lack of interest in the development and implementation of educational policies for persons with disabilities may be as a result of protection of segregated education. Inclusive Education would be very effective in promoting social inclusion and demystifying stereotypes associated with disabilities and the education of children with disabilities.

Furthermore, the special education services provision to handicapped children, is to some extent could not be provided by all the schools visited as the quantitative finding noted. Thus children, parents, and teachers' responses were consistent in that, the provision of special education services was moderate as indicated by the quantitative study. This can be inferred from tables 12 and 37. Table 11 established the children had, overall, a moderate feeling with respect to special education provision by the mean approval rating of 3.01 (Moderate). Accordingly, table 34 indicated an overall moderate rating of 3.10 for special education services provision. Clearly, it suggests that the provision of special education services for children with disabilities was limited to the practice of inclusive education. This view was also proved by the qualitative result. The interviewee teacher pointed out that they run the normal school; thus, there is nothing like the provision of special education services except counseling, extra curriculum classes which is organized for the whole school, not necessarily children with disabilities, and at times

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identification of learning needs. All other variables were limited with regards to the practice of inclusive education.

Moreover, there is hardly any acknowledgement of traditional beliefs and practice in relation to developing policies and programs to the education of children with disabilities. Thus, implementing and practicing inclusive education will need recognition of Ghanaian traditional education to help understand basic attitudes and cultural modification leading to societal change. This is because inclusive education is a highly controversial concept in education which relates to the cultural beliefs, values, and practices as well as dominating concept of individual worth and dignity. More so, Ghanaian societies have cared for and educated their disabled members for many years which have been overlooked in our modern education system and it is a significant barrier to expanding access to education to children with disabilities. It appears the colonial legacy of education in Ghana has not changed much; Ghana models its education practice on her colonial masters which has implication for inclusive education. For instance, Dahlberg & Moss (2005) noted that, colonial form of schooling considers schooling as simply receiving knowledge from a superior authority for replication.

However, if the pedagogical landscape of the Ghanaian schooling systems privilege teachers' authority and knowledge over learners then individuals with learning difficulties will be further subjugated, (Agbenyega, J. & Deku, P., 2011). These suggest that the practice of inclusive education in Ghana must incorporate individual national identity with respect to the local context situation to help address the challenges and promote effective and efficient practice. Linking the broader Ghanaian values and beliefs will contribute to the education of children with disabilities. It will also eliminating negative preconceive ideas of persons with disabilities and to achieve the goal of inclusive education.

5.6.1 Availability of resources and other factors affecting inclusive education

There are other factors that emerged during the study which inhibit the practice and progress of inclusive education in Ghana. These factors are resources needed to make the practice of inclusive education feasible and lack of it becomes a barrier. The importance of resources must be acknowledge to achieve the aims of inclusive education. However table 7 indicated that generally there was lack of resources such as education support materials with an overall low mean and standard deviation of rating 2.66 and 0.24 respectively. Thus, inclusive education goes beyond access to school; it should include supportive resources to enhance and facilitate the practice of inclusive education. Admittedly, learning and educational benefit basically takes place when there is availability of resources to meet the educational needs of learners. For instance, the provision of material resources and funds for practicing inclusive education is inadequate to meet the needs of children with disabilities in school. Inadequate resources can be linked to unequal conditions and provisions because resources are always short in relation to demand. The issue of lack of resources is evident by some teachers and they had this to say,

> *"I think inclusive is good but the concept should be embraced with the needed resources and materials to make education accessible to all".*

First, a resource which is one of the biggest challenge facing schools throughout Ghana is funding. Funding is the most critical of all the challenges associated with the practice of Special Education Need (SEN) in the country. There is no money set aside for special education needs for the mainstream schools within the regular budget allocation. It is believed that educating these groups of children needs extra financial support to meet their basic educational needs in school; thus, resources allocated must be reviewed. The bulk of funding to SEN comes from the central government of Ghana and it is woefully inadequate to cater for the needs of the schools. Inadequate

funding means that SEN programs cannot be funded and, subsequently, pupils have to do without meeting their education needs thus affecting the quality of education for children with disabilities (MOESS, 2008; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; MOE, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988). The Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2007) report estimates that the average cost of putting students with special educational needs in segregated placements is seven to nine times higher than educating them in general classrooms.

In addition, the majority of Children with disabilities come from economically weak background in the society; therefore, they need support in all aspects of their lives to go through school. Lack of and limited financial commitment on the part of the government and school to support exceptional children's education lead to ineffective implementation and practice of Inclusive Education. Governments do not see the need or find it difficult to spend money on children with disability. This could be explained by the idea that the government made up of people coming from the society are being guided by societal beliefs and negative attitudes towards people with disabilities. Children without disabilities are thus given priority due to the limited funds available and also because they are the majority. Generally, education in Ghana is supported by donors or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) but unfortunately it cannot be continued and sustained after the donors withdraw their support. This leads to deterioration in general education services provision, not only with inclusive education. This is evidenced by World Bank report (1996) which indicated that educational services are deteriorating as a result of severe decrease in funding in many countries.

Apart from financial resources, there is also the barrier of architectural buildings in the schools. Almost all the schools involved in the study are physically inaccessible to learners with disabilities especially those who use mobility devices. Thus the structure of the school buildings

is designed in a way that most of these groups of children find it difficult to get to their classrooms and move around in school on a daily basis. Inaccessibility renders children with disabilities in these schools unsafe and they need personal assistance in order to access these poorly designed structures. One parent noted in the interview:

> *For example, my child's disability has got to do with his legs so he needs*
>
> *easy access to the school environment but unfortunately there are no ramps*
>
> *in the schools and he always have to struggle on to get to his classroom. At*
>
> *times the friends have to carry him to the class.*

All the schools visited did not have ramps, or wide doorways, and these exceptional children have to find other pupils to assist them get to their classrooms. Along with inaccessible school buildings and classrooms, the classroom furniture, playgrounds and washrooms are difficult to use and those with wide doorways had higher threshold which makes it inaccessible for the wheelchair and Cain user. Most of the classroom furniture does not support pupils with disabilities and they have difficulty using them. Also, there are no specific toilets or adapted toilets for children with disabilities in all the schools visited; the existing ones could only be used by their non- disabled peers. There are no staff available to help them and this may prevent them from coming to school. Most importantly pupils with assistive devices are not able to use the classrooms because there is no space due to large class size which defeats their purpose of joining their non-disabled peers to learn together. Many times children without disabilities carry their friends with disabilities to the class rooms due to the architectural and environmental barriers. As well, some parents have to carry them to school; they cannot afford public transport and private transport is too expensive for them.

Consequently, lack of transportation and associated cost could make schools inaccessible to children with disabilities. Fundamentally, the reality is that the regular school environment is not disability friendly making the practice of inclusive education difficult. Further, most of these buildings unfortunately cannot be modified because it may be very expensive and authorities find it difficult to use the little administrative funds available. Therefore the schools are not equipped to respond to the educational needs of children with disabilities. This infringes on the rights of PWDs according to MOESS (2008); Agbenyega (2002); Avoke, (2002); Casely-Hayford (2002); MOE (2002); Anson-Yevu (1988).These physical barriers pose challenge to learning and participation of children with disabilities and there is the need to improve on the physical environment in the schools.

Secondly, inaccessibility goes beyond the architectural building design; large class size is a very critical factor that impedes inclusive education. There is high increase in school enrolment due to governments' education and social protection strategy policies of enrolling all school going age children in Ghana. Due to social protection strategies such as the free feeding programmes offered through the capitation grants, the pupil teacher ratio has tripled to an average of 80 to 120 pupils per teacher. Consequently, it has effects on the work load of teachers with more than 100 pupils in their class, especially in Greater Accra region, being a large area. A possible interpretation is that, the situation is worst in the cities as a result of urbanisation. This means the number of pupils in a class exceeds the number of classrooms available and therefore the children are overcrowded. Teachers have to contend with classes with more than 30 pupils/students, the maximum local prescribed class size (ESP, 2010-2020). Teachers said they are not able to give attention to children with disabilities due to large class size.

Large classes may be viewed as an obstacle to the successful implementation of inclusive education noted, (Agran, Alper, & Wehmeyer, 2002; Prochnow, Kearney, & Carroll-Lind, 2000; Van Reusen et al., 2001). Larger classes place additional demands on the regular educator, while reinforcing concern that all students may not receive proper time or attention (Stoler, 1992; Van Reusen et al., 2001). Thus teachers are burdened to manage large classes which includes children with disabilities with varied range of their educational needs requiring more time and demands from teachers. Large classes hinder and prevent individual attention and participation in classroom and it may be worst for the children with disability. Also, it hinders the provision of learning needs by teacher to the pupil with special education needs. Most teachers expressed helplessness to help these groups of children due to large class size. The practice of inclusive education under such circumstances may not be possible. As consequence, Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2010 to 2020 states that the teacher-pupil ratio should be made from the country average 1:45 in urban areas and 1:15 to 1:30 in rural areas instead of 100 pupils in a class. Small class sizes and teacher pupil ratios could be desirable for practicing inclusive education. Class size affects the attention and quality of education children with disabilities receives. This situation causes increasing concern about the competence of public schools in Ghana.

Moreover, the curriculum is a critical tool that affects the implementation and the practice of inclusive education in Ghana. It is an important barrier to learning by pupils with disabilities and the practice of inclusive education. Therefore, the findings of the study found little evidence on access to curriculum for children with disabilities. According to Davis and Sumara, (2010) curriculum should be more a path laid while walking than a preselected route and they suggested that a curriculum must not only allow for participation but also be organised around participation. Thus there is gap in the curriculum development and delivery in meeting special education needs.

The inflexibility of the curriculum prevents it from meeting the diverse learning needs of learners with special education needs.

It must be stressed that a Ghana's school curriculum is subject based, highly rigid and demanding with or without flexibility for teachers to modify it to try out new ways of delivering. The curricular is one of the difficult areas for both teachers and children with disabilities due to the individual education needs. The content is far from meeting the education needs of the diverse range of different learners. Flexibility in curriculum could help teachers to modify it with the help of the resource persons to accommodate all children with varied learning needs. This is because teachers lack the competence necessary to modify the curriculum. Even when the curriculum is modified and different teaching methods are used the same methods are not used to examine them. Children with disabilities take the same examination with their non - disabled peers without considering the method they used to teach them in the classroom. This allows minimal opportunity for children with disabilities to progress or continue with their education due to inaccessibility to curriculum. Therefore, it could be unfair to assess pupils with disabilities using the same methods as their non - disabled peers.

The process of assessment is mostly inflexible as a result of rigid curriculum and leads to repetition of class by these group of children. That is children with disabilities who experience difficulties in their learning and examinations are retained in the class. Even though the age gap is significant between the special education needs child and other children to move to the next stage. Resources devoted to a repeater are resources that could have been used to permit another child to enter school or to improve the quality of education for learners already there (UNESCO, 1998). Repetition of class at times frustrates these groups of children and they become drop outs since

they cannot move on with their peers or age mates. Dropout rates may increase among children with special needs when they are included in regular schools that have not undertaken a comprehensive set of institutional, curricular and pedagogical changes. Sometimes families are happy with repetition since they feel their child will be more 'protected' in the familiar environment. This confirms the assertion of Kristensen et al (2006), UNICEF (2008), and UNESCO (2010) that the social stigma and prejudice may discourage parents from sending their children to school. Repetition impacts negatively on children who could not benefit from additional support in the classroom. Lack of adequate education remains the key risk factor for poverty and exclusion for all children both disabled and non-disabled. For children with disabilities, however, the risk of poverty due to lack of education may be even higher than for children without disability.

Development of appropriate adaptations of educational curricula for diverse groups of children in school is a difficult area for education providers. In Ghana, there is no attention given to differentiation or adaptation of teaching and learning strategies, even though much focus is given to improve education quality. The only focus given to ensure quality education is the presence of general teaching and learning materials that can help pupils acquire the skills emphasized in the curriculum (MoE 2011A, MoE 2011B). Again, lessons planning are not done with children with disabilities in mind; Ghana's school curriculum is subject based and highly limited to children without disabilities. Thus, children with disabilities find it difficult to manage since it is not tailored to meet their needs to benefit from education. Rigidity of curriculum affects learning and benefits of education for children with disabilities.

Responses from teachers indicate that teachers are aware of using different methods in class to help children with disabilities. This is because findings of the study shows that pupils with

special educational needs can benefit from flexible methods approach to curriculum delivery. However, there are barriers such as lack of skills of class room teachers, specialised teaching learning materials for delivery and shortage of special educators to make the curriculum flexible. Head teachers and teachers complained they are under resourced in terms of curriculum flexibility to support children with disabilities in school for better educational experience and benefits. Some teachers rely on resource teachers even though in the results some teachers saw resource teachers as distractors in meeting their targets for the school term. Others value the support from these resource teachers, they are specialised trained educators working with regular classroom teachers to help pupils/students to have access to flexible curriculum and to meet their learning needs. These resource teachers are also under equipped and need additional support to ensure flexible curriculum delivery for maximum participation for children with disabilities in the mainstream schools.

In addition, there is also lack of resources such as Teaching Learning Materials (TLMs) to help teach children with disabilities in the regular class. Teaching Learning Materials unavailability is one of the ways in which children with disabilities are excluded from having access to curriculum. As a result, education children with disabilities receive do not address their actual needs to meet the demands of society and to improve on their living standard. Schools are not given the requisite material or equipment they may need to help teach these groups of children. This mostly results in poor academic performance which is evidenced by the fact that children with disabilities are sent to school because the law allows it. Again, they are expected to compete with their non - disabled peers on merit who have access to the TLMs and few of these children with disabilities make it to the higher level of education in Ghana. Barriers to TLMs affect children with disabilities in learning and

participating in education. Some of these children need assistive devices to help participate in learning in the mainstream school system. For example, the child with visual impairment may need braille to assist him or her learn effectively and lack of it will prevent learning to take place. However teachers in the class room should be supported with the appropriate Teaching Learning Materials to provide appropriate and quality teaching to children with disabilities.

For instance, the teaching method and learning materials should attach due importance to the unique learning needs of all children including children with disabilities. Unfortunately, the curriculum content does not provide the goals of learning and education for children with disabilities is not able to develop individual capabilities due to lack of modification. In line with the later, it is suggested that an inclusive curriculum should also focus on the full development of the child: the cognitive, emotional, creative and social development (Mittler 2000, UNESCO 2009). TLMs play very significant role on pupils' performance; therefore, the unavailability of it leads to poor academic performance and achievements. Thus there will be significant learning outcome for children with disabilities if the teaching and learning materials are provided to meet their learning needs. Thus, these TLMs should be part of the teaching strategy to support teachers to enhance quality education.

Moreover, lack of competency on the part of teachers is also a common and an important barrier to access quality education for children with disabilities. Mainstream classroom teachers are one of the primary stakeholders for achieving successful goals of inclusive education. Implicitly the acquisition of knowledge and skills of teachers or educators is very important and needs to be developed and improved for practicing inclusive education. Employing competent and effective teachers is very crucial to practice inclusive education in Ghana. Regular teachers in

Ghana receive insufficient information about inclusive needs during their training. The teacher training colleges do not equip teachers adequately to teach children with special educational needs in regular schools. The component of special education subject in the teacher training is not very detailed as compared to the special education program run for teachers undertaking specialised program in degree. Consequently, teachers feel inadequately trained and reluctant to support pupils with special education needs in school. For instance Ackah (2010) asserted that generally, mainstream classroom teachers do not support inclusive education as a result of teachers lacking the necessary equipment and training to handle disability issues they encounter in the classroom. Most special educational needs training are geared towards education in special schools. Therefore regular teachers are under trained in special education and under resourced to help special education needs pupils in their classes. As a result teachers in the regular schools may not have the required training or knowledge in handling and teaching children with disabilities. That is, they do not have the skills of diverse teaching strategies and support system in inclusive schools and this may be linked to some of them their attitudes about inclusive education. Consistent with Kuyini (2004), and Kuyini and Desai (2006), some Ghanaian principals and teachers' possessed limited knowledge of the requirements of inclusion and such educators were unlikely to have any reasonable capacity to provide appropriate instruction.

Furthermore, assistance from special educators is inadequate or at times not available to help pupils with special education learning needs. This is due to limited number of special educators in the various districts. Lack of well-trained regular teachers has negative effect on the educational experience of these groups of children. Special education training for mainstream teachers will equip them to support children with disabilities in school. Also, training of regular classroom teachers will help them to acquire knowledge of accommodating children with special

education needs and also deliver an appropriate curriculum. Lack of in service staff development with regards to professional training leads to incompetency of teachers in assisting pupils with special education needs. More so lack of training leads to deficiency in skills and knowledge acquisition by teachers to provide the needed education for children with disabilities. It presents a challenge to the entire practice of inclusive education in Ghana. Therefore there is the need for specialist training for all categories of mainstream classroom teachers to enhance effective practice of inclusive education. Initial professional training is very important but in service training of all educational personnel to acquire knowledge and understand the concept of inclusive education is crucial. It will help to compensate for inadequate and unavailability of special educators in the regular classroom. The absence of in service training of educators may lead to low self-esteem and lack of innovation in teaching children with diverse learning needs and practising inclusive education. Additionally as indicated by the study lack of appropriate training leads to negative teacher's attitudes towards inclusive education. Human resource development contributes to appropriate and adequate provision of learning to children with disabilities. Therefore lack of training and skill acquisition contributes to most regular class room teachers' unpreparedness to meet the diverse needs of learners in their classrooms, becoming a barrier to learning.

Essentially, the principle of inclusive education is a human right issue which has been accepted widely. The right to education is a right to an offering of service from which the child ought to be able to benefit. The practice of Inclusive education in Ghana is laudable to bridge the gap between the marginalised particularly children with disabilities and the non - marginalised in the society. It aims at bringing all the children of school going age into the classroom especially children with disabilities who are out of school. Although there has been opposing and supportive views, inclusive education provides the understanding and acceptance of diversity in the school

and the larger society. For example, concerns raised by both head teachers and teachers with respect to practising inclusive education may be explained as unavailability of resources and lack of professional competency which is inhibiting the practice of inclusive education. Children with disabilities in the regular school tend to be accepted due to educational policies according to the findings of the study but the schools are limited in satisfying their learning needs. As a result of these limitations, clearly, the results of the study have shown that attitudes of teachers have effect on their commitment on practising inclusive education in the two selected areas in Ghana. Even though inclusive education is accepted due to general educational policies, it is important to acknowledge it is not yielding appropriate educational outcome for children with disabilities. This is due to barriers such as unavailability of resources in terms of physical and material resources, teachers' incompetence (lack of training), limited policies and many more. For instance, Ocloo & Subbley (2008) noted that the concerns about lack of resources for supporting students with special educational needs were particularly common in resource poor countries such as Ghana. A lack of adapted teaching and assessment materials such as Braille is seen as a barrier to access the curriculum for those with visual impairments.

Finally Inclusive Education is a big goal and in Ghana it has a role to play in the development of an inclusive society. Devaluing the education of these groups of children due to socio cultural practices results in their exclusion from education. It is necessary that importance should be given to the values and beliefs of the various communities in Ghana for successful modification in social orientation regarding the practice of inclusive education. Indeed, to make any significant progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education For All (EFA) goal of universal primary education by 2015 in Ghana, concerted efforts must be made to ensure all children, including children with disabilities, have access to quality, effective,

and relevant education tailored towards their educational needs that can transform them to become accepted in the society with reference to the existing Ghana traditional education.

5.7 School Progression

One of the main concerns of this study is to investigate the opportunities provided for children with disabilities' progression in school. School progression here is explained in this study as children with disabilities moving from one stage to another till the advance stage in education to school transition. Overall, the children gave a low (2.36) to moderate (3.23) approval rating to statements concerning school progression for children with disabilities. Similarly parents' and teachers' responses also established school progression to be moderately low (2.59) for children with disabilities. This can be seen from tables 14 and 36. This means that school progression for children with disabilities is limited as a result of low opportunities offered to them. Children with disability lack encouragement and motivation to progress through to the advanced stage in school. From the findings of the study, children with visual impairment and the intellectually challenged, particularly, experience repetition in grades and non - progression. For example, children with visual impairment were more likely to repeat a class as a result of non-performance and the intellectually challenged child faces limited or lack of motivation to progress further. Consequently it suggests that most of them are likely to drop out of school and not benefiting from education. The intellectually challenged child is essentially unable to obtain such a full education and consequently faced with an inevitable drop out and become social and economically handicap. The best that can be done for such an individual is to minimise his difficulties by giving him/her as much education he/she is able to receive and use. This is in a way making up for the deficiencies by giving him/her social protection in later life against the hazards to which his lack of education will expose him/her. Some particular types of disabilities are regarded not to progress through

education than others and an example is the intellectually challenged who were considered not to be in regular classroom or school.

It can be explained that these groups of children who repeat or drop out of school may be the result of inappropriate education in terms of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of their learning needs. Appropriate education in this study can be defined as the provision of regular or special education, related aids and services that are designed to meet individual educational needs of children with disabilities. Appropriate education must be offered in a proper educational setting as much as the needs of children without disabilities are met. For example, children with visual impairments require specific interventions and modifications with respect to their provision of special learning materials. Unfortunately most schools involved in this study lack these special materials to enhance the learning and progression of children with visual impairments and the intellectually challenged. In general there was low mean rating responses for educational support variables and education participation with overall mean of 2.66 and 2.79, respectively, which is also substantially low approval rating tables 8 and 9. The education goals for children with visual impairment may be the same as for those without disabilities if the appropriate learning materials are provided. These groups of children should share the same learning opportunities provided for their friends without disabilities in the school and classroom. Therefore the provision of special education needs related to the disability must be provided to ensure appropriate education benefit. Indeed, the lack of provision of educational needs of exceptional children are certain to find their school and classroom experience incomprehensible, not meaningful and non-beneficial. This means that appropriate education should be tailored towards the needs of the child with disabilities and to meet the demands of the contemporary situation of the society in which they live and help in nation development. Moreover most schools

involved lack Individual Education Program (IEP) designed to help identify the needs of the child with disability to participate and to advance or progress through education successfully.

Conversely, the children with physical disabilities who have no learning impairments can achieve their greatest potentials in mainstream classroom. A child with a simple physical disability such as a missing limb or leg will have it very easy to be included in mainstream educational setting with basic technical help and modification in school environment. To some extent a child with physical disability is more likely to progress because it does not limit the child's performance academically and can be educated for the fullest possible living within the limited range.

It is worth mentioning, the regular public schools in Ghana have not always met the educational needs of the child with disabilities as adequately as the child without disability to help him/her progress through education and improve on his/her situation. This is true in that, though the public schools are government schools they lack the provision of resources needed to develop and practice inclusive education. Children with disabilities, even though they could get placement in the regular education schools, they are limited in the provision of special education needs that may require to meet learning needs and school progression. This could lead to the argument that children with disabilities may be adversely affected in some ways of participation and progressing successfully when brought into the regular school.

Briefly, school progression and appropriate public education indicate that children with disabilities could successfully go through education, especially for the physically disabled who do not have other learning difficulties. More so some teachers think that, particular type of disabled children will progress through education successfully than others; an example is the intellectually challenged children who may be unable to obtain full education successfully, compared to the children with physical disabilities who can receive full formal academic education since they are

in full possession of their learning capacities. For children with disabilities to progress in school, they should be provided with their special education learning needs appropriately to help them meet the demands of life and the society at large.

5.8 Adopted theoretical implication to the study

The adoption of the various theories used for the studies is in line with findings and it reflects the phenomenon studied. Firstly, the social model used in the study from the findings indicated that, most of the children with disabilities' negative experiences of education are due to societal negative perceptions. This statement is clearly in support of the social model which identifies society as the main contributory factor to the exclusion of children with disabilities in the society. Negative societal attitudes and systematic barriers create obstacle and determine the treatment given to children with disabilities. Secondly, the result maintains and supports the poverty theory of human capital formation. The findings proved that disability is a function of poverty and children with disabilities could break the generational cycle of poverty if they benefit from education. Education is seen as enhancing human capital formation through the acquisition of knowledge and skills to compete and meet the demand on the labour market. Thus findings proved that poverty affects children with disabilities education outcome negatively and in many cases they experience multiple deprivations in the education system. Children with disabilities are worst in many ways of economic wellbeing leading to denial of many opportunities in the society.

In addition the third theory adopted, Bronfenbrenner's ecological system was used to explain children with disabilities functioning and interaction in the environments. Thus environmental barriers prevent exceptional children from participating which have negative impact on their development, especially in accessing services in the environment (Society) to help improve on their living condition. The theory was used as a framework to find out the effects of

the three levels in the educational experiences of exceptional children. However, consistent with the findings, all the levels function to help children with disabilities access inclusive education. The micro level is the family level where the first point of interaction takes place and it is the most influential. The interaction that takes place at the micro level is very fundamental and critical for the child's development. It lays the foundation for developing emotions and building good self-image and highlights the interaction of the other system in society. The micro level is where acceptance begins and failure to show a sense of acceptance and belonging impacts negatively on the child and affects his or her interaction with the other systems. For example, children in this study face two continuum of relationship in the family, love and neglect. The relationship they get at home affects their relationships with others outside the family circles which can be both positive and negative depending on the level of acceptance at home. This suggests that there is an extension of the level of feeling at home to the outside community. From the study, children whose parents showed them care and love both in school and home had attention from teachers in their studies.

Secondly, the meso level is the interaction at the school between the peers, and the bigger society; therefore, the child's acceptance and a sense of belonging at home leads to better interaction between the individual, local community(society), and social institution (school). At this level societal force influences the child's interaction. Negative perceptions create unfriendly environment in society and school. The society is the place where values, norms and other resources are provided for its members to function effectively. These beliefs, values and norms of the society form the basis of our perception to educate children with disabilities. Again, the cultural beliefs in the society are passed on from generation to generation entrenched in the individual living in the society. Cultural beliefs cut across all the levels and have great influence on the

relationships they have with persons with disability. Negative perception of children with disabilities from the findings to some extent still persists in Ghana which needs attention.

The macro level is the biggest level and policies falls within this category which determines the relationships and interactions between the other levels. Public policies and practices is part of the macro system which determines the specific properties of the micro, exo and meso system that occur at the level of everyday life and steer the course of behavior. Also with the acceptance of these groups of children in the family, the society and school will be based on development and implementation of policies at all the levels. Confirming the findings of the study, with regards to the macro system, there is inadequate unique policies formulated towards inclusive education to help exceptional children benefit from education. It must be noted that, most of the respondents had little or no knowledge of the disability ACT (715) portraying the level of ignorance, lack of interest and failure of the education system to conscientise people on disabilities issues.

The three theories adopted to help explain the study were consistent with the results of the study which highlighted the holistic situation of children with disabilities.

DIAGRAM

The diagram below summaries the factors influencing inclusive education in two selected areas in Ghana. These factors from the study proved to be affecting the practice and successful inclusive education in Ghana. The factors interconnect in a way of complimenting each other, suggesting that successful implementation of inclusive education is basically dependent on addressing the negative areas of these identified factors. Any one of these factors or lack of any may affect inclusion and the quality of education provision for children with disabilities. A successful inclusive education will need understanding of these identified factors that may be barriers, to help prevent or eliminate these obstacles.

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Figure 3: A diagram illustrating the factors affecting inclusive education in Ghana
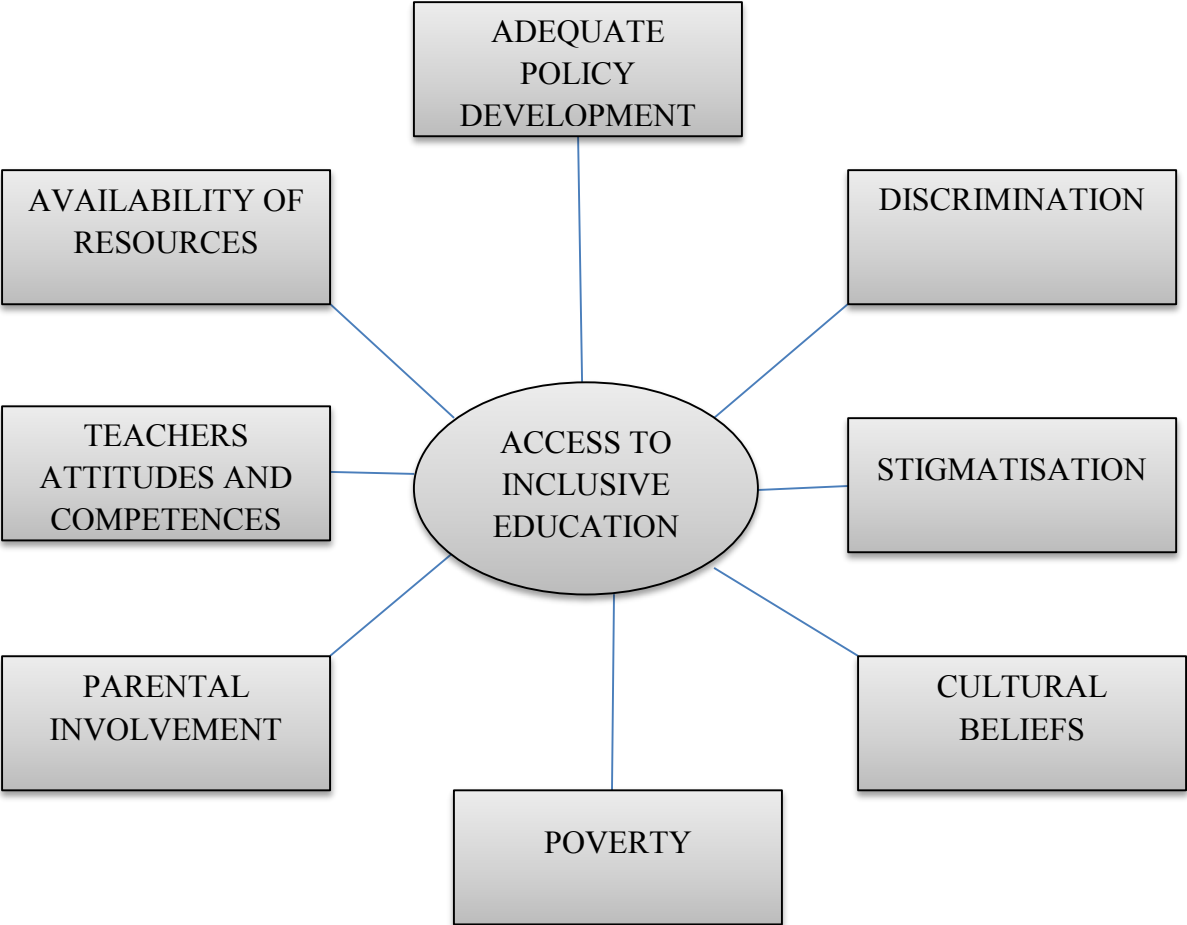
CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

The study seeks to investigate accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities in two selected areas in Ghana. The study examined the factors of accessibility considering the barriers children with disabilities encounter in accessing education in spite of the general education policies and passage of the disability Act 715. The study opens with background to the entire work given the current situation of children with disabilities in accessing education. The background gives the setting of the study which includes the problem studied, the objectives of the study, purpose of the study, and the theoretical framework. Three theories were adopted for the study to demonstrate the understanding of the phenomena being studied. These include the social model, poverty theory of human capital formation and Bronfenbrenners ecological framework. Literature was reviewed based on the objectives of the study in nine thematic areas such as the developmental path of education in Ghana, present status of the education system in Ghana, funding of education in Ghana, concept of inclusion and successful inclusion, teachers' attitude towards inclusive education, parental involvement, cultural bias, discrimination and stigmatisation, policies assessment, poverty and disability and other relevant literatures to the study. The literature critically looked at the existing research that is significant to the study by bringing out the relationship between different writings and relating it to the study.

The literature or written work on children with disabilities' educational experiences is not extensive in Ghana and comes mainly from the Western countries. That is, there were very few publications that focused on Ghana and most of the published literature was from international perspective. The study used mixed method approach such as quantitative and qualitative due to the nature of the information needed for the study. The two methods were used to complement

each other, by taking advantage of each other's weaknesses. The quantitative method was used to generate occurrences and numeric data through standardised processes while the qualitative method helped to describe the complexity of the occurrences through in depth discussions on a broader context. Self-administered questionnaire and interviews were the main instruments used for the data collection. The sampling procedures used for getting participants were simple random and purposive sampling. It must be noted that the sample of the study is not representative of the whole of Ghana; it is a survey of two selected districts (New Juabeng and Ga East Municipalities) in the Eastern and Greater Accra Regions of Ghana respectively. In addition, the study relied on two approaches to analyse the information gathered. First, quantitative analysis used Statistics Product and Service Solutions (SPSS). All appropriate statistics was run on the information gathered; the result of each variables were tabulated and percentages drawn to describe the final result. Second, qualitative analysis relied on reported narrations bringing out the important themes relevant to the objectives and literature of the study.

On the whole, inclusion of children with disabilities in the mainstream class has been a laudable move in Ghana for the last few years. This could be perhaps due to the global trends in education to meet the contemporary demands of globalisation with respect to improving standard of living. Available information from the study suggests that even though children with disabilities are included in the mainstream education, these groups of children face many barriers to quality education. That is with the free education policy more children are being offered educational opportunities than ever before but, there are some hidden from public and do not get access. Ghana's commitment and compliance to global agenda for improving and enhancing the welfare needs of children with its various policy frameworks cannot be overemphasized. Thus laws and

policies have been developed and passed but remain failed at the practice level leaving the situation of children with disabilities unchanged.

In Ghana, the concept of inclusive education is limited and to some extent is not leading to the appropriate education outcome for children with disabilities. This is due to unavailability of resources, lack of human resource development (limited educators' competencies), sociological factors (stigmatisation and discrimination), limited policies and lack of commitment from government and stakeholders to meet the educational needs of these groups of children. It is disturbing that many years after the Salamanca conference and the passage of Ghana disability law, there have been little attempts in formulating separate policies and programs to protect the educational rights of children with disabilities. In line with the findings of the study, it suggests that children with disabilities in Ghana are often not given the equal opportunities like their non-disabled counterparts to enjoy meaningful education in the mainstream school system. Ghana promised to achieve universal primary education by 2015. According to UNESCO (2011), despite progress it has cautioned that unless countries redouble their efforts there will be an increase in the number of children who are not in school from the 2008 estimate of 67 million to a higher number. However the results of the study indicate that attitudes need to be changed through awareness creation for successful implementation of inclusive education in Ghana. In addition the findings and discussions of the study, clearly shows that inclusive education has been embraced with a lot of limitation to its practice in Ghana.

Socially, people's understanding and perceptions of disabilities lead to obstacles and non-progression in the lives of persons with disabilities in the society. The Ghanaian concept of inclusive education is giving too little attention to the society's cultural uniqueness in terms of traditional education and society development. Though there seem to be gradual acceptance of

these groups of children in the regular school system, there are obstacles both structural and attitudinal which mostly emerge from Ghanaian traditional values and needs to be overcome for complete and successful inclusion education practice. Therefore until Ghana developed specific inclusive education policies and programs separate from the main education policies and given attention to traditional values, education would be far from the Ghanaian school system, denying children with disabilities their fundamental human rights.

Overall, from the two study areas Ga East and New Juabeng, inclusive education has been rolled but there are challenges that need to overcome before the education system can fully practice. The study showed that children with disabilities are enrolled in the mainstream schools but their numbers are far less than those out of school. It proves that irrespective of the barriers encountered in both study areas, the practice of inclusive education is adopted without adequate evidence about its effectiveness in Ghana. More so the findings from both study areas, draw attention to the need to develop comprehensive strategies and approaches to inclusive education. Most importantly the research showed that attitudes are highly critical to the success of inclusive education. Therefore the society has a role to play in promoting inclusion, if it is to become anything other than an expectation of the education system. Thus all stakeholders, both government and non-government, must help to ensure that there is the provision of quality and equal access to inclusive education.

6.2 Recommendation

The results of the study above indicated that children with disabilities have access to education in Ghana but are not reaping the full benefit of education as a result inability to meet their education needs in the mainstream school. Thus there are challenges needed to be resolved to have successful inclusive education practice. In light of the responses and discussions, the

following recommendation has been suggested to address the imbalance in the education system for successful and full implementation of inclusive education.

- First, the way of addressing this imbalance is to foremost change people's attitudes towards persons with disabilities in the society to reduce stigmatisation and discrimination. Change of attitudes in the society is very important because attitudes from the teachers, children and the staff in the school define the meaning and understanding of the situation of children with disabilities in school and society. This suggests that the societal values and beliefs determine the relationship between the non-disabled and the disabled, and the duties and responsibilities of the school and teachers on the other hand. Thus the activities of the school are the function and reflection of the society in which they live. Social acceptance of children with disabilities will reduce the heightening perceptions and give way for better interaction in the society in order to handle their current problem.

- Secondly, teachers, children without disabilities and school authorities should be encouraged to institute and provide positive attitudes towards the education of children with disabilities. More importantly classroom teachers who are seen as one of the main facilitators of the practical implementers, need to change their beliefs, values and attitudes to promote effective inclusive education. Further, in-service training programs must be developed in line with the current situation of inclusion. Also the existing programs should be restructured to effectively meet the needs of all diverse pupils in the mainstream school. Training and change in attitudes would help to understand behavioral implications of category of disabilities and to provide explicit and definite educational needs and behavioral intervention strategies. The training of teachers and all implementers must be intensive, appropriate and focused to help these categories of children in the school and

the classroom environment. Indeed training of teachers on disability issues will help to achieve the desired results of inclusive education. The special education components of the teacher training program must be strengthened to enhance the practice of inclusive education. Again, attitudinal change will help general education teachers better understand the education plight of these groups of children in their classroom and reduce the low expectation. Attitudinal change should be driven largely in the society which will affect all other barriers impeding the education and participation of children with disabilities. Regular school teachers must put in more effort to help provide opportunities for children with disabilities with full participation given their unique education challenges.

- Thirdly, the policy environment needs policy makers with a change of attitude since they also come from the society with the same cultural values and beliefs towards children with disabilities and their educational experiences. Thus negative ideas towards the development of inclusive education require urgent solution. Successful practice of inclusive education will need fundamental change in cultural values and beliefs leading to attitudinal change in the society. Further, there should be a holistic policy for persons with disabilities in general and a unique educational policy tailored towards meeting children with disabilities needs in school. More so government should attach a special budget, separate from the main education budget, to meet the demands of inclusive education. Thus to have effective and successful Inclusive education, there should be funding strategy developed specifically to support inclusive education. Policies developed should meet the situation in our local context; internationally accepted practice as a result of donor agencies is inappropriate in the Ghanaian education certain. Teachers should be consulted on decisions concerning inclusive education regarding formulation of inclusive education

policies to meet the educational challenges and to promote opportunities for children with disabilities in school. However to prevent factors obstructing formulation of policies and its implementation the Government has to be politically engaged and support inclusive education financially and to reduce institutional barriers. Also, the findings of the research call for the Ghana government to support families to help them meet with the cost of educating their children with disabilities. Implicitly the right to access and full participation to education must be promoted by government.

- Fourthly, inclusive education is very important for creating inclusive society; therefore, it should be restructured to make learning meaningful and beneficial to children with disabilities. Inclusive education should be relevant to address the needs of the handicapped children and to meet the contemporary demands of the society and to improve on their standard of living. More so inclusive education should be available and accessible without discrimination; schools need to mainstream children with disabilities. All children have a right to quality education that would serve as the basis for lifelong learning and children with disabilities are no exception. Further the practice of inclusive education must acknowledge Ghanaian values and beliefs due to negative attitudes children with disabilities. Also all stakeholders must understand the concept and take up responsibilities to help achieve successful inclusion in the school and the larger society. Class size must be reduced and architectural structures should be modified to have effective inclusive education. School curriculum must be flexible and adaptable to accommodate all children especially children. Children should be encouraged in the class to take responsibility from classmates with disabilities by pairing each child who has a disability with a child without

disability to work together to foster friendship, disabuse their negative thoughts, and accept diversity.

- Fifthly, parental involvement should be given priority in decisions concerning their children with disability's education and parents must honour invitations from schools and speak with school staff and teachers. Again, parents should disabuse their perceptions of taking their child with disability to school as a result of poverty with the belief that they may not benefit and it will be waste of resources. Parents should be educated about their children's potentials and should be given more autonomy in decision making concerning their children. Moreover school staff and volunteers could conduct a follow-up with parents to determine reasons for involvement in their child school's activities.

- Lastly, given the findings of the research it is broadly recommended that there is the need for further study to improve on Ghana education system with regards to appropriate training of teachers, planning and above all evaluation of the inclusive education practice in the Ghanaian schools. This will finally lead to a paradigm shift in the practice and accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities in Ghana.

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Letter of introduction (District Education Officer)

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA   UNIVERSITÄT SIEGEN

University of Ghana   University of Siegen

Department of Social Work   International PhD Program
P.O. BOX LG 419   Adolf-Reichwein-Strasse 2
Legon   57068 Siegen
Accra/Ghana   Raum AR–L010

Dear Sir/Madam,
Request to conduct research in schools in the district

I am a Doctoral student at the University of the Siegen, Germany under the supervision of Dr. Johannes Schaedler, the head of the Centre of Planning and Evaluation of Social Services. The focus of my thesis is accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities in Ghana. The aim of my thesis is to investigate and identify the specific barriers, hindering accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities. Ten schools will be sampled for data collection. I am by this letter seeking permission to conduct the research between February to March and July to September. The following ethical issues will be considered:

- School identity will not be disclosed
- Interviews will be conducted during break time and after classes
- Making sure the child is not embarrassed during the interview session
- Children will not be forced to disclose information they are uncomfortable discussing or sharing

With your participation you can help to develop special care for children with disabilities.
I am counting on your usual cooperation. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Efua Esaaba Mantey   Dr. Johannes Schaedler, Supervisor
Phone: +233 (0)302936043   Phone: 0049 271 740-2212
Email: efuam@yahoo.com   Email: schaedler@zpe.uni-siegen.de

Appendix B

Letter of introduction

Heads of schools

University of Ghana

Department of Social Work
P.O. BOX LG 419
Legon
Accra/Ghana

University of Siegen

International PhD Program
Adolf-Reichwein-Strasse 2
57068 Siegen
Raum AR–L010

Dear Sir/Madam,

Request for conducting research in your school

I am a Doctoral student at the University of the Siegen, Germany under the supervision Dr. Johannes Schaedler, the head of the Centre of Planning and Evaluation of Social Services. The focus of my thesis is accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities in Ghana. The aim of my thesis is to investigate and identify the specific barriers, hindering accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities. Ten schools have been sampled in this area and your school has been chosen for data collection. I am by this letter seeking permission to conduct the research between February to March and July to September. The following ethical issues will be considered:

- School identity will not be disclosed
- Interviews will be conducted during break time and after classes
- Making sure the child is not embarrassed during the interview session
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With your participation you can help developing special care for children with disabilities.
I am counting on your usual cooperation. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Efua Esaaba Mantey   Dr. Johannes Schaedler, Supervisor

Phone: 0302936043
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Phone: 0049 271 740-2212
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UNIVERSITÄT SIEGEN

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

EFUA ESAABA MANTEY

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PHD THESIS

UNIVERSITY OF SIEGEN, GERMANY

This questionnaire is designed to solicit information on the study accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities in Ghana. It forms part of data collection for a research study undertaken by a PhD student of the University of Siegen, Germany. You are kindly requested to provide answers to enable the researcher contribute to knowledge in the field of study. Any information given would be treated as strictly confidential that is, no participant will be identified; it is purely for academic purposes. Please answer all the questions below carefully.

This questionnaire is to be administered to children with disabilities.

SECTION A
GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. How old are you?

7-10	11-14	15 and 16	17+
1	2	3	4

2. Please indicate your sex:

Male	Female
1	2

3. Educational level:

Primary	JHS
1	2

4. What is the type of your disability (multiple choice is possible)?

Physical	Visual	Hearing	Intellectually challenged	Others, specify
1	2	3	4	

SECTION B

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

(Please rate your opinion on the following by choosing from the responses 1-5 from the table below).

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

A. General Education

i. My school is available to all children including children with disabilities because there are children with disabilities too.

  1 2 3 4 5

ii. My school provides text books needed to learn to move from one class to the other to complete school.

  1 2 3 4 5

iii. My school gives all children good opportunity to read, write and do maths.

1 2 3 4 5

iv. My school provides tables and chairs to all children to learn.

1 2 3 4 5

v. My school has ramps and toilets facilities for all children.

1 2 3 4 5

vi. The school provides encouragement to all children to participate in school activities such

as games.

1 2 3 4 5

vii. The school provides with everything (pencils, erasers, pens etc) needed to come to

school to learn with my friends with disabilities and those without disabilities

1 2 3 4 5

Viii. The received will help all children including children with disabilities to learn basic

skills of everyday living to move around easily and accepted in the community

1 2 3 4 5

xi. My school makes efforts to address barriers to learning and participation by all children

1 2 3 4 5

x. The classroom has enough space for children with disabilities

B. Special Education and Individual Education Program (IEP)

i. My school has an office that every child could go for advice if he/she has problem

1 2 3 4 5

ii. My school provides special teacher to help children with disabilities understand lessons in

class.

1 2 3 4 5

iii. My school has additional instructional periods for all children including children with

disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

v. There are special teaching and learning materials to help children with disabilities in class.

1 2 3 4 5

vi. My teacher organizes extra class for all children in their difficult areas of the lessons.

1 2 3 4 5

vii. The other pupils in the class help children with disabilities if they don't understand the lesson.

1 2 3 4 5

viii. The school identifies learning needs of children

C. School progression

i. Children with disabilities are not ask to leave the school if they do not do well in their lessons in school.

1 2 3 4 5

ii. Children with disabilities are not asked to repeat their class when they are not performing well in their lessons in school.

1 2 3 4 5

iii. The current class prepares children with disabilities very well to be able to understand the lessons and to move to the next class.

1 2 3 4 5

iv. The school gives as much knowledge and skills to improve and develop oneself at every level in case a child fails to progress to the next class or drop out from school

1 2 3 4 5

v. There is enough encouragement to move from one stage to the other in school.

1 2 3 4 5

vi. The type of disability will not have great influence on my going further in school or to

moving from one stage to the other to complete school

1 2 3 4 5

vii. The school provides children with disabilities are provided with supporting materials
during assessment/examinations to them understand a the exams and participate to
progress further to prevent repetition or drop out

1 2 3 4 5

2. ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS

i. Lessons are provided by the teacher to help meet learning needs of every child in the class.

1 2 3 4 5

ii. Teachers try to make the lessons in class simpler and easier for children with disabilities to
understand.

1 2 3 4 5

iii. My teacher involves me during questions and answering time in class

1 2 3 4 5

iv. Teachers and other staff in the school who do not teach make the school environment a
friendly place for children with disabilities to attend.

1 2 3 4 5

v. Teachers in the school don't know how to care for children with disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

vi. Teachers do not get angry with children with disabilities when they do not understand the
lessons in class

1 2 3 4 5

vii. Teachers do not show impatience when dealing with children with disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

3. DISCRIMINATION AND STIGMATIZATION

(State your opinion on questions i-vii by choosing the responses 1-5 from the table below.)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. My school provides a welcoming environment for all children including children with impairments.

  1 2 3 4 5

ii. Children without disabilities play with pupils with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

iii. Other pupils in the school do not shun the company of pupils with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

iv. Children with disabilities are not teased because of their disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

v. Children with disabilities do not get bullied because of their disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

vi. Children with disabilities are seen as pupils who do not do well in school.

  1 2 3 4 5

vii. It is important to educate children with disability in regular school

  1 2 3 4 5

viii. Children with disability are not laughed at because of their disability

  1 2 3 4 5

UNIVERSITÄT
SIEGEN

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

EFUA ESAABA MANTEY

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PHD THESIS

UNIVERSITY OF SIEGEN, GERMANY

This questionnaire is designed to solicit information on the study accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities in Ghana. It forms part of data collection for a research study undertaken by a PhD student of the University of Siegen, Germany. You are kindly requested to provide answers to enable the researcher contribute to knowledge in the field of study. Any information given would be treated as strictly confidential that is no participant will be identified; it is purely for academic purposes. Please answer all the questions below carefully.

The questionnaire is to be administered to children without disability.

SECTION A
GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. How old are you?

7-10	11-14	15 and 16	17+
1	2	3	4

2. Please indicate your sex:

Male	Female
1	2

3. Educational level:

Primary	JHS
1	2

SECTION B

(Please rate your opinion on the following by choosing from the responses 1-5 from the table below).

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

1. ACCESS TO EDUCATION

A. General Education

i. My school welcomes all children including children with disabilities, because there are children with disabilities too.

  1 2 3 4 5

ii. My school provides text books needed to learn to move from one class to the other to complete school

  1 2 3 4 5

iii. My school gives all children good opportunity to read, write and do maths

  1 2 3 4 5

iv. My school provides tables and chairs to all children to learn.

  1 2 3 4 5

v. My school makes efforts to address barriers to learning and participation by all children

  1 2 3 4 5

vi. My schools have ramps and toilets facilities for all groups of children to use.

1 2 3 4 5

vii. The school encourages all children to be involved in school activities such as games

1 2 3 4 5

viii. The school provides everything (pencils, erasers, pens etc) needed to come to

school to learn with my friends with disabilities and those without disabilities

1 2 3 4 5

ix. The received will help all children including children with disabilities to learn basic

skills of everyday living to move around easily and accepted in the community

1   2 3 4 5

x. The classroom has enough space for children with disabilities

B. Special Education and Individual Education Program (IEP)

i. My school has an office that every child could go for advice if he/she has problem

1 2 3 4 5

ii. My school provides special teacher to help children with disabilities understand lessons in

class.

1 2 3 4 5

iii. My school has additional instructional periods for all children including children with

disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

v. There are special teaching and learning materials to help children with disabilities in class

1 2 3 4 5

vi. My teacher organizes extra class for all children in their difficult areas of the lessons.

1 2 3 4 5

vii. The other pupils in the class help children with disabilities if they don't understand the

lesson

1 2 3 4 5

viii. The school identifies learning needs of children

1 2 3 4 5

C. School progression

i. Children with disabilities are not ask to leave the school if they do not do well in their

lessons in school.

1 2 3 4 5

ii. Children with disabilities are not asked to repeat their class when they are not performing

well in their lessons in school.

1 2 3 4 5

iii. The current class prepares children with disabilities very well to be able to understand the

lessons and to move to the next class.

1 2 3 4 5

iv. There is enough encouragement to move from one stage to the other in school.

1 2 3 4 5

v. The type of the disabled child's disability in the class will not have great influence in their

going further in school or moving from one class to the other class to complete school.

1 2 3 4 5

vi. The school gives as much knowledge and skills to improve and develop oneself at every

level in case a child fails to progress to the next class or drop out from school

1 2 3 4 5

vii. The school provides Children with disabilities are provided with supporting materials during

assessment/examinations to them understand a the exams and participate to progress further to

prevent repetition or drop out

1 2 3 4 5

2. ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS

(State your opinion on the following by choosing the following responses 1-5 from the table below)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. Lessons provided by the teacher meet the learning needs of every child in the class.

  1 2 3 4 5

ii. Teachers try to make the lessons easier for all children to understand

  1 2 3 4 5

iii. Teachers treat children with disabilities with some fear of being a cursed person

  1 2 3 4 5

vi. Teachers provide lessons to only children without disabilities in class.

  1 2 3 4 5

v. Teachers do not show signs of hatred towards children with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

vi. Teachers do not get angry with children when they do not understand the lessons in class

  1 2 3 4 5

vii. Teachers do not show impatience when dealing with children.

  1 2 3 4 5

viii. The teachers have knowledge on handling children in class.

  1 2 3 4 5

3. DISCRIMINATION AND STIGMATIZATION

(State your opinion on questions i-vii by choosing the responses 1-5 from the table below.)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. My school provides a welcoming environment to all children including children with

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  1 2 3 4 5

ii. Children without disabilities play with pupils with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

iii. Other pupils in the school do not shun the company of pupils with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

vi. Children with disabilities do not get teased because of their disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

v. Children with disabilities do not get bullied because of their disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

vi. Children with disabilities are seen as pupils who do not do well in school.

  1 2 3 4 5

vii. It is important to educate children with disability in regular school

  1 2 3 4 5

viii. Children with disability are not laughed at because of their disability

  1 2 3 4 5

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The questionnaire is to be administered to parents with children with disabilities.

SECTION A
GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Age:……………..

2. Sex: Male (1)   Female (2)

3. Occupation………………

4. Marital Status:

Married	Single	Widowed	Divorced
1	2	3	4

5. No. of children(s):……………..

6. Please indicate child's educational level:

Primary	JHS
1	2

7. What is the nature of your child's disability (multiple choice is possible)?

Physical	Visual	Hearing	Intellectually challenged
1	2	3	4

SECTION B

(State your opinion on the following by choosing the responses 1-5 from the table below)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

1. ACCESS TO EDUCATION

A. General Education

i. The school environment welcomes all children including children with disabilities.

   1 2 3 4 5

ii. The school provides communication and social skills needed to progress through to higher

   education for children with disabilities.

   1 2 3   4 5

iii. The school gives reading, writing, and mathematical skills for children with disabilities.

   1 2 3 4 5

iv. The school makes effort to address barriers to learning and participation for children with

   disabilities.

   1 2 3 4 5

v. The school gives opportunity to children with disabilities to participate in school activities

   such as games

1 2 3 4 5

vi. There are ramps, spacious class room and toilet facilities for all children including children

with disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

vii. The school provide children with disabilities the needed textbooks, tables, chairs and writing

materials to learn to progress through to higher education

1 2 3 4 5

B. Special Education

i. The school gives counseling services to all children with disabilities.

1 2 3   4 5

ii. The school identifies learning needs of children with disabilities and assist them.

1 2 3   4 5

iii. The school has additional instructional periods for children with

disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

iv. The school offers remedial teaching for children with disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

v. There are special learning materials to help children with disabilities in the school.

1 2 3 4 5

vi. The school lessons taught from the various subjects meets the learning needs of my child.

1 2 3 4 5

vii. The pupils without disabilities are paired with children with disabilities to learn.

1 2 3 4 5

viii. The curriculum is developed to meet the learning needs of all pupils including children with

disabilities

1 2 3   4 5

C. **School progression**

i. Children with disabilities are not threatening with expulsion from school if they are not performing well in class.

   1 2 3 4 5

ii. Children with disabilities are not asked to repeat their class when they are not performing well

   1 2 3 4 5

iii. The current class of children with disabilities prepares them adequately to meet the demands of the next class

   1 2 3 4 5

iv. The school provides enough motivation for children with disabilities to progress without discrimination.

   1 2 3 4 5

v. The children's type of disability will not have great influence on their educational progression (moving from one class to the other to complete).

   1 2 3 4 5

vi. The school gives as much knowledge and skills to improve and develop oneself at every level in case a child fails to progress to the next class or drop out from school

   1 2 3 4 5

vii. The school provides children with disabilities are provided with supporting materials during assessment or examinations to them understand a the exams and participate to progress further to prevent repetition or drop out

   1 2 3 4 5

2. **ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS**

(State your opinion on the following by choosing these responses 1-5 from the table below)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. Teaching and learning are planned to meet the learning needs of all categories of pupils in class.

  1 2 3 4 5

ii. Teachers try to make the lessons simpler and easier to everyone to understand including children with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

iii. The teachers do not treat children with disabilities with fear of they been cursed persons.

  1 2 3 4 5

iv. Teachers are not careless when handling children with disabilities

  1 2 3 4 5

v. The teachers do not show signs of hatred towards children with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

vi. Teachers are not angry with children with disabilities when they do not understand the lessons.

  1 2 3 4 5

vii. The teachers do not become impatience when dealing with children with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

viii. The teachers have knowledge on handling children with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

3. DISCRIMINATION AND STIGMATIZATION

(State your opinion on the following choosing these responses 1-5 from the table below.)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. Children with disabilities are accepted in the school by both teaching and non-teaching staff.

1 2 3 4 5

ii. Other pupils without disabilities in the school play with pupils with disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

iii. Children with disabilities do not get teased because of their disability.

1 2 3 4 5

iv. Children with disabilities do not get bullied because of their disability.

1 2 3 4 5

v. The other children without disabilities do not shun the company of children with disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

vi. It is important to educate children with disabilities in the regular school.

1 2 3 4 5

vii. The children with disabilities are not seen as non achievers in the school.

1 2 3 4 5

4. CULTURAL BELIEFS

(State your opinion on the following by choosing the following responses 1-5 from the table below)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. A child with disability is a god that came in human form.

1 2 3 4 5

ii. A child with disability is a punishment from the gods.

1 2 3 4 5

iii. Having a child with disability is seen as a curse.

  1 2 3 4 5

iv. A child with disability may die earlier than the child without disability.

  1 2 3 4 5

v. A child with disability was bewitched from her mother's womb.

  1 2 3 4 5

vii. A child with disability can cause harm to a child without disability when they play with them.

  1 2 3 4 5

vii. Families of disabled children should be ostracised from the community.

  1 2 3 4 5

Are you able to take care of your child with disability satisfactorily according to school and your standard?

Yes/No

UNIVERSITÄT SIEGEN

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

EFUA ESAABA MANTEY

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PHD THESIS

UNIVERSITY OF SIEGEN, GERMANY

This questionnaire is designed to solicit information on the study accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities in Ghana. It forms part of data collection for a research study undertaken by a PhD student of the University of Siegen, Germany. You are kindly requested to provide answers to enable the researcher contribute to knowledge in the field of study. Any information given would be treated as strictly confidential that is no participant will be identified; it is purely for academic purposes. Please answer all the questions below carefully.

The questionnaire is to be administered to parents without disabled children.

SECTION A

1. Age:……………..

2. Sex: Male (1)   Female (2)

3. Occupation………………

4. Marital Status:

Married	Single	Widowed	Divorced
1	2	3	4

5. No. of children(s):……………..

SECTION B

(State your opinion on the following by choosing the responses 1-5 from the table below)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

1	2	3	4	5

1. ACCESS TO EDUCATION

A. General Education

i. The school environment welcomes all children including children with disabilities.

    1 2 3 4 5

ii. The school provides communication and social skills needed to progress through to higher education for children with disabilities.

    1 2 3   4 5

iii. The school gives reading, writing, and mathematical skills for children with disabilities.

    1 2 3 4 5

iv. The school makes effort to address barriers to learning and participation for children with disabilities.

    1 2 3 4 5

v. There are ramps, spacious class room and toilet facilities for all children including children with disabilities.

    1 2 3 4 5

vi. The school provide children with disabilities the needed textbooks, tables, chairs and writing materials to learn to progress through to higher education

    1 2 3 4 5

vii. The school gives opportunity to children with disabilities to participate in school activities such as games

B. Special Education and Individual Education Program (IEP)

i. The school gives counseling services to all children with disabilities.

    1 2 3 4 5

ii. The school identifies learning needs of children with disabilities and assist them.

1 2 3   4 5

iii. The school has additional instructional periods for children with disabilities.

   1 2 3 4 5

iv. The school offers remedial teaching for children with disabilities.

   1 2 3 4 5

v. There are special learning materials to help children with disabilities in the school.

   1 2 3 4 5

   vi. The school lessons taught from the various subjects meets the learning needs of my child.

   1 2 3 4 5

vii. The pupils without disabilities are paired with children with disabilities to learn.

   1 2 3 4 5

C. **School progression**

i. Children with disabilities are not threatening with expulsion from school if they are not

   performing well in class

   1 2 3 4 5

ii. Children with disabilities are not asked to repeat their class when they are not performing well

   1 2 3 4 5

iii. The current class of children with disabilities prepares them adequately to meet the demands

   of the next class

   1 2 3 4 5

iv. The school provides enough motivation for children with disabilities to progress without

   discrimination.

   1 2 3 4 5

v. The children's type of disability will not have great influence on their educational progression

(moving from one class to the other to complete).

1 2 3 4 5

vi. The school gives as much knowledge and skills to improve and develop oneself at every level

in case a child fails to progress to the next class or drop out from school

1 2 3 4 5

vii. The school provides children with disabilities are provided with supporting materials during

assessment or examinations to them understand a the exams and participate to progress

further to prevent repetition or drop out

1 2 3 4 5

2. ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS

(State your opinion on the following by choosing these responses 1-5 from the table below)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. Teaching and learning are planned to meet the learning needs of all categories of pupils in class.

1 2 3 4 5

ii. The teachers try to make the lessons simpler and easier to the understanding of everyone including

children with disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

iii. The teachers do not treat children with disabilities with fear of they been cursed persons.

1 2 3 4 5

iv. Teachers are not careless when handling disabled children.

1 2 3 4 5

v. Teachers do not show sign of hatred towards children with disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

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vi. Teachers are not angry with children with disabilities when they do not understand the

lessons.

  1 2 3 4 5

vii. The teachers do not become impatience when dealing with children with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

viii. The teachers have knowledge on how to handling children with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

3. DISCRIMINATION AND STIGMATIZATION

(State your opinion on the following by choosing these responses 1-5 from the table below.)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. Children with disabilities are accepted in the school by both teaching and non-teaching staff.

  1 2 3 4 5

ii. Other pupils without disabilities in the school play with pupils with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

iii. Children with disabilities do not get teased because of their disability.

  1 2 3 4 5

iv. Children with disabilities do not get bullied because of their disability.

  1 2 3 4 5

v. The other children without disabilities do not shun the company of children with disabilities.

  1 2 3 4 5

vi. It is important to educate children with disabilities in the regular school.

  1 2 3 4 5

vii. The children with disabilities are not seen as non achievers in the school.

  1 2 3 4 5

4. CULTURAL BELIEFS

(State your opinion on the following by choosing the responses 1-5 from the table below)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. A child with disability is a god that came in human form.

   1 2 3 4 5

ii. A child with disability is a punishment from the gods.

   1 2 3 4 5

iii. Having a child with disability is seen as a curse.

   1 2 3 4 5

iv. A child with disability may die earlier than the child without disability.

   1 2 3 4 5

v. A child with disability was bewitched from her mother's womb.

   1 2 3 4 5

vii. A child with disability can cause harm to a child without disability when they play with them.

   1 2 3 4 5

vii. Families of disabled children should be ostracised from the community.

   1 2 3 4 5

UNIVERSITÄT SIEGEN   UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

EFUA ESAABA MANTEY

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PHD THESIS

UNIVERSITY OF SIEGEN, GERMANY

This questionnaire is designed to solicit information on the study accessibility to inclusive education for children with disabilities in Ghana. It forms part of data collection for a research study undertaken by a PhD student of the University of Siegen, Germany. You are kindly requested to provide answers to enable the researcher contribute to knowledge in the field of study. Any information given would be treated as strictly confidential that is no participant will be identified; it is purely for academic purposes. Please answer all the questions below carefully.

The questionnaire is to be administered to teachers.

SECTION A

GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age: …………...

2. Sex: Male (1) Female (2)

3. Class taught: …………...

3. Level of education: …………...

4. No. of years taught:…………...

5. What is the type of the child's disability?

Physical	Visual	Hearing	Intellectually challenged
1	2	3	4

SECTION B

(State your opinion on the following by choosing the following responses 1-5 from the table below)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

1. ACCESS TO EDUCATION

A. General Education

i. The school environment welcomes all children including children with disabilities.

    1 2 3 4 5

ii. The school provides communication and social skills needed to progress through to higher education for children with disabilities.

    1 2 3 4 5

iii. The school gives reading, writing, and mathematical skills for children with disabilities.

    1 2 3 4 5

iv. The school makes effort to address barriers to learning and participation for children with disabilities.

    1 2 3 4 5

v. The school gives opportunity to children with disabilities to participate in school activities such as games

    1 2 3 4 5

vi. There are ramps, spacious class room and toilet facilities for all children including children with disabilities.

    1 2 3 4 5

vii. The school provide children with disabilities the needed textbooks, tables, chairs and writing materials to learn to progress through to higher education

1 2 3 4 5

B. Special Education

i. The school gives counseling services to all children with disabilities.

   1 2 3   4 5

ii. The school identifies learning needs of children with disabilities and assist them.

   1 2 3   4 5

iii. The school has additional instructional periods for children with

   disabilities.

   1 2 3 4 5

iv. The school offers remedial teaching for children with disabilities.

   1 2 3 4 5

v. There are special learning materials to help children with disabilities in the school.

   1 2 3 4 5

vi. The school lessons taught from the various subjects meets the learning needs of my child.

   1 2 3 4 5

vii. The pupils without disabilities are paired with children with disabilities to learn.

   1 2 3 4 5

C. **School progression**

i. Children with disabilities are not threatening with expulsion from school if they are not

   performing well in class.

   1 2 3 4 5

ii. Children with disabilities are not asked to repeat their class when they are not performing well

   1 2 3 4 5

iii. The current class of children with disabilities prepares them adequately to meet the demands

   of the next class

1 2 3 4 5

iv. The school provides enough motivation for children with disabilities to progress without

discrimination.

1 2 3 4 5

v. The children's type of disability will not have great influence on their educational progression

(moving from one class to the other to complete).

1 2 3 4 5

vi. The school gives as much knowledge and skills to improve and develop oneself at every level in case a

child fails to progress to the next class or drop out from school

1 2 3 4 5

vii. The school provides children with disabilities are provided with supporting materials

during assessment or examinations to them understand a the exams and participate to

progress further to prevent repetition or drop out

1 2 3 4 5

2. ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS

(State your opinion on the following by choosing these responses 1-5 from the table below)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. Teaching and learning are planned to meet the learning needs of all categories of pupils in

class.

1 2 3 4 5

ii. Teachers try to make the lessons simpler and easier to everyone to understand including

children with disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

iii. The teachers do not treat children with disabilities with fear of they been cursed persons.

 1 2 3 4 5

iv. Teachers are not careless when handling children with disabilities

 1 2 3 4 5

 v. The teachers do not show signs of hatred towards children with disabilities.

 1 2 3 4 5

 vi. Teachers are not angry with children with disabilities when they do not understand the

   lessons.

 1 2 3 4 5

vii. The teachers do not become impatience when dealing with children with disabilities.

 1 2 3 4 5

viii. The teachers have knowledge on handling children with disabilities.

 1 2 3 4 5

3. DISCRIMINATION AND STIGMATIZATION

(State your opinion on the following by choosing the responses 1-5from the table below.)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. Children with disabilities are accepted in the school by both teaching and non-teaching staff.

 1 2 3 4 5

ii. Other pupils without disabilities in the school play with pupils with disabilities.

 1 2 3 4 5

iii. Children with disabilities do not get teased because of their disability.

 1 2 3 4 5

iv. Children with disabilities do not get bullied because of their disability.

1 2 3 4 5

v. The other children without disabilities do not shun the company of children with disabilities.

   1 2 3 4 5

vi. It is important to educate children with disabilities in the regular school.

   1 2 3 4 5

vii. The children with disabilities are not seen as non achievers in the school.

   1 2 3 4 5

4. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

(State your opinion on the following by choosing these responses from table below.)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

i. Parents visit school to find out how their children with disabilities are faring.

   1 2 3 4 5

ii. The school authorities consult parents on whether their children with disabilities should be promoted

   to the next class or repeat.

   1 2 3 4 5

iii. The school involves parents in the identification of special education needs of their child with

   disability.

   1 2 3 4 5

iv. Disciplinary measures taken against children with disabilities are done with the consent of their

   parents.

   1 2 3 4 5

v. There is support available in the school to help parents with children with disabilities.

1 2 3 4 5

vi. Parents of children without disabilities and children with disabilities are given equal educational rights

without discrimination.

1 2 3 4 5

4. CULTURAL BELIEFS

(State your opinion on the following by choosing the responses from the table below)

Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

A child with disability is a god that came in human form.

1 2 3 4 5

ii. A child with disability is a punishment from the gods.

1 2 3 4 5

iii. Having a child with disability is seen as a curse.

1 2 3 4 5

iv. A child with disability may die earlier than the child without disability.

1 2 3 4 5

v. A child with disability was bewitched from her mother's womb.

1 2 3 4 5

vii. A child with disability can cause harm to a child without disability when they play with them.

1 2 3 4 5

vii. Families of disabled children should be ostracised from the community.

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix H

Qualitative Interview guide

Children with Disabilities

Name:

Age:

Study area:

1. What are the problems you face in school?

2. Do you know about the disability law? If yes, say what you know about it.

3. Do you think government should support your parents to take care of you?

4. How do you expect the school to help children with disabilities get education easily in the mainstream school?

Appendix I

Qualitative Interview guide

Parents of children with disability

Name:

Sex:

Study Area:

Occupation:

1. What is disability?

2. What do you think about the word disabled?

3. Are you involved in decision making concerning your child's education?

4. Please explain how you are involved in your child's education.

5. What are some of the major barriers your child encounters in the school?

6. Do you think the nature of your child's disability will influence his or her educational progress in school?

7. Are you aware or familiar with the disability Act 715? Could you please say what you know about it?

8. Has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily?

9. Do you think there is legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

10. How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of people with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?1

11. How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

12. Suggest ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disabilities in Ghana.

Appendix J

Qualitative Interview guide

Teachers

Name:

Class taught:

Study Area:

Level of education:

1. What is disability?

2. What do you think about the word disabled?

3. What is inclusive education?

4. Are parents involved in decision making concerning their children's education?

5. Does / do the child (ren) in your class type of disabilities have influence on their educational progression school (negative/positive).

6. What are some of the major barriers children with disabilities encounter in the school?

7. Are you aware / familiar with the disability Act 715? How did you come to know? Could you please say what you know about it?

8. To what extent has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily?

9. Do you think there is legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

10. How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?

11. How committed is the government concerning the implementation of the disability policy?

12. How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

13. What are your midterm objectives in practising inclusive education in the next five years?

14. Suggest ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disability in Ghana.

Qualitative Interview guide

Head of school

Name:

Age:

Sex:

Level of education:

No. of years taught:

Study Area

1. What is disability?

2. What do you think about the word disabled?

3. Does your school welcome all children including children with impairments? If so, can you describe with examples how this is done?

4. What do you understand by inclusive education?

5. How do you evaluate the current situation of inclusion of persons with special educational needs in your school?

6. What is the level of engagement of parents in the education of their child (ren) with disabilities? Can you give examples?

7. What are some of the major barriers children with disabilities encounter in the school?

8. Curriculum development activities should address the participation of pupils differing in background, experience or impairments. How do you cope with such challenges in your school?

9. Are you aware with the disability Act 715? How do you know about it? How do you assess its importance?

10. How committed is the government with the implementation of the disability law? What should happen more intensively?

11. To what extent has the disability policy helped children with disabilities to access inclusive education easily? What should be changed?

12. How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available? (Positive and negative aspects)

13. How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

14. What are your midterm perspectives on inclusive education in the next five years?

15. Suggest most promising ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disability in Ghana.

Qualitative Interview guide

Resource persons

Name:

Age:

Level of Education:

Study Area:

1. What is disability?

2. What do you think about the word disabled?

3. What is inclusive education and what are your concerns regarding the practice of Inclusive education in schools in this area?

4. How does the teachers' education curriculum encourage development of inclusive education?

5. In your perspective what are the main barriers to accessibility to inclusive education?

6. How do you assess the available financial resources for inclusive education?

7. How do you assess the available financial resources for inclusive education and what financial resources would you regard as necessary for inclusive education in your district? And where would you set priorities?

8. What kind of support services and resources are available to schools in this area practicing inclusive education?

9. What are some of the cultural beliefs in Ghana which influence the perception of disability?

10. How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

11. How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of laws, policies and programs available?

12. What are some of the challenges implementing the disability law?

13. How do you think these challenges can be reduced or eliminated?

14. What are your midterm perspectives on inclusive education in the next five years?

Appendix M

Qualitative Interview guide

Education Officer

Name:

Position:

Study Area:

1. What is disability?

2. What do you think about the word disabled?

3. What is inclusive education and what are your concerns regarding the practice of Inclusive education in schools in this area?

4. What kind of support services and resources are available to schools in this area included in the school?

5. How does the teacher education curriculum encourage development of inclusive education?

6. In your perspective, what are the main barriers to accessibility to inclusive education?

7. What financial resources would you regard as necessary for inclusive education in your district? And where would you set priorities?

8. How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in terms of laws, policies and programs available?

9. What are the main challenges implementing the disability law?

10. How do you think these challenges can be reduced or eliminated?

11. How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

12. What are your midterm perspectives on inclusive education in five years?

Appendix N

Qualitative Interview guide

Disability institution

Name: Officer from disability institution

Sex: Male

1. What is disability?

2. What do you think about the word disabled?

3. What do you understand by inclusive education?

4. How do you assess the importance of the disability Act 715? How did you come to know of the Disability Act 715?

5. What do you think about the disability policy? To what extent has it been supportive for children with disabilities to access inclusive education?

6. How do you assess the legal protection for persons with disabilities in Ghana?

7. How effective is the national legislation in making education accessible to children with disabilities? Which aspects should be developed further with priority?

8. How do you evaluate the current situation of meeting the educational needs of persons with disabilities in Ghana? (Strengths and weaknesses)

9. How do you assess the provision of funding from the government for promoting the concept of inclusion in school?

10. How supportive is the government in meeting the needs of persons with disabilities in terms of policies and programs available?

11. How committed is the government with the implementation of the disability law? (negative and positive)

12. How important are cultural beliefs for the education of children with disabilities?

13. What are your midterm perspectives on inclusive education in the next five years?

14. Suggest ways to help reduce barriers to make inclusive education more accessible for children with disability in Ghana.