INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES AND THEIR TEACHERS AT RICHARD AKWEI MEMORIAL AND CENTRAL MOSQUE BASIC SCHOOLS

BY

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THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (M.PHIL) SOCIAL WORK DEGREE.

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DECLARATION

I, Victoria Dayan, hereby declare that this thesis titled "Inclusive Education: Experiences of Children with Multiple Disabilities and their Teachers" at Richard Akwei Memorial and Central Mosque Basic Schools is an original piece of research I personally conducted in the Department of Social Work, University of Ghana, Legon, under the supervision of Dr. Emma Seyram Hamenoo and Dr. Alice Boateng. It has not been presented to any examining body for the award of a degree elsewhere or published in whole or in part. Except for references to other people's work, which have been duly cited and acknowledged, this work is a personal endeavour.

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DEDICATION

To all the children, who through no fault of theirs are living with all kinds of disabilities, my late parents; who took keen interest in my education, Auntie Kim, Uncle Mark Redman of United States of American, and my three sisters.

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The process involved in research and thesis writing really entails a lot. There is therefore the need for much guidance and direction. To this end, I express my thanks to the Almighty God through whose guidance this thesis finally saw the light of the day. A number of people helped me directly or indirectly and it will be most inappropriate if I fail to acknowledge their valuable assistance. I am greatly indebted to my supervisors, Dr. Emma Seyram Hamenoo and Dr. Alice Boateng for their advice and valuable suggestions. As my supervisors, they proved to be tolerant and dealt with issues amiably, which might otherwise have marred the completion of this work. They read my scripts many times and made countless number of necessary corrections. This approach helped me a great deal to work towards my objective. I owe them a debt of gratitude that I cannot pay and cannot repudiate. Without them, this thesis might not have seen the light of day.

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ABSTRACT

The study explored the experiences of children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs) and their teachers in an inclusive education (IE) setting in the Ashiedu-Keteke Sub Metropolitan District Council of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA). It also considered the challenges the CWMDs and their teachers encounter with the inclusive education (IE) policy using theory of Intergroup Contact by Allport (1954) as the theoretical perspective to demonstrate the understanding of the phenomena being studied. A qualitative method was employed which gave way to select twenty-five participants purposively. The participants included two headmistresses, two special education teachers, one special coordinator, ten regular teachers and ten CWMDs.

As part of the positive experience, the study found that CWMDs enjoy the friendship and socialization the IE program offers, though there were challenges. On the other side, the study revealed that regular teachers did not receive any formal training before the take-off of the pilot training. What was critical was the fact that the school environment is not disability friendly. Again, the teachers do not have teaching learning material coupled with large class size. It is therefore recommended that teachers should be given formal training and provided with the requisite teaching learning material to do effective teaching. It is hoped that with these provisions available, inclusive education will be more effective and will elicit the expected fulfillment in both the teachers and the CWMDs.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CRC	Convention on the Right of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities
CWDs	Children with Disabilities
CWMDs	Children with Multiple Disabilities
EAHCA	Education of All Handicapped Children Act
EFA	Education for All
EID	Education of Intellectually Disabled
GES	Ghana Education Service
ICF	International Classification of Functioning
IDA	Individuals with Disabilities Act
IE	Inclusive Education
IEP	Individualized Educational Plan
IG	Intergroup Contact
JHS	Junior High School
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SEN	Special Education Needs
SPED	Special Education Division
VSO	Voluntary Services Oversea

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Ghana Disability Act 715 defines disability as **"**an individual with physical, mental or sensory impairments including a visual, hearing, or speech functional disabilities which give rise to physical, cultural or social barriers that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of that individual". In this regard, education could be seen as one of life's major activities worth pursuing and to make it accessible to children with disabilities, all barriers have to be removed. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) considers disability to be an "evolving concept" and adopts a social model of disability and portrays **'people with inabilities'** as the individuals 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 others (Article1, UNCPRD, 2006).

Inclusive education is a process of increasing the participation of all students in schools, including those with disabilities (UNESCO, 2009). It is about restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in schools to accommodate the diversity of students in a given locality. Inclusive Education acknowledges that all children can learn, irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, Human Immune Virus (HIV) and Tuberculosis (TB) status etc. It likewise empowers training structures, frameworks and strategies to address the issues of all children. Inclusive education is a piece of a more extensive system to advance a comprehensive society through a dynamic procedure that is always developing (Save the Child, 2002).

Until now, children with disabilities (CWDs) were made to have their training in special schools. This instructive approach depended on the theory of isolation and standardization with uncommonly prepared educators to deal with them (Danso, 2009). Numerous nations including Ghana had this conventional approach as the significant medium for teaching people with disabilities. To recount a few, as a policy, the Dutch Ministry of Education introduced a new education Act directed at inclusive education in 2003. This Act reorganized the special and general education systems and provided support for inclusive education for all students with special needs (Tadema, Viaskamp & Ruijssenaars, 2008). According to the authors, "the new Act also affected the education of students with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD) as schools were no longer allowed to reject these students on grounds of the severity of their disabilities". However, before this Act, most parents applied to a Centre for Special Education (Tadema et al, 2008). In addition to this advancement by the Dutch, the Ministry of Education supported the development of an assessment procedure and the development of a suitable curriculum (Tadema et al, 2008) as well as the development of new skills and extending existing skills at the teacher level (Tadema et al, 2008). This positive advancement has also been demonstrated by educators across board with regard to the inclusion of students with disabilities into classrooms (Bunch & Valeo, 2004; Butcer & Wilton, 2008; Morgan & Alexander, 2005).

Access to education irrespective of one's disability status is a right. There is growing commitment to make children's rights a reality and this drive is underpinned by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1989). The UNCRC protects and promotes the rights of all children, including children with disability. Articles 2, 23, 28 & 29 are

particularly relevant to the rights of children with disability. Article 2 of CRC states that each article applies similarly, and no matter what, to all children, regardless of race, color, sex, disability, birth or different status. These adoptions of the CRC and the World Summit for Children in 1990 were promising enactments that showed that rights of children were seriously being considered by the governments and the international community (International Save the Children Alliance, 2001).

In addition, The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education paved the way for inclusive education. It upheld the aim of 'education for all' by suggesting some foundational changes in programmes and policies of nations. The Statement solicits governments to give the highest priority to making education systems inclusive and adopt the principle of inclusive education as a matter of law or policy. It emphasizes that every child has a basic right to education and every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs (UNESCO, 1994).

The Salamanca Statement maintains that 'inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and the enjoyment and exercise of human rights'. Thus, inclusive education is seen as largely emanating from the human rights perspective, which upholds that variations in human characteristics associated with disability, whether in cognitive, sensory, or motor ability, as inherent to the human condition and such conditions do not limit human potential (Rioux & Carbet, 2003). The idea of children having rights independently of the adults around them is a relatively new concept of the past century. A common theme in early legislation was that children were seen as passive recipients, to be seen but not heard (Munro, 2001). Children with disability have the same rights as other children. These include, the right to education, survival and development, be cared for by

their families, participate in leisure activities, and have their opinions heard. Despite the existence of these rights, children with disability routinely face discrimination. Gender wise, the girl child stands most at risk as well as those with disabilities. In many cases, discriminatory attitudes or lack of awareness as to how children with disability should be included in schools causes many to be excluded. All children, including those with disabilities have a right to education (UNICEF, 1989).

The Government of Ghana understood the obstructions to investment of students with disabilities in the public arena and regular schools. Combined with the weight from disability dynamic gatherings; the Ghana Society for the Blind (GSB) and Ghana Society for the Physically Disabled (GSPD), the legislature went into an agreement in September, 2003 with Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO); a British non-administrative association. As indicated by the agreement, VSO would pilot comprehensive training in ten areas inside three districts, and upon its prosperity, extend it to different locales (Agbenyega, 2007).

A substantial number of these pilot schools are found in Amasaman, Ada and Accra Metro in Greater Accra Region. In the Central Region, there are inclusive schools in Winneba, Swedru and Cape Coast areas. The Eastern Region has four regions with comprehensive pilot schools in particular, Somanya, Koforidua (New Juaben), Oda, and Odumase.

These undertakings were guided and executed by a group of specialists driven by Professor Ainscow in 1996. In accordance with the Salamanca announcement, the Government of Ghana had a goal to completely actualize comprehensive instruction by 2015, to give evenhanded instructive open doors by coordinating all children with mellow uncommon instructive needs in standard schools and full enrolments of difficult to-reach

and children out of school by 2015 (Yekple & Avoke, 2006). Over 60% of children between the ages of 6 and 18 years identified as living with disabilities are not in school. The number of persons with disabilities who had the opportunity of formal education to the basic level until 1998 was estimated at about 2,500 persons. The individuals who proceeded through to the second cycle and tertiary levels are not very many (Deku & Mensah, 2004). In a comparative report, Yekple & Avoke (2006), revealed that numerous CWDs in Ghana are either formally rejected from the standard training framework or get less positive treatment than other youngsters. As per Yekple & Avoke (2006), the Development of Education National Report of Ghana on the 2000 populace evaluation sows that with a populace of 670,000-804,000 school age CWDs, just 0.6% get any type of instruction.

There has been quite a number of studies conducted in the area of inclusive education (Aron & Loprest, 2012; Gasser, Malti, & Buholzer, 2013; Nilholm & Alm, 2010; Tisdall, 2012). These studies have outlined that having an inclusive educational system in various countries and more specifically in the public sector has its advantages and disadvantages. According to these, the disadvantages, if not tackled could destroy the lives of children with multiple disabilities (Aron & Loprest, 2012).

Furthermore, despite the numerous studies conducted on the subject matter, most of these studies have been focused on developed countries (Gable, 2009; Gasser et al., 2013; Winter & O'Raw, 2010), with few studies conducted in developing countries like Ghana. Therefore, this study hopes to bridge this gap by conducting this study in the public educational sector of Ghana.

1.2 Problem Statement

The implementation of inclusive education in several countries such as Ghana has been marred with challenges. Issues of lack of professionalism and attitude of teachers resulting

in what appears to be a separation and segregation of children with disabilities has been raised (Agbenyega & Deku, 2011). In addition, is the issue of regular education teachers not being in favour of the influx of students with disabilities in the mainstream schools (Gilmore, Campbell & Cuskelly, 2003). A study carried out by Obeng (2005) to examine the views of teachers on inclusive education in Ghana acknowledged that though teachers show love and affection towards children with disability, they are unwilling to include them in their mainstream classrooms.

Recognizing the above-mentioned challenges, the study seeks to investigate teachers' attitudes and perspectives of inclusive education, and the experiences of CWMDs in two basic schools (Richard Akwei Memorial and Central Mosque Basic Schools in the Ashiedu Keteke Sub Metropolitan). These two schools have managed to implement the inclusive education system, which allows children with disabilities and children without any form of disability to study in the same classroom. The current is therefore aimed at (a) exploring the experiences of students with multiple disabilities and (b) the experiences of the teachers in these two schools to make room for improvement.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of the study explores the experiences of children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs) and their teachers in an inclusive educational setting.

1.3.1 Specifically, the study aimed:

1. To explore the experiences of children with multiple disabilities in Richard Akwei Memorial and Central Mosque Basic Schools.
2. Explore the experiences of teachers who have CWMDs in their class.

3. To suggest strategies to enhance teaching and learning experiences of children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs).
4. To suggest strategies to enhance teachers work in Richard Akwei Memorial and Central Mosque Basic Schools.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the experiences of children with multiple disabilities in Richard Akwei Memorial and Central Mosque Basic Schools?
2. What are the experiences of teachers in inclusive education at the two schools?
3. What strategies are there to enhance the experiences of children with multiple disabilities CWMDs)?
4. What strategies are there to enhance the work of teachers in inclusive schools?

1.5 Significance of the Study

About adding to existing literature on inclusive education, this study will be very much significant especially from the perspective of developing countries. The study will serve as a literature for other researchers who may want to investigate experiences of children with multiple disabilities under the inclusive education settings being implemented in various countries and more especially within the settings of developing countries.

The study will further be significant to other researchers by serving as a springboard for them as well as helped them avoid some of the limitations encountered in this study thereby coming out with much better results.

The outcome is hoped to be of benefit to the various stakeholders such as the School Management Committee, Parent Teacher Association and parents in education, children enrolled in inclusive educational facilities and their teachers. Basically, it would help policy makers, experts and the Ghana Education Service (GES) know the experiences of regular teachers and CWMDs within the inclusive educational set up.

It is trusted that the investigation would draw in the consideration of other intrigued analysts to test further into the pilot activity of inclusive programme in the zones of group association, regulatory examples and bolster administrations.

The findings from the study will also inform Social Workers about the needs of special children within inclusive setting to enable them advocate for the rights of these children.

1.6 Definition of Terms

In order to set the boundaries of the work, the following key terms are defined.

Inclusive Education: It is education for both children without disabilities and children with disabilities (CWDs) in regular classrooms/school and being taught (Ainscow, 2005).

Regular classroom/school: A place where children without any form of disability receive formal education (Bergsma, 2000).

Regular Teachers: Teachers who have not had training in special education and teach in regular school (Hudson, Graham, & Warner, 1979).

Special Education teachers: These are teachers who have been formerly trained to teach pupils/students with disabilities and special needs (Billingsley, 2004).

Multiple Disabilities: "These refer to concomitant (simultaneous) impairments (such as intellectual disability- blindness, intellectual disability- orthopedic impairment), the combination which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programme solely for one of the impairment". This term does not include deaf blindness (Individual with Disabilities Education Acts) (Nakken, & Vlaskamp, 2007).

Inclusive pilot schools: These are schools implementing inclusive education policies on trial basis.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one focused on the background of the study, the statement of the problem and the objectives of the study. The research questions, significance of the study as well as the definition of terms of the study are included in this chapter. The chapter ends with organization of the study.

Chapter two entails the review of the literature, which highlights the following: Introduction, Historical Background of Inclusive Education, The Concept of Inclusive Education, Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusive Education, and Teachers' Perception of Inclusive Education.

In Chapter three, the methodological approach is presented. It consists of the study area, research design, target and study population and sample size, validity of instruments, pilot study, data analysis, ethical consideration and limitations.

Chapter four presents the findings of this study and analysis. It presents the data from the interviews and observation that took place in the two selected schools.

Finally, Chapter five consists of the Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

Literature were reviewed looking at the historical background of inclusive education, the concept of inclusive education, teachers' attitude towards inclusive education and teachers' perceptions of inclusive education.

2.1 Historical Background of Inclusive Education

Over the years, children with disabilities (CWDs) have been treated as "invalid" or substandard and in need of very special protection. The perception has always been that they are essentially incapable to benefit from education. This resulted in exclusion and the construction of institutions to accommodate these children (Lebona, 2013). The exclusion of these children has gone mainly unchallenged and many of them remain invisible in the efforts to achieve universal access to primary education (Susie & Nidhi, 2010). Martin, Martin & Terman (1996) unmistakably express that not very far in the past, numerous imbalances and treacheries existed regarding the instruction of CWDs. Until the 1970's a number of these children were barred from instructive open doors, while others got lacking and unseemly services.

During the twentieth century, voices arose asking for integration in education to curb these inequities and injustices. In the United States for example, guardians begun to lobby and document suit for better instructive open doors for their children, bringing about the enactment of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) (Brown, 2007). The EAHCA renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) ensured free and fitting instructive chances for all school age CWDs. The new orders required CWDs to

have Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) and be taught at least restrictive condition. The least restrictive condition arrangement of IDEA requires CWDs to be instructed in regular classrooms, unless the nature and seriousness of the disability are to such an extent that their needs cannot be accomplished completely (Etscheidt & Bartlett, 1999).

The 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand, marked the emergence of an international consensus that education is essential in combating poverty, empowering women, protecting children from hazardous and exploitative labour and sexual exploitation, promoting human rights and democracy, protecting the environment and influencing population growth. The conference also highlighted the need for more inclusive approaches to education to address the barriers faced by many children who were currently excluded from formal education (UNESCO, 1990).

In 1994, all European nations signed the UNESCO Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action. The Salamanca Statement incorporates an unmistakable acknowledgment of the need to work towards "schools for all" – organizations, which incorporate everyone, praise contrasts, bolster learning, and react to singular needs. All European nations concurred that the standards incorporated in the Salamanca Statement ought to support all training strategies – not only those particularly managing uncommon necessities instruction (WCSNE, 1994).

In 2000, the Education for all Framework for Action was received by the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal. Education for All (EFA) is a worldwide responsibility that fuses six objectives to be met by 2015 with the goal of giving quality essential training to all youngsters, youth and grown-ups. The second of the EFA Goals, Universal Education, is reverberated in the second of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Indeed,

the accomplishment of the EFA objectives is fundamental for the fulfillment of each of the eight MDGs (World Bank, 2000). In spite of the fact that EFA has given a worldwide push to training promotion and practice, it 'has not, to date, given adequate regard for some underestimated gatherings of youngsters, specifically those seen as having "extraordinary instructive needs" or disabilities' (UNICEF, 2011, p. 4). The 2010 MDG Report is the first to mention disabilities and specifically the limited opportunities for children with disabilities and the link between disability and marginalization in education (WHO/World Bank 2010)

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1998 and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2008 enshrine the right to education for all children. The right to education is also recognized in other core human rights documents. Article 26 (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 5 (e) (v) Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Article 13 (1) on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 10 on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and Article 30 Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers (CRPD, 2010).

2.2 The Concept of Inclusive Education

The concept of inclusion was conceived in 1948 with the declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly on the “International Bill of Rights” which recognizes that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights (Graphic Online, 2014). It is widely held that the meaning of inclusion is contended (Ainscow & Howes, 2003). Any definition of inclusion needs to make a clear distinction between inclusion and integration. Distinctions made earlier are descriptions of placement where CWDs learn together with

their peers without disabilities. However, the difference among them is seen in the way that a child with disability has to adjust to the mainstreaming/integration system and requirements.

The lack of clarity with respect to the operational meaning of inclusive education as far as the definition of the characteristics of the school and the classroom as well as the group to be included has been a major issue despite its philosophy has been widely accepted in some countries with others yet to fully accept and implement it. Nevertheless, a review of studies by Ainscow (2006) and Booth (2000) tried to provide a clarity to the operational definition. These studies tried to provide a deeper understanding to the concept of inclusive education. According to Booth (2000), one major way of ensuring the expansion of interest and reducing any form of prohibition from the way of life is through inclusive training. The study further added that, inclusive training also ensures better educational programs as well as group of standard schools. The study by Ainscow (2006) was no different from the findings of Booth (2000). According to Ainscow, the achievement of inclusive education is by schools focusing on expanding interests as well as fulfillment of gatherings of have been undoubtedly underestimated within the educational circle.

A study by Peter (2007) also touched on the concept of inclusive education. According to this study, the concept of inclusive education should be based on social equity concept as declared in the Salamanca Statement. This Statement and basis is further in tune with the disability social model. According to the Social Model, the school or educational system must or needs to change in order to meet all the needs of individual learners and this is due to the fact that, all children are different.

Furthermore, a study by Swart & Pettiper, (2006) also posited that, the concept of inclusive education must be considered as a continuous and evolutionary process and by this approach, it will ensure that all the increasingly needs of diverse learning population are effectively met. In other words, as according to Ainscow (2005), inclusive education should be not viewed as a single event rather as a never-ending societal process. Dyson & Howes, (2009) concluded that, with most often than not, the field of inclusion has been characterized as a field where there is constant resolution of dilemma as result of emergence of differences.

Inclusive education is characterized by UNESCO as a procedure of tending to and reacting to the various needs of all students by expanding investment in learning, societies and groups, diminishing rejection inside and from instruction. It includes changes and adjustments in content, methodologies, structure and techniques, with a typical vision that covers all offspring of the suitable age run and a conviction that it is the obligation of the state to instruct all youngsters, (UNESCO, 2005).

Further, 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 & Gartner (1999) suggested, “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”. In addition, Barton (1999) 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. As outlined by UNESCO, (2003) “It aims at social inclusion and implements the

child's right as pronounced in the Universal Declaration in Human Rights of 1949", giving the implication that, inclusive education ultimately seeks to transformation the society as well as its institutional arrangements.

Anytime education for children or persons with disabilities comes up in any country, whether in the developed or developing countries. The issue of inclusion also pops up. This is due to the complexity and contentious nature of inclusive education as a result of it being shaped by the cultural, historical, contextual and global factors. Additionally, the concept of inclusive education requires the creation, provision of support as well as necessary and required resources by schools that will ensure that, all persons both living with or without any form of disability gain access to quality education and meaningful learning of any form. Hence, it can be concluded that, the onus lies with the people of the society and the nation as a whole to fully embrace inclusive education and commit to providing equitable education for all. Matey (2014) posited in his that, the main principle of inclusion to ensure the full development of persons with disabilities potentials and achieving this will mean the right direction taken.

In spite of the fact that there are varieties in the way unique individuals depict comprehensive training, there are likewise basic components that tend to include emphatically in the conceptualization of consideration. Some of these components are referred to by Green (2001) and they incorporate a pledge to building a more just society, a promise to building a fairer instruction framework. United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2005) traces four rules that are basic to all meanings of incorporation. Incorporation as a procedure must be viewed as a ceaseless inquiry to discover better methods for reacting to differing qualities. Incorporation is worried about the recognizable proof and expulsion of hindrances. Incorporation is about

nearness, interest and accomplishment of all understudies, and consideration includes a specific accentuation on those gatherings of students who might be at danger of minimization, avoidance or under accomplishment.

In any case, the key standard is that inclusive schools must perceive and react to the assorted needs of their students, obliging both distinctive styles and rates of learning and guaranteeing quality instruction to all through suitable educational module, hierarchical courses of action, showing procedures, asset utilize and organizations with their groups. There ought to be a continuum of help and administrations to coordinate the continuum of uncommon needs experienced in each school (Pham, 2008).

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". This should include children with disability 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.

Inclusive education has been justified based on research, which indicates that it could lead to better academic and social skills for students with special needs (Freeman & Alkin, 2000). Research by the above author, shows 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 by UNESCO, (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. By logical extension, it can be argued that effective inclusion needs to be based on the human rights and one of the social models (Theory of Intergroup Contact) approaches stated in the theoretical framework.

2.3 Inclusive Education in Ghana

From the perspective of Ghana, the concept of inclusive education can be dated back to 1951, where the Accelerated Education Plan and further the 1961 Education Act Free Education were introduced. The Plan and Act lead to the increase in enrolment of students as far as the basic level of education was concerned (Gadagbui, 2008). The Plan and Act was not discriminatory as it accommodated education for all persons including persons with disabilities. This gives the indication that, as far as Ghana is concerned, there has been an existing well-defined legal framework which ensures both persons with and without disabilities in the same classroom under the educational system. Gadagbui, (2008) also outlined that, inclusive education or education for disabled persons has been enshrined in the 1992 Constitutions.

As a signatory to the Salamanca Framework for Action on Special Education Needs and one of the very few countries to have first implemented the Convention of the Rights of the Child, Ghana does not have a comprehensive inclusive education policy as at now. However, efforts are underway to implement inclusive education practices in some basic schools in Ghana on pilot basis (Sarfo, 2010).

The Government of Ghana through the passage of the Disability Law (Act 2006, 715) aims to educate pupils with special education needs in mainstream schools. For instance, article 20(1) indicates that a “person with disability seeking admission into a school or any other institution of learning should not be denied access on account of his or her disability,

unless the person with disability has been assessed by the ministries 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). What this means is that, regular schools in Ghana are obliged to enroll children with disabilities in their schools without any discrimination. At the 48th session of the International Conference of Education, the Minister of Education of Ghana, Dominic Fobih indicated, "efforts were underway to build the capacity of teachers in mainstream schools in order to handle inclusive practices" (Fobih, 2008). At present, extraordinary units in the premises of general schools have been built up to advance social coordination on pilot premise in three districts of Ghana: Greater Accra locale, Central area and Eastern district. This program is being executed by the Special Education Division (SPED) of the Ghana Education Service (GES) and VSO, a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). SPED is further building the limits of some region directorates of Education to give Inclusive Education administrations.

A review of studies by (Kuyini, 1998; Ofori-Addo, et al., 1999; and O'Toole, et al., 1996) outlined some of the major challenges Ghana faced since the inception of inclusive education. According to their findings, issues of limited number of teacher knowledge including the necessary skills needed to provide all the needed instructional adaptations leading to the meeting of every person (students) included. Additionally, reviewing the study conducted by Avoke (2000) also added that, despite the existence of the legal framework introduced in the 1951 and 1961, there still lack of clarity with regards to the legislation and policy on inclusive education. Avoke also added that, inclusive education has been stated as an official educational policy as according to the Special Education Division (SPED) of Government of Ghana Annual Education Sector Operation Plan 2003-

2005 accompanying the Education Strategic Plan (ESP). With regards to SPED and ESP, some of the policies enshrined in it include

1. provision of support systems for children with Special Education Needs (SEN) by 2015;
2. attendance of children with SEN in schools must be increased to 50% in 2008, 80% in 2012 and 100% in 2015.

It is the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Education (MoE) to provide as well as manage education in Ghana and as a result have include the achievement of inclusive education as one of its main targeted vision in the in the Education Strategy Plan (ESP) 2003-2015 by 2015

2.4 Changing Conceptions of Inclusion in Education

Globally, especially in Europe, there is a clear move towards inclusive practice and wide agreement on the key principles first encompassed in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994). Since that time, these standards have been strengthened by numerous traditions, affirmations and suggestions at European and worldwide levels, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), which makes explicit reference to the importance of ensuring inclusive systems of education. The UNESCO Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education (2009) set out the following justifications for working towards inclusive practices and educating all children together:

Educational justification. Inclusive schools have to develop ways of teaching that respond to individual differences and benefit all children.

Social justification. Inclusive schools are able to change attitudes towards diversity and form the basis for a just, non-discriminatory society.

Economic justification. It costs less to establish and maintain schools that educate all children together than to set up a complex system of different schools 'specializing' in different groups of children. The Agency Teacher Education for Inclusion project uses the following definition of inclusion, which is significantly broader than earlier definitions that have often focused on the dilemma between special education and 'integration' into mainstream school. The UNESCO (2008) definition states that inclusive education is: 'an ongoing process aimed at offering quality education for all while respecting diversity and the different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of the students and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination' (p. 3).

It is clear, then, that thinking has moved on beyond the narrow idea of inclusion as a means of understanding and overcoming a deficit and it is now widely accepted that it concerns issues of gender, ethnicity, class, social conditions, health and human rights encompassing universal involvement, access, participation and achievement (Ouane, 2008). Arnesen et al. (2009) points out that inclusion may be understood not just as adding on to existing structures, but as a process of transforming societies, communities and institutions such as schools to become diversity-sensitive.

The philosophy of inclusive education, as sketched out above, is executed in various routes over various settings and fluctuates with national approaches and needs, which are thusly affected by an entire scope of social cultural, historical and political issues. While considering arrangement and practice for comprehensive training crosswise over nations, in this way, "it is important to keep in mind that policy makers and practitioners are not always talking about the same thing" (Watkins & D'Alessio, 2009). Mitchell (2005) states

that since there "is no one model of inclusive education that suits every country's circumstances; caution must be exercised in exporting and importing a particular model". While countries can learn from others' experiences, it is important that they give due consideration to their own social, economic, political, cultural and historical singularities.

2.5 Conceptualizing Inclusive Education Based on Key Features

The most predominant training conceptualizations are those that characterize inclusion in view of certain key elements and attributes, for example, age-fitting arrangement and understudies having the capacity to go to their nearby school. Berlach & Chambers (2011) give a philosophical structure to inclusion education alongside school-based and classroom based cases. Their philosophical underpinnings incorporate accessibility of chance; acknowledgment of disability and additionally impediment; predominant capacity and differing qualities; and a nonappearance of predisposition, partiality, and disparity.

Loreman (2009) provides a synthesis of inclusive education obvious in an assortment of sources arranged immovably in these key elements class. These components include all children go to their neighborhood school. Schools and areas have a 'zero-dismissal' strategy about enlisting and showing youngsters in their locale, all children are invited and esteemed, all children learn in customary, varied classrooms with same-age peers, all children take after substantively comparative projects of study, with educational programs that can be adjusted and altered if necessary. Methods of direction are fluctuated and receptive to the requirements of all. All children add to customary school and classroom learning exercises and occasions. All children are bolstered to make companions and to be socially fruitful with their associates. Satisfactory assets and staff preparing are given inside the school and locale to help inclusion (Loreman, 2009).

Some inclusive education researchers, for example, Mittler (2012), Ainscow, and associates likewise conceptualize the errand of inclusion similar to what distinguishes and expels obstructions to interest in instruction. In reality, Slee (2011), Graham & Slee (2008) venture to recommend that, the exceptional school-general school division is never again a helpful method for surrounding training, and that boundaries that exist in the two segments should be expelled in order to deliver what is, at last, not at all like either. As per Slee (2011), the irregular school is neither a special nor a 'regular' school, but one which has been envisioned and restored with a view to eliminating barriers to inclusion in an anticipatory way. He states that reforming education is a manifold and complex task that reaches into the deep structures of education and schooling to produce different policies, practices and cultures. (Slee, 2011). Macedo (2013), however, has contended that worldwide approaches like the United States' No Child Left Behind Act (2001) makes fake lines, in any case, the general concept of inclusion looks to expels these simulated lines and create training that spotlights on the uniqueness of students.

It is additionally contended in literature that there are potential hindrances to inclusion. For instance, a survey of practices of inclusive instruction in Australia inferred that hindrances seen by instructors include: an absence of time; trouble in individualizing inside a gathering; deficient preparing and assets; an absence of school bolster; and the view that modifying towards a few understudies (a) bargains the learning of others; (b) attracts negative consideration regarding students contrasts; and additionally (c) neglects to plan students for 'this present reality' (Shaddock, 2006).

A further test that keeps on making noteworthy boundaries to inclusion is the mentality of society (Forlin, Loreman, Sharma, & Earle, 2009; Sharma, Forlin, & Loreman, 2008;

2011). Up until now, consideration has been introduced through a disability focal point. Inclusion should, notwithstanding, not be viewed as an issue exclusively about understudies with inability. Shaddock et al. (2004) watches that the consideration development has been a specialized curriculum development and thusly, it is anything but difficult to fall into imagining that it is just about CWDs. The catalyst for consideration has originated from outside of the standard from the individuals who have been customarily barred.

Some now see inclusive instruction as being worried about assorted qualities all the more for the most part. As indicated by Shaddock and associates (2006), inclusive suggests that if investment turns into an issue for any understudy, regardless of whether emerging from disability, sexual orientation, conduct, destitution, culture, displaced person status or whatever other reason, the alluring methodology is not to set up uncommon projects for the recently recognized individual or gathering need, however to grow standard considering, structures, and practices with the goal that all understudies are suited.

2.6 Children with Multiple Disabilities (CWMDs) and Inclusive Education (IE)

Inclusion serves many purposes within the social environment where everyone belongs. In the educational environment, inclusion seeks to reduce exclusion, increase participation and help address stigma. "The International Classification of Functioning (ICF) demonstrates the dynamic relationship between a person, his/her impairment and the environment that can influence the activity and participation of children with disabilities" (Abeywickrama, Jayasinghe & Sumanasena, 2013; 116). There has been a standardized classification of individual's impairment and the kind of environment that facilitates inclusion for such individuals. This suggests that a raw environment cannot in itself

provide the welcoming atmosphere a child with disability will desire. Abeywickrama, Jayasinghe & Sumanasena, (2013) sought to examine the experiences of children with disabilities, their parents and teachers at the special education units in 3 public school in Sri Lanka. To achieve this, the used 20 children with disabilities, 8 teachers and 18 parents, where a qualitative research approach and an in-depth interview, focus group discussion and non-participatory observation was used to collect data from the respondents. The findings showed that, in general the current practices in education in Sri Lanka with respect to children with disabilities did not meet the global recommendations.

The ICF acknowledges that an environment must be modified in a way that will suit and shape the experience of children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs). To make this a reality, the ICF framework makes another effort to identify the promoters and barriers in schools that will influence activity and participation of children (WHO, 2009). This makes it possible for entities to know their mandate within the inclusive agenda and how to carry out this mandate to achieve the agenda.

Children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs) have unique and independent experiences with their social and learning environment. Usually, these experiences emanate from the nature of disability and their expectations. Indeed, some of the experiences of CWMDs in their learning environment is encouraging as well. Studies reveal that "based on their positive experiences, children viewed school as an avenue to socialize" (Abeywickrama, et al., 2013; 119).

The experiences of the students have been considered as remarkable. Many of the experiences live in the memories of the students for a long time. They express their satisfaction through various communication media just to let others know about their

experiences. Studies confirmed that, "interaction with peers through participation in dance or sport encouraged them to learn, as depicted by their drawings and from what they said" (Abeywickrama, et al., 2013). In the lived experiences of the children in their respective schools, children considered the school as a good platform to socialize, make friends, love and care and feel loved by others as well.

Even, when many of the students could not express themselves verbally, they found other alternative means clearly express their satisfaction regarding their experiences. Beyond the socialization experience, they also realized that the school helped them build healthy relationship that considered their needs. "The student drawings and interviews strongly portrayed support and relationships as the most significant factors influencing their perceptions of participation in school" (Abeywickrama, et al., 2013; 120). There is evidence that CWMDs do experience some satisfaction in their encounter in their schools. With their multiple disabilities, which affected their ability to communicate clearly, they still were able to reveal how they felt in their learning environment.

On the other hand, the experiences of CWMDs have also witnessed some regrets, pains and dissatisfaction. Whiles many issues have been identified as worrying and undermining to the experiences of the children, bullying has been singled out as a very disturbing factor in the school environment. Apart from the bullying, poor technology was a major setback in the experiences of CWMDs. The absence of poor quality of available technological products interfere with the learning processes and affects the productivity of the students. "Lack of adapted materials and assistive equipment to facilitate learning was a significant hindrance according to all the participants, regardless of the type of impairment" (Abeywickrama, et al., 2013; 120). It was discovered that the available technological

equipment did not match the needs of the students, making it almost impossible to benefit in the learning processes.

Additionally, it has been revealed that the natural and built environment does not favour the impairment of the children. Ideally, the natural and built environment must have the purpose of being responsive to the specific environmental concerns of the children. It must take into consideration the auditory, visual and other sensory limitation of the students with disabilities.

However, the physical environment did not take into account whether or not the environment was soundproof, there were varying elevations that affect movement of physically challenged and the visually impaired (Loreman, 2009). Among the many concerns, it was discovered that "physical accessibility was observed to be a problem for children with physical and visual disabilities because of different elevations due to the hilly terrain in this area" (Abeywickrama, et al, 2013; 120). The physical environment is not adaptable enough to facilitate movement and effective classroom activities. The built environment, likewise, does not seem to take into consideration the social and linguistic needs of the CWMDs. These major concerns could have been easily considered to ease the challenge of CWMDs learning in an inclusive or non-inclusive social environment.

Closely related to the physical and built environment is the social environment. The relationship that exists between CWMDs and their colleagues and teachers brings meaning to the social experiences. The nature of the relationship with the school entities is a clear miniature of the relationship they have in the larger communities. The children suffer lots of discrimination, violence and abuse in the school. In many situations, they suffer exclusion within the school setting, which is aimed at promoting inclusion.

This happens because the elements or entities in the school settings (teachers, pupils and other staff) who hope to promote inclusion come from societies who are guided by the historical and cultural beliefs about disability. It is believed that "positive attitudes, values and beliefs of society, peers, families and teachers were identified as fundamental for the initiation and sustainability of education for children with disabilities" (Abeywickrama, et al., 2013; 120). However, many are guided by negative beliefs and values that consider disability to be a curse, some karma punishment, a punishment for a generational sin, or a message from the deities or gods of the land. Hence, these school entities come to school with these notion and perceptions and discriminate against the pupils to deepen exclusion within an inclusive environment.

In the end, both the children and their parents get disappointed and either endure the mistreatment or withdraw their children from the school. In some cases, the consequent reaction is quite disturbing. Evidence reveal that, "in some communities, parents decide to keep children away from as a result of the situations and attitudes within the school environment which prevent effective learning or affect the comfort and safety of the children when they attend school (Abeywickrama, et al., 2013).

The academic standards in an inclusive school affect the academic progress and performance of CWMDs. Due to the unique needs of the children, special academic provisions and techniques need to be put in place and modified regularly to suit the changing needs of the child. These provisions are rarely taken into consideration, thereby affecting effective knowledge exchange and academic performance. In many cases, the availability of the educational services, the nature of the services and how it can be accessed is absent. "Lack of information about educational services and poor awareness

regarding availability delayed school admissions for children of many families" (Abeywickrama, et al., 2013; 121). Even when they are available, the contents are substandard such that it hardly serves its expected purpose. "Most parents and some teachers and students emphasized the need to change the curriculum contents, the mode of delivery and evaluation methods to match the students' abilities" (Abeywickrama, et al., 2013; 121).

2.7 Teachers' attitude towards Inclusive Education

Convictions about inability, ethnicity, demeanour and worries of educators can affect the act of inclusive education, the nature of instructive materials and direction students get (Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001). The study by Leyser & Tappendorf, (2001) sought to examine the attitude and practices regarding mainstreaming in the United States of America. To achieve this, the study adopted a quantitative research approach and the use of questionnaires to collect data from 91 regular and special educators in two small rural school districts. The findings found that, regular education teachers did not readily implement differentiated instructional strategies that were necessary to accommodate children with special educational needs.

The world research on exceptional requirements instruction shared the suppositions that instructors' states of mind may act to encourage or oblige the usage of inclusion. Examination of dispositions towards individuals with inabilities is a worry to specialists since mid-1930 (Krosnick et al., 2005). It is argued that when teachers gain extensive professional knowledge needed to implement inclusive programmes, they may succumb to it (Avramidis, Buylis & Burden, 2000).

Numerous educators do not completely concur and trust that inclusion works. As per UNESCO study, educators who support the instruction of all youngsters in standard classes were from the nations that have laws requiring this (UNESCO, 2000). Educators' states of mind towards inclusion depended firmly on their training, knowledge with CWDs, class size, workload, and the accessibility of help (Opdal et al., 2001, UNESCO 2000, Avramidis et al., 2000).

Actually, adversaries are those worried about the absence of preparing, work force and authoritative help and the instability of scholastic and social increases through embracing such models (Whitaker, 2004). Instructors are increasingly positive or idealistic about inclusion of CWDs (Avramidis et al., 2000). Nevertheless, the real usage of incorporation in classrooms befuddles and stresses educators. Educators may express acknowledgment yet not make the adjustments and alterations essential for fruitful inclusion (Bradshaw & Mundia, 2006).

There are various variables affecting demeanors of instructors and other shut partners towards inclusion. After an audit of the writing on instructors' mentalities towards combination/inclusion, Avramidis et al., (2000) in their study sought to investigate the attitudes of mainstream teachers towards the inclusion of children with special needs in the ordinary school in south-west England. The study included 81 primary and secondary teachers. The study condensed three gatherings of factors affecting instructors' states of mind. They are tyke related factors, instructor related factors and instructive condition related factors, which are, from numerous points of view, interrelated. Different sources recommended particular components like class measure, insufficient assets, the degree to which all students would profit by inclusion, and an absence of satisfactory instructor planning.

Research expresses that the level of the inabilities influenced educators' states of mind towards having CWDs incorporated into their classroom. The milder the disabilities, the all readier educators are to incorporate them in their classrooms and the other way around (Yuen et al., 2001). Interestingly, the finding of Avrimidis et al., (2000) uncovered that instructing understudies with noteworthy disabilities in standard classrooms brings about positive changes in instructors' dispositions. This accept such practice happens "after the educators have picked up authority of the expert aptitude expected to actualize comprehensive program" (Avrimidis et al., 2000, p.207).

Opdal et al., (2001) found that presentation to and involvement with understudies with specific disabilities had an impact on instructor demeanors. For example, educators who were presented to understudies with visual debilitation, discourse and dialect hindrance, or with hearing impedance were more positive towards consideration than those instructors who did not show understudies with these particular disabilities.

Teaching experience with CWDs affected instructor's suppositions about inclusion (Opdal et al., 2001). Additionally, in their examination, Opdal et al., (2001) found that instructors with experience of showing students with versatility and other physical disabilities were the strongest of the possibility of inclusion. The more contact educators have with understudies the more positive. They are towards their incorporation, which could be addressed by the number of subjects that each teacher instructs. Opdal et al., (2001) discovered that educators who showed at least three subjects were somewhat more positive than the instructors who showed maybe a couple subjects.

As indicated by Avramidis, et al., (2000) appropriate teacher education is the indicator of effective comprehensive instruction. Avramidis et al., (2000) found that paying little respect to any type of expert advancement as with school-situated in-benefit or pre-benefit preparing it is educators with significant preparing in a custom curriculum that hold higher uplifting demeanors than those with next to zero preparing about inclusion. The exploration finding uncovers that educators got college based proficient improvement demonstrated most noteworthy mean scores in every one of the three parts of dispositions, i.e. cognizance, warmth and conation (Avramidis et al., 2000). Moreover, this gathering of educators additionally showed more trust in meeting the IEP prerequisites of students with uncommon necessities. Lanier et al., (1996) called attention to following satisfactory starting instruction, that the instructor saw inclusion of CWDs conceivable with the progression of time and experience.

The impact of preparing, to creating uplifting state of mind, was seen with the two gatherings of pre-service and in-service teachers (Ali et al., 2006, Bradshaw & Mundia, 2006) confirmed that just a single compulsory course seems to produce critical contrasts in dispositions between the gatherings. Chances to attend courses identifying with the IE programs were the apparatuses to expand the level of educators' capability. Additionally, numerous past endeavors were made to analyze the states of mind of educators towards conclusion at various school levels. The famous research was with the emphasis on looking at educators of primary schools with instructors of optional school level. Auxiliary instructors seem less tolerating of training for CWDs in regular schools than rudimentary or grade teachers (Smith, 2000). One clarification given by Smith (2000) is the enormous measure of materials auxiliary instructors are required to cover in the fifty to hour-long class periods.

Conversely, there is another review that educators of lower instructive school levels are less positive than instructors of optional school level. Hasting et al., (2003) contemplated that down level, children interact more often than not with just a single or if nothing else two instructors. Therefore, educators' demeanors are more negative while optional instructors rely on their part as the head instructors or subject instructors and on the significance of the subjects; the instructors would choose how much time they function specifically with CWDs.

Wamae & Kang'ethe-Kamau, (2004) in their study outlined the importance of furnishing all teachers and facilitators under the inclusive education system as that will ensure that, these facilators are well equipped with right learning and proper abilities and this must be given and treated with much urgency due to its criticality. Furthermore, their study also outlined the importance of knowledge of disability from the perspective of these teachers and facilitators. The study believed that, the more knowledge teachers have with regards to disabilities, the better the position these teachers will be in dealing with the persons with disabilities. Hence a more positive attitude will be developed towards disabled persons in the classroom from these facilitators or teachers.

Another study by Stough, (2003) also outlined an instance in the United States of America (USA) where the study found that, students are usually instructed in an isolated setting or in other settings, they are taught insufficiently in a general training classroom and this is as a result of lack of prepared custom curriculum teachers and facilitators

Another study conducted by Campbell, Gilmore & Cuskelly (2003) also looked that attitude of facilitators and teachers under the inclusive education and found that, most

often than not, teachers attitude towards inclusive education has been quite negative and this because, they have not been given the necessary support on how to treat, tolerate and teach persons with disabilities in a regular classroom with other persons without disabilities. This finding was supported by McLesky, Hoppey, Willaimson & Rentz, (2004) who also found that, there are quite a number of reasons why some if not most teachers have a negative attitude towards persons with disabilities in the same class with persons without disabilities. From their study, it was found that, one major reason was lack of training and support. The study found that, as a result of this, most of the facilitators or teachers usually felt uneasy in the classroom and over the years have vocally expressed their feelings

Reviewing the work of Riddell & Weed (2009) also on the attitudes of teachers within an inclusive education system, their study posited that, there have been many opposing forces to quite a number of attempts being made to introduce a stronger discourse into education. However, Riddell & Weed readily pointed the fact that, professionals in the educational system have embraced these attempts. Additionally, another study also outlined that, most of these professionals in the education system were of the belief that, if their efforts are backed and supported by an authoritative body, then there is a chance of expanding their capacity to work side by side with the custom curriculum educator leading to the solving issues of comprehensive inclusive education in the classroom (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003).

Reviewing a study by Avoke (1997) which was taken from the context of Ghana, it was found that, inclusive education is actually shaped by the traditional stereotypes of communities in Ghana as well as cultural prejudices. In the Ghanaian context, children living with disabilities are much regarded let alone being included in the classroom to study, therefore making education for children with disabilities irrelevant and this is reflective on the attitude and perceptions of teachers in the classroom towards children with disabilities.

Oben (2005) also reviewed the attitude of teachers in the context of Ghanaian teachers. The study sought to examine the perceptions or views of facilitators and teachers who were directly involved in teaching children with disabilities. The findings revealed that, teachers exhibited a negative attitude towards teaching children with disabilities even though some expressed affection and sympathy towards children with disabilities. The findings also revealed majority of these teachers were unwilling to have these children in their classes.

Another study by Ackah (2010) also looked at the attitude and background characteristics of teachers with regards to inclusive education. The findings revealed that, most teachers in the Ghanaian educational system lack the necessary tools or equipment including training on how to handle children with disabilities in their classrooms and as a result of this, most of them did not support inclusive education.

Most teachers within the education system in Ghana were of the belief that, the inclusive education will not be the best option for children with disabilities and this because in most cases, these children may be suffering from some form of sensory impairment, therefore, it will be wise or encouraged that, these children be given the necessary attention in a special

school for children with disabilities (Agbenyega, 2007). The study believed that, due to the above perception of teachers, they had developed a negative attitude towards inclusive education. Agbenyega, (2007) also added that, teachers also believed the inclusive education tend to increase their workload and sometimes are unable to complete their syllabus for the term and this they attributed to disabled children dragging the class most of the time and general performance of the class. It is this regard that, Avoke (1997) emphasized the importance of ensuring inclusive education by citing the United Nation Education Act for Children with Disability. According to this Act, every children both with or without disabilities be given the equal chance (mandatory) and access to free appropriate education.

2.8 Roles of Teachers

Regular and special education teachers play various roles in the nurturance of special students and students with multiple disabilities. The dynamics of the learning opportunities they present is crucial and depends on factors such as exposure, experience, resource availability and technology. The roles of the teachers in inclusive schools at the basic school levels are both academic and social in nature. The teachers have the dual responsibilities of inculcating knowledge and skills and facilitating effective and healthy social interaction that will enhance inclusion.

At the basic school level, the teachers are easily able to contain and regulate the behaviours of the children than at the secondary school level. Yet, the responsibilities can be daunting. As teachers spend much time observing and monitoring could provide the strategies of managing the social interactions. “Young children can be very accommodating to the idiosyncrasies of others, and teachers tend on the whole to stay with

their class, and thus get to know their pupils and be known by them" (Rogers, 2007; 55). This suggests that the children at this level can easily accept the differences found in others and will easily adapt and relate well with their colleagues with multiple disabilities. However, this can be more achieved when the teachers monitor and direct the children and help them appreciate uniqueness and diversity.

In the classroom, there is the challenge of having to teach children with disability using the same curricula used in teaching children without disability. The sensory and intellectual impairment make it quite challenging to be able to easily use the same curricula and accomplish the target within the same time limit. However, this has been the situation in many inclusive educational settings where "children with different types of abilities would follow a similar, if not the same, curriculum and it was agreed that where possible children with SEN should have access to it" (Rogers, 2007; 58). The curricula do not necessarily take into the consideration the limitation of the pupils; it does not also take into consideration the fact that children with multiple disabilities need special attention and more time. With these, the role of the teachers become more diverse and numerous if they are to make meaningful impact.

The challenge to improve upon the academic performance compels teachers to look beyond inclusion and emphasize on effectiveness. Teachers do not only work to ensure that CWMDs become part of the integrated social environment, but also benefit wholly from the entire educational program. Many CWMDs have been socially excluded for long before becoming a part of the school environment. Therefore, whiles the CWMDs will struggle to get acceptance, the children without disability will also struggle to accommodate the pupils with new and unfamiliar conditions. The task of bridging these

two extreme social positions and ensure accommodation is a burden that lies on the teacher.

Prior to the teaching of substantive skills and ideas, teachers help children acquire fundamental communication skills. For example, children with visual impairment, hearing impairment or a combination of both need to learn how to communicate and interact through the learning of braille and sign language. This task is very tedious considering the fact that these children "are excluded from birth in their own family by virtue of not being able to speak the same language" (Reiser, 2012; 267). Without these communication abilities, the children with disabilities/multiple disabilities will not be able to share in the learning experience. The teachers through a structured and lengthy methodology teach these skills.

It is only after these skills have been effectively acquired that the children can be able to learn and benefit from the content of the universal curricula. The need for excellence has also become a major requirement in the academic circles of inclusive schools. It has been revealed that teachers of inclusive schools feel compelled to compete with other schools for excellence and academic awards. "Few would dispute the aim of raising standards, but along with this are 'oscar' like rewards for teaching performance, 'zero tolerance' for under-performance, league tables and the privileging of examination results" (Rogers, 2007; 58).

School rakings do not seem to favour inclusive schools because of the pace of learning and limited capacities of CWMDs. It seems unfair to put them in the same category with the other non-inclusive schools. Nonetheless, because they are all evaluated together, teachers of inclusive schools feel pressured to sacrifice the special needs of the CWMDs for academic laurels. In other cases, many of the teachers are under intense pressure to

combine the two and achieve both fairly. In this case, the teachers try to work hard to enhance academic performance and patiently meet the challenging needs of the CWMDs as well.

Methods of delivery are very prominent in teaching CWMDs. The availability and effectiveness of teaching methods is central in helping CWMDs. Even when the methodology or technologies are unavailable, teachers need to improvise and create relevant and friendly methods to help the children. "The school's teachers have evolved a variety of teaching methods that involve children in learning activities" (Reiser, 2012; 270). In this case, the main is to clearly present knowledge to the children in a way they are able to comprehend and apply.

Experts believe that "the school's main aim is not to achieve high scores in the central board examination" (Reiser, 2012; 270) but to focus on the individual needs of the children with special educational needs. The duty at this level could be tougher and calls for collaboration and regular consultations. In this regard, "teachers meet frequently as a team to solve problems and take care of the learning needs of all pupils. "In addition, the school has an outreach programme that helps children and adults from underprivileged groups with literacy and skills" (Reiser, 2012; 274). In cases where regular teachers are unable to handle the challenges or develop effective methodologies, they call in special education teachers to assist both the teachers and the pupils. The role of regular teachers and special education teachers can be demanding and the focus gets confusing considering external pressures, the nature of the multiple impairment and social foundation of the children.

2.9 Teachers' Perception of Inclusive Education

Regardless the continued movement towards inclusive practices however, recent investigations (Dupoux, Wolman & Estrada, 2005; Loreman, Forlin & Sharma, 2007; Barco, 2007; Ross-Hill, 2009) have discovered that numerous educators have not as much as positive discernment towards CWDs and their inclusion in classrooms. A few examinations have demonstrated that essential and secondary teachers share comparative recognitions with respect to comprehensive instruction; some negative, and some positive too (Dupoux, Wolman & Estrada, 2005; Barco, 2007; Ross-Hill, 2009). Wiggins (2012) found a huge connection between secondary teachers' impression of incorporation and classroom setting. This analyst inferred that instructors with involvement in instructing inside comprehensive classrooms held more positive recognitions toward comprehensive training than those educators who did not instruct in comprehensive classrooms.

Late examinations have demonstrated that much has not changed over the previous decade with respect to secondary teachers' impression of comprehensive instruction; in an investigation which explored the view of general training in grades K-12, Dev (1996) uncovered that by and large, educators communicated more inspirational state of mind and recognition toward mainstreaming than incorporation. Sharma, Earle, & Desai (2003) found that preparation in a custom curriculum seemed to decrease pre-benefit instructor's worries with respect to comprehensive training. In addition, Subban & Sharma (2012) uncovered that, instructors who announced having embraced preparing in a specialized curriculum were found to hold more positive recognitions about executing comprehensive training. Forlin, Sharma & Loreman, (2007) detailed comparative discoveries, which demonstrated that educators' impression of comprehensive instruction were adversely affected by their preparation, or deficiency in that department, in

exceptional/comprehensive training. Conversely, Ali, Mustapha & Jelas (2006) empirical study on teachers' perception towards inclusive education in Malaysia used 235 respondents comprising of mainstream and special education teachers in the public primary and secondary schools. The study found that when all is said in done, educators held uplifting states of mind towards comprehensive training. As indicated by the consequences of their examination, the educators concurred that comprehensive training upgraded social collaboration and consideration among the understudies and in this way limiting negative generalizations on uncommon necessities understudies. The perception is that both the regular education and special education students will benefit socially from inclusion in a regular education program (Marchetti, 1991).

Different instructors have the discernment that as more students are incorporated, educators would require extra apparatuses and abilities for adapting to the social and enthusiastic issues that go with inclusive schooling (Idol, 1997). Vaughn, Schumm, Jallad, Slusher & Samuell (1996) said a few angles that may make instructors raise complaints to consideration, for example, the expansive number of understudies in the class, spending deficiencies, the educators' workload, and troubles in institutionalized assessment. In any case, others indicated the absence of cooperation, or requested direction in managing understudies with uncommon requirements (Danne & Bearn-Smith, 2000).

As indicated by Haskell (2000), instructors are seen to be necessary to the usage of comprehensive training. Research conveys the view that educators are the way to the achievement of inclusionary programs (Cant, 1994), as they are seen as linchpins during the time spent incorporating CWDs into general classes (Stewart, 1983; Whiting & Young, 1995). Different investigations recognize that comprehensive instruction must be effective if instructors are a piece of the group driving this procedure (Horne, 1983;

Malone, Gallagher, & Long, 2001). It is vital to look at the states of mind of standard teachers toward the consideration of CWDs into customary settings as their discernments may affect their conduct toward and acknowledgment of such understudies (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003; Sideridis & Chandler, 1996; Van Reusen, Shoho & Barker, 2001). The achievement of an inclusionary program might be at hazard if standard classroom instructors hold negative recognitions toward the incorporation of CWDs (Horne, 1983; Van Reusen et al., 2001). Negative impression of comprehensive training may move toward becoming deterrents, as general instruction educators endeavor to incorporate CWDs (Cawley, Hayden, Cade, & Baker-Kroczynski, 2002).

Sigafoos & Elkons (1994) watched that standard instructors for the most part needed certainty as they endeavored to incorporate CWDs into their classes. This might be because of lacking capability about adjusting the normal instruction educational modules to suit understudies with singular adapting needs (Sigafoos & Elkins, 1994). Further, Avramidis et al. (2000) and Briggs et al., (2002), bolster the view that instructors, who see themselves as skillful comprehensive teachers, regularly have more inspirational states of mind toward comprehensive training. Educators gain expanded fitness because of expanded preparing in the field of comprehensive training (Avramidis et al., 2000). Deficient information with respect to instructional systems and curricular adjustments, which adds to diminished certainty, might be factors that affect an instructor's disposition toward comprehensive training (Janney, Snell, Beers, & Raynes, 1995; Lesar, Brenner, Habel, & Coleman, 1997).

Likewise, having past involvement as a comprehensive instructor appears decidedly incline educators toward comprehensive training (Avissar, 2000; Avramidis et al., 2000; Hodge & Jansma, 2000). Doubtlessly past involvement in this field, enables standard

instructors to feel better inside the comprehensive classroom (Avissar, 2000). Coordinate encounters of incorporating CWDs into standard settings had all the earmarks of being a fundamental factor in forming educators' perspectives toward comprehensive settings (Avramidis et al., 2000; Villa, Thousand, Meyers, & Nevin, 1996). Nevertheless, Briggs et al. (2002) bring up that the idea of past contact ought to be sure, as it is this that outcomes in inspirational mentalities toward comprehensive instruction.

A few instructors likewise have the discernment that the help of primary and other school pioneers is basic with the goal for them to actualize comprehensive practices (Daane, Beirne-Smith & Latham, 2000; Hammond & Ingalls, 2003). Gameros (1995) alludes to a "visionary" important, who will acknowledge the test to make a comprehensive domain for all children. Principals need to acknowledge responsibility for children and bolster comprehensive situation, with a specific end goal to move these sentiments among other school work force (Gameros, 1995; Idol, 1994). Nonetheless, explore recommends that heads' demeanors toward CWDs are not as much as positive in this way affecting on the procedure of incorporation in schools (Daane, Beirne-Smith & Latham, 2000). Clayton noticed that authoritative staffs need adequate comprehension and mastery in regards to the conveyance of administrations to CWDs (Clayton, 1996). Additionally, look into remarked that overseers may hold positive perspectives of consideration, as they are further away than standard educators, as far as genuine encounters (Garvar-Pinhas & Schmelkin, 1989; Larrivee & Cook, 1979).

2.10 Strategies to enhance the experiences of Children with Multiple Disabilities

Stakeholders within the educational sector must be proud of the positive experiences of children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs). The effective interaction and support they

get from friends and teachers help reshape their experiences and give meaning to their existence. However, the myriad of negative encounters they have to deal with concerning the systems, structures, curricula, teachers and their fellow colleagues need urgent attention.

To strategize and give proper meaning to inclusion, there is the need to streamline the various policies and frameworks guiding the implementation of inclusive education around the world, and in Ghana to be specific. This is because "contradictions that arise from education policy and provision, and from the discourses of inclusion and abnormality/normality', often result in parents having difficulty in negotiating the 'official' education process, or constantly 'fighting the system" (Rogers, 2007; 66). There has been some scholarly argument that inclusion merely looks at including CWMDs or children with special educational needs into the mainstream school system without necessary benefiting.

Hence, the focus should be about ensuring that CWMDs and children with special educational needs benefit fully in the educational system and the curricula thereof. Doing this requires a redirection of the focus to ensure that legislations aim at ensuring education for all persons. It is for this reason that Rogers (2007; 67) argues, "These discourses should not be about 'inclusion' or `exclusion`, but about negotiating an appropriate education for all children." With this, all children, irrespective of their impairment or biological, social, emotional or linguistic barriers will reap the full benefit of education. It is only through this approach that CWMDs will also be able to benefit from education, rather than just enjoying the wholesale promotion without necessarily acquiring useful knowledge and relevant life skills.

Beyond the need to streamline the various legislative framework and policy regulations, there is the need to roll out specific programs and methodologies to make the experience of CWMDs more fulfilling in the interim. A change in the environment, proper allocation of funds and a clear definition of roles are strategies that can help reform the IE program. In the writing of Simon et al. (2010), a strong argument was made about the need to make a sufficient monetary investment in the inclusive education program.

This is because, much of the challenges are due to the fact that the system lacks resources and logistics that are needed to transform it. The availability of resources will help with structures, infrastructure, proper service provision and a rebranding. Johnsen (2001) also admitted that that supportive environmental structures and role definition for parents and teachers is needed. To Johnsen (2001), whiles the environment needs a lot of restructuring, the individuals who work directly with the CWMDs need to alter their moral and cultural values and be more responsive to the needs of the children. With these measures in place, there is a surety that the micro, mezzo and macro reformation will be felt in a single wave to make the inclusive education experience a worthy one for CWMDs.

2.11 Theoretical Framework

The Theory of Intergroup Contact underpins this study. Gordon W. Allport (1954) propounded this theory. The theory was originally developed to help explain how groups of different characteristics can work together to reduce prejudice and intergroup conflict. According to Allport (1954), the factors that have a positive influence on the intergroup contacts are cooperation, equal status within the situation, common goals and authority support. It posits that bringing individuals from contradicting bunches together under conditions including cooperation, equal status, personal acquaintance with authority

support can improve attitudes and enhance dispositions toward the out-gathering and encourage intergroup amicability (Pettigrew, 2011). These conditions are met, to a large extent, through structured intergroup encounters that emphasize commonalities between the groups or through contact that occurs between friends (Turner, Hewstone and Voci, 2007).

As stated by Allport (1954), not all types of contact between diverse groups could lead to acceptance of each other. In disagreement with the common belief that merely assembling diverse groups of people together facilitates acceptance of each other, Allport (1954) concluded that there is no formula to establish successful contact. It was however echoed that, "prejudice may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of a common goal. He also believed the effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports" (Allport, 1954; p. 281).

Thus, according to Allport (1954) the three factors that have a positive influence on the intergroup contacts are equal status within the situation, common goals and authority support. Allport's formula continues to receive support across a variety of situations, groups and society (Pettigrew, 1998; Stein, Post & Rinden, 2000; Schwartz & Simmons, 2000; Wittig & Grant-Thompson, 1998).

Supporting Allport's (1954) argument regarding the theory of intergroup contact, Ami, Sharan & Ben-Ari, (1984), stress that albeit coordinate contact between various gatherings might be basic for positive collaborations, it is not adequate without anyone else. They likewise trust that all controlled contact between children from various ethnic gatherings in school can affect social collaborations among gatherings. Contact circumstances that support rapprochement between the distinctive gatherings are that personal contact allows the revelation of novel parts of one's partner in the other gathering. Accordingly,

individuals identify with each other not assemble delegate but rather as people. At long last, a social climate or standards that support relational and intergroup contact can encourage rapprochement and more prominent comprehension between individuals from various ethnic gatherings; cultivating associations (Pettigrew, 2011).

In the field of inclusive education, this theory is without doubt of great importance. Thus in the light of the Intergroup Contact Theory, this study explored the experiences of children with multiple disabilities and the views of regular teachers and special education teachers towards inclusive education.

The adapted study model below is a diagrammatic representation of the theory of Intergroup Contact.

(Intergroup contact theory)

Intergroup Contact (IG)

Element **Outcome**

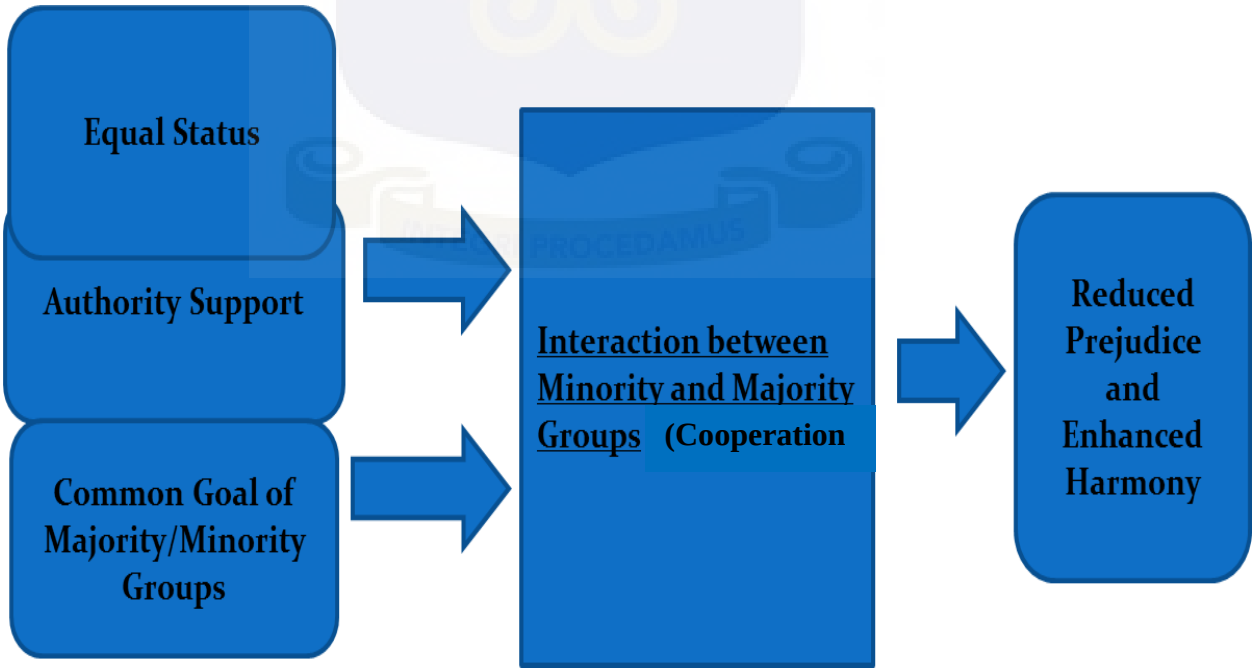

Figure 2.1: Intergroup contact theory

(Source: Adopted from Alhassan A.M., 2014)

2.11.1 Application of the Framework

Considering the fact that, the theory of intergroup contact helps to explain how groups of different characteristics can work together thereby helping reduce the occurrence of prejudice and intergroup conflicts, the theory fits in this study. The choice of this theory lies with the fact that, it helps to explain how children with multiple disabilities can mingle, study and learn with other children without any form of disability, without any form of prejudice or conflict between them. Furthermore, the theory helps to bring out and establish the factors that can promote positive influence and relationship between children with multiple disabilities and children without disabilities through intergroup cooperation, equal status within the situation, common goals as well as authority support.

Another reason underlying the choice of this theory is that, it helps to establish the fact that, when children with multiple disabilities are made to mingle and form some level of relationship with children without disabilities. It could lead to children without disabilities accepting children with multiple disabilities as their equals and treat them fairly without any form of biasness or prejudice. Additionally, the theory establishes the fact that, this kind of relationship can only be achieved if it is sanctioned by institutional supports. Clearly, this is true for this especially since the inclusive education is sanctioned by the government and supported by all stakeholders in the educational industry.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the methodology approach used by the researcher to collect data from the field. The chapter also presents the profile of the study area, research design, research approach, population and sample size of the study. It further presents the sampling technique adopted in the collection of the data, the source of data, the data collection procedure, and the ethical consideration.

3.1 Study Area

The study was conducted at Ashiedu Keteke Sub Metro in two selected schools; Richard Akwei Memorial and Central Mosque Basic Schools. Ashiedu Keteke Sub Metropolitan District Council is one of the ten (10) Sub Metropolitan District Councils of Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA). It shares boundaries with Ablekuma Central and Okaikoi South Metros to the North, Gulf of Guinea to the South, Ablekuma South to the West and to East by Osu Klottey Metropolitan District Council. (Ashiedu Keteke District Environmental Sanitation Strategy Plan, 2013).

The Ashiedu Keteke Sub – Metro with an estimated 2008 mid- year population of about One Hundred and Nineteen Thousand, Four Hundred and Seventy-eight (119,478) people as projected from 2000 National Population and Housing Census by the Ghana Statistical Service is growing in leaps and bounds with a floating population of over Fifty Thousand (50,000) a day. Ashiedu Keteke, one of the Sub-Metropolitan District Councils of AMA forms 6.00% of the entire population of Accra, which has also contributed to the fast growing population of the Accra Metropolis.

The work part gives 26% occupations to people in general and private formal areas of business. Seventy percent (70%) of the general population in the Sub-Metropolitan region work zone in the casual segments of business. The rest of the 4% are with non-legislative associations and global associations. (Ashiedu Keteke District Environmental Sanitation Strategy Action, 2013).

The Central Mosque Basic School was named after the Central Mosque, which is situated at Abbossey Okai. The people there are of mixed tribes: Gas, Dagombas, Komkombas, Akans, Ewes and few others. Majority of the parents and guardians of the children are traders, fishermen, artisans and drivers. The Central Mosque Basic School was established in 1959. It is in Circuit fourteen (14) within a cluster of school known as Ayalolo. It has a student population of Three Hundred and Forty-six (346). It has two streams (A & B) headed by a headmistress with twelve (12) teachers and a Special Education Teacher.

Richard Akwei Memorial Basic School was formerly known as Gold Coast National School and later Ghana National School. This unique school was popularly nick named "Akwei School" after its illustrious founder, the late Richard Mabuo Akwei (a sport administrator) on 1st October, 1930 and attained eighty-five (85) years on 1st October, 2015. The government took over the school in 1932, two (2) years after its establishment. It is in Circuit thirteen (13) of the Ashiedu Keteke Sub – Metro of Accra Metropolis. It has a student population of about eight hundred and fifty (850). It runs two streams (A & B), both under one headmistress. These schools were selected for the study because they are designed by G.E.S as IE schools and have children with multiple disabilities that the researcher is interested in studying. IE started on pilot base in both schools in 2007. In addition, the researcher is familiar with the setting.

3.2 Research Design

The research design refers to the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer the research questions (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006). The design describes the procedures for conducting the study, including when, from whom, and under what conditions the data was obtained. The study was approached qualitatively. As a form of social enquiry, qualitative approach focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences in the world in which they live (Atkinson, Coffey & Delamont, 2001). This approach allowed the researcher to interact directly with participants thereby gaining an in-depth knowledge into their personal experiences (Opie, 2005).

3.3 Target Population

Kumekpor (2002) is of the opinion that a population or universe of investigation may be considered as the total number of all units of the phenomenon to be investigated that exists in the area of investigation. Besides, the term population also refers to a large group of people, an institution or a thing that has one or more characteristics in common on which a research study can be focused (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The target population for this study include; a total student population of one thousand, one hundred and ninety-six (1196); out of which one hundred and fifty-eight (158) are children with disability, twenty-six (26) regular teachers, two (2) special education teachers and one (1) inclusive education coordinator (Central Mosque Basic School & Richard Akwie Memorial, May, 2016).

3.3.1 Study Population

The study population is the subset of the population that the researcher selected from the target population for this study. These comprised pupils with multiple disabilities from

class one to junior high school, age 6-18 years, who could communicate, regular teachers, special education teachers and the special coordinator for the two schools.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

Sampling is a process of selecting subjects to take part in a research investigation. Mack, et al., (2005) note that in most cases it is not possible to collect information from all the members of the target population of a research inquiry. The notion of sampling as applied in qualitative research entails that only a subset of the population known and referred to as sample is selected for a given research enquiry. Therefore, the researcher deemed it appropriate and used purposive sampling in selecting the sample. This is because purposive sampling attempts to select research participants according to criteria determined by the researcher's purpose (Tuckett, 2004). Furthermore, purposive sampling according to Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston (2013), involves selecting participants who portray key characteristics or elements with the potential of yielding the right information available for the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select children with multiple disabilities and teachers who teach these children out of the population. The reason for using purposive sampling technique lies with the fact that, the researcher believed the children with multiple disabilities and teachers of the schools who teach the CWMDs held key information on the subject matter.

3.5 Sample Size

According to Creswell (1998), sample size for qualitative research should range from five (5) to twenty-five (25) participants to reach saturation. Saturation is reached when a researcher collects data from participants to a point where participants have nothing new to add to the data (Marshall et al., 2013). Twenty-five (25) participants were purposefully

selected from the two schools: ten (10) children with multiple disabilities, ten (10) regular teachers who have CWMDs in their class, two (2) headmistresses, two (2) special educators and one (1) special coordinator.

3.6 Source of Data

The researcher used primary data for the study. The primary data was collected using an interview guide. The interview guide allowed the researcher to probe further thereby gaining better understanding of issues and experiences of participants concerning inclusive education

3.7 Method of Data Collection

According to Coll & Chapman (2000), interview is recognized as a vital instrument in the gathering of data for the qualitative researcher. Based on this, the researcher used an interview guide to collect data from participants on the field. The interview guide allowed the researcher to probe further on questions or issues to gain better understanding on the subject matter (Twumasi, 2001).

3.8 Pilot Study

With the view to examine the completeness of the interview guide, a pilot study was carried out on 8th and 11th April, 2016, at Central Mosque and Richard Akwei Memorial Schools with four of the participants. The aim of the pilot study was to provide information about deficiencies and suggestions for improvement (Gay et al. 2003). The participants were told to discuss verbally and frankly with the researcher any ambiguity, incoherence or incomprehension that they experienced about any aspect of the interview

guide draft. The necessary corrections were effected after the piloting. Those who participated in the pilot study were not included during the actual study.

The researcher personally conducted a face-to-face interview with all participants within a period of two (2) weeks (from 16th-28th May, 2016) at the schools and at the homes of some of the study participants. The headmistresses, special educators and the special coordinator were interviewed during school hours in their offices. Some students were interviewed after close of school and others at their homes with their parents and grandparents; some regular teachers were interviewed during break and others after closing.

The interview guides were designed in English Language. The interviews were conducted in the language that the participants were comfortable with; English language, Ga, Twi and Ewe. This was possible because the researcher speaks all these languages. This was to ensure that all the participants cooperated and helped greatly in obtaining the needed data. Each interview lasted thirty-five minutes to one hour. A voice recorder was used to record the interviews with the permission of participants. Recording the interviews allowed for more accuracy in data collection and enabled the researcher to be more attentive to the participants (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003).

3.9 Data Handling and Analysis

The voice-recorded data was saved on a computer and a hard drive as a backup. The voices recorded was transcribed verbatim to ensure a greater degree of accuracy during analysis. The transcripts were then broken down into discrete parts, then examined closely and analyzed for similarities and differences using thematic framework.

The thematic framework analysis is a matrix-based analytic method for ordering and synthesizing data (Ritchie, Spencer & O`Connor, 2003). It is useful in classifying and organizing data according to themes, concepts, and emergent categories for analysis. The Analytical Framework has five steps of managing and analyzing data. First, the researcher familiarized herself with the bulk data by reading through several times. This was followed by the development of concepts. This was done by drawing on recurring issues and themes that emerged from the data. The generated initial themes were applied to the entire data as the third step. Next was the sorting of data according to the themes created and finally, the researcher summarized the data by reducing the bulk data based on the set objectives.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

According to Walliman (2005), Social research and other forms of research, which study people and their relationships to each other and to the world, need to be particularly sensitive about issues of ethical behavior. In research, certain actions can be referred to as unethical (not seeking permission from participants, not using findings for its purpose, eg. academic purposes, recording participants without their knowledge) and others as ethically acceptable (seeking permission to conduct the interview, assuring participants of their confidentiality and privacy). Based on this, the following ethical measures were taken into account during the research:

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Head of Department of Social Work. The letter spelt out the purpose of the study, the need for individual participation, anonymity as well as confidentiality of participants' responses. After getting approval from the Accra Metro office of the Ghana Education Service, the researcher established

the necessary contact with the headmistresses of the selected schools, permission was granted for the administration of the instruments. Furthermore, the researcher sought permission from the participants to be included in the research with each of them being assured of their confidentiality and privacy.

3.10.1 Professional ethics

"Professional ethics refers to the moral commitment that scientists are required to make to acquire objective and accurate data about real phenomena" Creswell (2012: p. 277). Based on the above, this research was conducted ethically for the following reasons:

- The researcher was objective in reviewing literature and obtaining data.
- The researcher refrained from falsification and/or fabrication of data.
- The researcher in all cases described the methodology used to obtain the data.

3.10.2 Accountability

The research was conducted in an open and transparent manner. Results would be accessible.

3.10.3 Publishing ethics

Auriacombe & Mouton (2007) state that one of the key ethical principles of social research publication is that one must acknowledge sources. This research was done in compliance with the following:

- Works of all authors used in this document have been properly acknowledged in a list of references.
- All other written work was free of plagiarism.

3.10.4 Relationship with subjects

Participants have the right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity at all times. McMillan & Schumacher (2010) explained privacy and anonymity as the individual's right to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent his or her attitudes, beliefs, and behavior will be revealed. The following measures were adopted in this study:

- The anonymity and privacy of participant was respected at all times
- All subjects had the right to express their viewpoints.
- No harm was done to any of the participants, be it physical or emotional.
- A summary of the rationale of the research project was explained to participants at the beginning of the interviews as well as in the cover letter.

3.10.5 Publication of results

In the view of De Vos (2005), the findings of a study should be introduced to the reading public in written form, should be of value and should be viewed as research.

- The report of this investigation is clear and unambiguous to ensure that whoever is using it, can rely on it.

3.11 Limitations of the Study

The researcher encountered few challenges. The researcher encountered a challenge with some of the children with multiple disability during the interview. This was particularly with those with speech impairment. The researcher could not hear and understand what they were saying. This made the researcher not to include them.

In addition, those with learning disabilities and other challenges did not accept the fact that they have that challenge of learning disabilities. This made them also not to qualify to be part of the sample.

The researcher encountered language limitation with some of the CWMDs. Some of them could not express themselves in the English language properly. This made the researcher use the local languages, such Ga, Twi and Ewe, to interview both the CWMDs and the teachers who participated in the study. Some also did not feel comfortable because they were not familiar with the researcher. Therefore, the researcher using the mother tongue of the child participants made them feel comfortable to express themselves. Another challenge that the researcher encountered was the limited number of CWMDs as compared to children without any form of disabilities. This made the researcher to conduct the study in the two selected schools to get the desired number of CWMDs for the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. It began with the demographic characteristics of the children, followed by the experiences of children in an inclusive education setting (positive and negative) as well as the views and experiences of teachers towards inclusive education. The chapter finally presents suggestions from child participants and teachers on how to enhance teaching and learning of children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs).

4.1 Demographic Data of Children with Multiple Disabilities (CWMDs)

In table 4.1 below is the demographic data of children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs). Some of the demographic data collected from the children include age, gender, class/form, type of disability and the school they attended.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Child Participant

Pseudonyms	Age (yrs)	Sex	School	Class/form	Type of disability
Vincent	17	Boy	Richard Akwei Memorial Basic School	Form one	Intellectual and learning disability and dysgraphia
Bismarck	17	Boy	Central Mosque Basic School	Form one	Speech impairment, hard of hearing and learning disability
Tracy	17	Girl	Central Mosque Basic School	Class 6	Epilepsy and learning Disability
Helen	17	Girl	Central Mosque Basic School	Class 6	Low Vision, Hearing and Speech Impairment
Ofei	15	Boy	Central Mosque Basic School	Class 5	Physical, learning disability and dysgraphia
Rosemary	10	Girl	Richard Akwei Memorial Basic School	Class 1	Intellectual/speech, dysgraphia Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Adwoa	13	Girl	Central Mosque Basic School	Class 1	Physical, low vision & speech impairment and dysgraphia
Linda	8	Girl	Central Mosque Basic School	Class 1	Intellectual, epilepsy& speech impairment and dysgraphia
Joseph	10	Boy	Central Mosque Basic School	Class 1	Physical & speech impairment
NiiAyree	18	Boy	Central Mosque Basic School	Class 1	Physical, intellectual & speech impairment & dysgraphia

Sources: field study, 2016

Table 4.1, indicates that, ten children were interviewed, five girls and five boys. The girls have epilepsy, intellectual disability, low vision, hearing and speech impairment, dysgraphia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and physical disabilities. The boys have intellectual and learning disability, dysgraphia, speech impairment, hard of hearing and physical disabilities. The common disability between them is intellectual disability, hearing and speech impairment, dysgraphia and physical disabilities.

4.2 Experiences of Children with Multiple Disabilities (CWMDS)

This section presents the experiences of children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs) in the inclusive education setting. It began with their negative experiences followed by the positive experiences.

4.2.1 Negative Experiences of Children with Multiple Disabilities (CWMDs)

Participants expressed their negative experiences based on their relationship with their peers without disability, their teachers and the physical school structures. In terms of relating with children without disabilities, a participant said:

It is not helpful to me because they are not helping me to learn. Sometimes when I write they laugh at me. They say l don't know how to write so l should leave the school, how can I be in the same class with mates who always laugh at me?

(Vincent, Form *1, Intellectual, learning disability & dysgraphia)*

Another child with disability narrating his negative experience recounted

'The *children without disability laugh at me because my legs twist and look crooked when I run.*

(Adwoa, Class 1, Physical, low vision, speech, impairment, dysgraphia.).

Tracy in class 6 reiterates how their peers without disability tease children with disabilities. She said

'O*ne of the boys is always teasing me that when I am hungry then I intentionally fall down for them to give me milk. I know that I am not well and not that l intentionally collapse'.*

(Tracy, Class 6, epilepsy and learning disability)

Tracy and Ofei further narrated how they feel in class when they are ignored:

Sometimes it is not helpful to me. Sometimes when teachers teach and l don't understand and l ask some of my mates they don't mind me neither do they explain to me. Even today, we had dictation; l didn't know what to write when l asked the one sitting by me he didn't mind me.

(Tracy Class 6, epilepsy and learning disability)

Others don't mind me when l ask them for help when exercises are given. I feel shy when they don't mind me

(Ofei, Class 5, physical, learning disability & dysgraphia)

Aside the above, the study also found that bullying of CWMDs exists in the two schools. Bullying is a common phenomenon in most Ghanaian schools. However, it is expected that in an inclusive education (IE) setting it will be different. A participant said

"I'II be there and the children without disability will come and be shaking me saying "Mo mmayenteten'ataade' (meaning let's tear his dress). They do that and my uniform gets torn or the buttons get loose and l fix it".

(Vincent, Form1, Intellectual, learning disability & dysgraphia)

Another added:

I bought food during break time and was eating; a boy without any disability in Form 1 killed a housefly and dropped it in the food l was eating. Therefore, l didn't eat the rest of the food. I threw the food away and bought another. I came and informed Madam she only told me not to mind him.

(Nii Ayree, Class 1, physical, Intellectual, dysgraphia & speech impairment)

Adding his voice, Vincent said '*Sometimes the children without disability throw stones at me. If l go to report to the teachers, they say 'Ee me, I Iike complaining. This does not make me happy.*

(Vincent, Form 1 Intellectual, dysgraphia & learning disability)

When I want to sleep, they don't allow me. There is a girl here; she is 'Hausa.' She has been beating me. Other children without disability have also been pushing me down.

(Adwoa, Class 1 physical, low vision, dysgraphia, speech impairment)

In terms of infrastructure, the findings showed participants are not happy with the kind of environment that they have in these schools. They claim the compound is full of big stones, unleveled ground (erosion), unsafe verandah and stairs, potholes in the classrooms, hot and dark classrooms for those with bad sight.

Some of the response include

"The environment is not disability friendly. Personally, I don't know when my sickness will attack me. I can fall at any time anywhere and hit my head. Therefore, I usually stay in the classroom".

(Tracy, Class 6, epilepsy & intellectual disability)

"No, the verandah and the stairs are not safe. The way we play with energy, running and pushing one another does not make it safe. Sometimes some of us fall and hurt ourselves".

Ofei, Class 5, physical, dysgraphia & learning disability)

"The compound is full of big stones, the ground is not levelled and if one doesn't take care s/he will fall and hurt him/herself. The classrooms are without windows so they are dark and hot. Therefore, sometimes when we are in classroom we remove our shirts due to the heat"

(Bismarck, Form 1, speech impairment, hard of hearing & learning disability).

Beyond interpersonal relationships and infrastructural difficulties, participants also narrated their experiences based on their capabilities as compared with children without disabilities:

"I feel different because what the children without disability can do I cannot do. I for one it isn't every day that l come to school. Last term for instance, I couldn't write end of term`s exams in all the subjects because l was sick. It really disturbs me and I do cry"

(Tracy, Class 6, epilepsy & intellectual disability).

"I feel different. I come and sit there and then I write".

(Joseph, Class 1, physical & speech impairment).

4.2.2 Positive Experiences of Children with Multiple Disabilities (CWMDs)

Although some of the participants have stated that some of the children without disability tease, bully, and refuse to help them to learn, they still hold the opinion that IE policy is good. Joseph, a physically challenged and speech impaired in class one said

> *"The children without disabilities usually help me. They push me in my wheel chair to school and from school to home". Nii Aryee, a physically challenged with intellectual and speech impairment as well as dysgraphia added, "When they give exercise in class, l sit by some of my classmates and they explain the exercise to me".*

(Nii Ayree Class 1, physically challenged, intellectual, speech impairment & dysgraphia)

Including his relationship with his teachers as part of his positive experiences, Bismarck, a child with speech impairment, hard of hearing and learning disability commented,

> "We *have good relationship with children without disabilities and teachers. We can also hit our chest and say we belong to this year group of our school".*

(Bismarck, Form 1, speech impairment, hard of hearing & learning disability).

However, other children with multiple disabilities were satisfied with their situation and so they do not feel different about being in the same class with children without disability. To these children, they consider themselves as mates with those without disability.

> *"I don't feel different. I see myself as my mates, children without disability".*

(Bismarck, Form 1, speech impairment, hard of hearing & learning disability).

"My sister helps me by holding my hands to enable me get to the classroom. If I want to urinate, she has to help me out. The washroom is usually locked up. There is another older girl; together they send me to the bush to ease myself".

(Adwoa, Class 1, physical, low vision, speech impairment & dysgraphia).

4.2.3 Relating with our Teachers

As part of their experiences, the children also described how their teachers relate with them. These experiences were categorized into positive and negative experiences.

4.2.3.1 Positive Experiences

Narratives from other participants were however very positive towards some of the teachers. These participants said that some of the teachers were very helpful to them, taught them privately, and to some extent paid some of their fees. Others also said some teachers provided pencil, crayon, eraser, ruler, and few others:

"Sometimes they help me. When it happens (by this she means epileptic reaction) in school they call my parents to come for me. The class 4 teacher is the one who has helped me a lot. She pays my exams fees. Sometimes she teaches me during break time. The Special Education teacher too has helped me".

(Tracy, Class 6, epilepsy & learning disability).

"My teacher sometimes gives me money; buys watermelon and slices for us to eat. When she teaches and I don't understand she does not insult or cane me".

(Nii Aryee, Class 1, physically challenged, intellectual, speech impairment & dysgraphia).

"My teacher helps me a lot. She gives me book, pencil, crayon, eraser and ruler to write".

(Joseph, Class 1, physically challenged & speech impairment).

In spite of the bad environment, isolation, and bullying, the study found that emotionally, some of the children expressed happiness of being part of the school:

"I am happy because when I ask them for something they give me. I eat their food and they eat my food".

(Tracy, Class 6, epilepsy & learning disability).

"I am happy in school because I play football with my classmates, running, walking… I can also dance. I get off my wheel chair and join them"

(Joseph, Class 1, physically challenged, & speech impairment).

"Sometimes they can tell me to answer question(s) and if I answer, they tell me today I have done well. They say I should study hard".

(Vincent, Form 1, Intellectual, dysgraphia & learning disability).

"They encourage me not to worry but study hard. I shouldn't say that I am not good academically and stop schooling. I should learn little by little and I'II understand. They also encourage me to pray to God to heal me".

(Tracy, Class 6, epilepsy, & learning disability).

4.3.2.2 Negative Experiences

Due to the nature of the children's disability, some of the teachers take them for granted and use them to perform needless tasks. This takes away from them what is taught in class, in other words, they are unable to participate and remember what is taught in class.

Some of their comments included:

> *"Sometimes if the 'bɔlar' (trash bin) is full they tell me to go and empty the 'bɔlar" while my mates are learning. I am the only person they ask to always empty the 'bɔlar" because they say I don't know how to write".*
>
> *(Vincent, Form 1, Intellectual, learning disability & dysgraphia).*
>
> *".... When the teacher teaches and we don't understand then he will say 'Are you stupid?"*
>
> *(Bismarck, Form 1, speech impairment, hard of hearing & learning disability).*

4.3 Repetition and Withdrawal

4.3.1 Positive Experience

The feelings of participants were elicited on whether or not they would like to repeat or withdraw from school if given the opportunity and the following constituted their responses. The vehemence of the responses showed that some participants would not be very happy if they are repeated or asked to withdraw because they like to be in school. Actually, to some, it would be an embarrassing situation for them due to their conditions.

> *"I will not understand, because of my condition if they repeat me the children will laugh at me".*
>
> (Vincent, Form 1, Intellectual, dysgraphia & learning disability).

"I won't like to be repeated or asked to withdraw because my friends will leave me behind and laugh at me".

(Bismarck, Form 1, speech impairment, hard of hearing & learning disability).

"I won't like to be repeated because my mates will laugh at me. I wouldn't want to withdraw either".

(Ofei, Cass 5, physically challenged, dysgraphia & learning disability).

The experience of a participant who had been repeated showed repetition is not what most participants will want.

"I don't want to be repeated again. If they are to repeat me again, I will not be happy because I have so far been repeated four times. Twice-in class 2 and twice-in class 3. I will not want the head to either ask me to withdraw because I like to be in school".

(Tracy, Class 6, epilepsy & learning disability).

4.3.2 Negative Experience

Nevertheless, Vincent was quick to add that his dislike for the school is why he would want to withdraw from that school. According to him, the mockery and jokes are too much for him to bear:

"I will like to withdraw because I don't like this school. I want to go to the school that they will help me. This school they don't like helping me. They laugh at me when l give wrong answer".

(Vincent, Form 1, Intellectual, dysgraphia & learning disability).

4.4 Experiences of Teachers towards Inclusive Education

Fifteen teachers were interviewed. The demographic profile of the participants varied in terms of sex, age, level of qualification and number of years in the schools. Table 4.2 below shows the demographic characteristic of the participants and their pseudonyms.

Table 4. 2: Demographics of the Special Education Teachers and Regular teachers with their pseudonyms.

Pseudonyms	**Age (Yrs)**	**Sex**	**School**	**Years Of Experience**	**Level Of Qualification**
Headmistress 1: Mrs. Asante	58	Female	Central Mosque Basic School	36	Cert 'A' plus B. Ed Basic Education
Headmistress 2 : Mrs. Armah	54	Female	Richard Akwei Memorial Basic	30	Cert 'A' plus B.A (Hons) Home Economics
Special Education teacher 1: Mr. Ganyo	49	Male	Richard Akwei Memorial Basic School	9	Cert 'A' plus MPhil in Special Education
Special Education teacher 2: Sir Abu	40	Male	Central Basic School	9	Cert 'A' plus B.Ed Special Education
Special Inclusive Education Coordinator: Mr. Yamoson	56	Male	Accra Metro Office	5	Cert 'A' plus Master Degree in Special Education
Regular Teachers : Miss Akuffo, Class 1A teacher	39	Female	Richard Akwei Memorial Basic School	2	Cert 'A' plus Degree in Basic Education
Sir Gideon, Class 6A teacher	42	Male	Richard Akwei Memorial Basic School	4	Cert 'A' plus Diploma in Basic Education
Miss Bruce, Class 1B teacher	59	Female	Central Mosque Basic School	10	Cert 'A' with 'A' Level
Mrs. Lartey, Class 4 teacher	43	Female	Richard Akwei Memorial Basic School	6	Cert 'A' plus Master Degree in School Supervision
Mrs. Okai, JHS One teacher	38	Female	Richard Akwei Memorial Basic School	2	Cert 'A' plus B.Ed in Basic Education
Madam Stella, Class 1C teacher	42	Female	Central Mosque Basic School	5	Cert 'A' plus B.E. in Basic Education
Miss Wood, Class 2 teacher	30	Female	Central Mosque Basic School	5	Cert 'A' plus B.Ed. in Basic Education

Madam Betty,Class3 teacher	32	Female	Central Mosque Basic School	3	Cert 'A' plus B. Sc in Administration
Mr. Owusu, Class 6B teacher	45	Male	Central Mosque Basic School	3	Cert 'A' plus B.Ed in Basic Education
Mr. Mensah, Class 5 teacher	40	Male	Central Mosque Basic School	5	Cert 'A' plus B.Ed in Basic Education

Sources: field study, 2016

4.4.1 View of Special Education Teachers on the definition of Inclusive Education.

The views of the three Special Education Teachers from both schools indicate that inclusive education (IE) is a process of bringing CWDs into our regular schools where they are supported to learn with their peers without disabilities.

Mr. Yamoson, the Special Coordinator gave a basic explanation of what the concept actually means. To him both children with and without disability learn under one roof is inclusive education. However, Mr. Ganyo, Special Education Teacher 1, gave a more elaborate definition of the concept: inclusive education. In fact, he mentioned that the concept from his point of view is a process that brings children with disabilities into regular schools where special educators and other specialists with the use of gadgets or assisted device support them to learn with their peers without any disability. This will help them participate fully in classroom activities and develop their potentials. They will also be able to contribute their quota to the community development and to a large extent national development.

More so, Sir Abu, also a Special Education Teacher at Central Mosque Basic School stressed on increasing access as well as erasing any doubt in the minds of people that CWDs could not mingle with children without disability to learn.

"Inclusive Education means children with special needs, that is, the mild and the moderate are educated alongside their peers without disability under the same roof or classroom that is what we mean by IE".

(Mr. Yamoson, Special Education Coordinator).

"Inclusive education is a process; it is not an event to achieve within a day or two. It is a process of bringing children with disabilities into our regular schools where they are supported to learn with their peers without disability".

(Mr. Ganyo, Special Education Teacher 1).

"Inclusive education is about increasing the access of participation of all children including the disabled children and try to clear the doubt of people with regard to CWDs".

(Sir Abu, Special Education Teacher 2).

In addition, the Headmistresses also said inclusive education is about children with varied disabilities in the same school and class with children without disability.

Some of their responses include:

"I think inclusive education is a process whereby we include the physically challenged, (CWDs), those who are deaf and dumb, those with eye problem and others with the children without disability in the same class and school.

(Mrs. Asante, Headmistress *1*).

"Inclusive education is whereby children with mild to moderate disabilities are made part of the regular classroom situation. They are not separated. They are made to be part of the classroom situation".

(Mrs. Armah, Headmistress *2).*

Regular teachers also expressed similar views concerning what inclusive education actually means to them.

"IE, I know is a policy that the Education Service has implemented. With this policy, CWDs are made to learn with those without disability in regular school stream system".

(Miss Akuffo, Class 1A teacher).

"Inclusive education is bringing CWDs together into one classroom or school with those without disability to learn together".

(Sir Gideon, Class 6A teacher).

From the headmistresses and the regular teachers' definitions, they are aware that inclusive education is a policy that combines CWDs and children without disabilities in the same school and classroom.

Apart from expressing their understanding of what IE stands for, the Special Coordinator also narrated the educational policies that are needed to enhance their experiences. According to him, the policy was implemented in 2016 in twenty districts and fourteen other districts are currently also being enrolled to practice IE.

"It was stated that it would take off in all the schools by 2015. It did not start in all the schools. As I speak, the policy is going on in twenty districts but fourteen other districts are also being enrolled to practice

IE that is the status of IE in Ghana. It is a gradual process and it will take time for us to get there".

*(*Mr. Yamoson, Special Education Coordinator*).*

Impressively, some measures have been put in place by government to ensure the smooth start of the IE. The findings revealed measures such as training special educators, resource centres for screening of CWDs, parents and community sensitization, buildings, and modification of curriculum as stated below.

"The measures were training special educators, resource centres for screening and early detection of children with disabilities, communities and parents were sensitized, then buildings were designed to suit special educational needs status and curriculum too were modified to help these children benefit fully from IE"

(Mr. Yamoson, Special Education Coordinator*).*

According to the Special Coordinator teaching and learning materials such as perkins braille, hand frame, stylus and materials toys are provided by Ghana Education Service (GES) and that in his opinion the GES is up and doing with this policy:

"I will say that GES is doing a lot to help these children to have access to teaching learning material. The visually impaired are assisted with their perkins braille to write their braille. We have the hand frame and stylus also provided to assist those with the auditory or hearing impairment. They are also given hearing aids to assist them enhance

their hearing capacities. We have many materials for the intellectually disabled. Therefore, I will say we have the teaching materials".

(Mr. Yamoson, Special Coordinator)

In spite of all these, the Special Coordinator was not satisfied with the varied measures put in place by the government to enhance the smooth and successful take off-of the IE in basic schools in Ghana. In fact, he pointed out that there were not enough special educators, and adequate buildings to make this policy a reality.

"It wasn't enough. We need to step up our activities to ensure that this programme, IE comes to a good note. For instance, we don't have enough teachers, enough special educators etc who will actually help".

(Mr. Yamoson, Special Education Coordinator).

4.4.2 Roles of Special Education Teachers

This section of the findings reports the roles played specifically by Special Education Teachers in making sure that IE policy works in Ghana. Responses from participants revealed that Special Education Teachers' effort is indispensable to the success of IE policy implemented by the GES.

Identification of CWDs is one of the basic roles Special Education Teachers play in ensuring the success of IE. In fact, according to the findings this process is done within the school through rigorous screening of the eyes, ears, the intellects etc.

"GES has urged all resource teachers to screen the children at least from kindergarten to P3 every year. This has been put in place; the resource teachers are doing that".

(Mr. Yamoson, special coordinator)

"Our roles are many.

1. We are here to create awareness about IE programme and identify children with disabilities through rigorous screening from kindergarten to Primary three. 2. Those we identify to have problems are referred to appropriate health institutions for diagnoses and treatment. When they return we put in educational interventions for them. We develop Individualized Educational Program ((IEP).

3. We help the authorities to establish inclusive schools by organizing school based in service training, workshops and seminars for teachers.

4. We counsel children with special needs and their parents

5. We procure teaching learning material for CWDs and financial support from the district assemblies' common fund".

(Mr. Ganyo, Special Education Teacher 1)

"We also make sure that we solicit for financial support from the district assemblies common funds".

(Sir Abu, Special Education Teacher 2)

"In addition, we have the national assessment centre at Achimota that assists in the screening of early detection of these children probably to refer them to the Ridge Hospital, Psychiatric hospital and eye clinics all over. This is in place. We also have nurses coming to the schools occasionally to screen these children".

(Mr. Yamoson, Special Coordinator*).*

From the responses, it can be stated that special education teachers have a number of roles they perform in the running of IE. However, they on their own cannot say a child has a

specific disability after screening unless referred to a hospital and declared by medical doctors.

4.4.3 The Teaching Methods Used by Regular Teachers

This section looked at the teaching methods employed by the regular teachers in tutoring CWDs in the schools. In fact, the researcher cannot expect that the same teaching methods should apply to the various group of students considering their abilities. The responses show that some of the teachers used group discussion, involved CWDs in more practical work, child centered activity, rhyme, dramatization and stories.

> *"What happens is that, we do more of discussion in groups just to encourage those who do not talk to talk and the bit older ones to take care of the younger ones".*
>
> (Miss Akuffo, Class 1A Teacher).

> *"Depending on the subject and the topic l am teaching, in creative art I group the children without disability and the CWDs together and when it comes to the other subjects I use child centered method".*
>
> (Sir Gideon, Class 6A Teacher).

> *"...because of the large class size, I use group discussion and whole class discussion. I do this so that I will be able to monitor the children and what they are doing".*
>
> (Mrs. Okai, JHS 1 Teacher).

> *"We have different types of teaching methods that we use. I usually try interacting with the children; I always make my teaching child centered. I also do individual and group teaching".*
>
> (Miss Wood, Class 2 Teacher).

However, one regular teacher indicated she does not use any special method apart from the normal class teaching because of the large class size.

> *"Class teaching of course, because the class is large so l teach them all together the same time. I assume that they are all children without disability and we move on. I don't think it is helping the CWDs".*
>
> (Mrs. Lartey, Class 4 Teacher).

Nevertheless, another teacher uses rhyme, dramatization, stories, real objects and role-play as method of teaching relative to CWDs to make the lesson interesting and practical.

> *"I use rhyme, dramatization, stories, role-play and then many teaching aids, assorted ones that each child can see and feel. I make the lesson practical and interesting".*
>
> (Mrs. Bruce, Class 1B Teacher).

According to some of the teachers, the teaching method they employ to impart knowledge to CWDs is through the grouping of students according to mixed ability.

> *"Mostly, I do class activities; I group them in their sitting according to mixed ability: average, above average, below average and those who can't perform at all in one group so that they can be assisting one another".*
>
> (Madam Betty, Class 3 Teacher).

> *"I use the discussion method mostly and occasionally I do group work because children learn better from their friends. Even with their sitting arrangement, I have the very good ones with the bad ones and below average* ones *so that at least if there are problems, they can help".*
>
> (Mr. Owusu, Class 6B Teacher).

In furtherance, the teachers gave the types of teaching learning material they have access to and are using in teaching both CWDs and those without disabilities. They mentioned objects like balls, bucket, cups, empty used tins, wall charts and few others:

> *"I have flash card, drawings on manila cards, some cut out shapes for mathematics, pieces of straws and sand tray for tracing".*
>
> (Miss Akuffo, Class 1A Teacher).

> *"I have objects like balls, bucket, cups plates empty used tins, wall chart, counters and few others in the cupboard. We have been told to provide our own teaching aids".*
>
> (Mrs. Bruce, Class 1B Teacher).

> *"... Like abacus, colour wheel, emmm! I don't have enough..."*
>
> (Mrs. Lartey, Class 4 Teacher).

> *"Ehh! I don't have, for the ICT I use my personal laptop".*
>
> (Mr. Owusu, Class 6B Teacher).

From participants responses teachers in lower primary seem to have some teaching and learning material that they use in teaching than teachers in the upper primary and JHS. This may be attributed to the fact that teachers are to provide their own teaching and learning material.

4.4.4 Views of teachers on academic standard and progression of CWMDs

The extent to which children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs) are promoted, repeated or asked to withdraw featured in the study. CWMDs take part in everything done in the schools. They are assessed and evaluated with their peers without disability in their internal exams but are always promoted because there are some of them who cannot do anything. On promotion, both headmistresses indicated that the students have to go through the system due to their condition, meaning they are promoted on wholesale basis:

"They take part in the exams and everything. They are always promoted. They have challenge so it is not the repeating that will make them pass. With me, I tell them they just have to go through the system because there are some who cannot do anything".

(Mrs. Armah, Headmistress 2).

"They are promoted on wholesale. We don't repeat them because after all, if we repeated them it will not work".

(Mrs. Asante, Headmistress 1).

Again, it means they are never asked to withdraw from school due to non-performance or something else.

"I have never asked any to withdraw. No, I can't do that. When they come and mix with the children without disability, alone it helps them a lot".

(Mrs. Asante, Headmistress1).

The heads' only problem is how CWDs negatively affect their results at the BECE. According to them, the schools are ranked when the BECE results are released by their Metro office using their main aggregates. If they don't get 100% continuously, they would be called to the district office to answer questions.

"...but the little problem that l have is the way they affect our final BECE results by WAEC and heads of schools are invited for Director's questions".

(Mrs. Armah, Headmistress 2).

According to the Special Coordinator they in the Special Education Division of GES, are not happy with the league of schools and call for the end of it at their last School Performance Appraisal Meeting (SPAM).

"This issue came up at the last SPAM; we in the Special Education Division of GES are strongly against that because some schools are going down the league because of few CWDs. The league table cannot be

used in these days of IE. Therefore, it is my fervent hope that it will be outdated".

(Mr. Yamoson, Special Coordinator).

However, the Special Coordinator was quick to add that CWDs will be assessed at the school level, those found incapable of writing the BECE with consent of the child, and parents will be sent to rehabilitation centre to learn a trade of their choice.

"We want CWDs to be assessed at the school level and those who are found to be unable to write the BECE with consent from them and their parents would be taken to the Rehabilitation Centre under GES, Social Welfare, to learn a vocation of their choice. This, we call transition".
(Mr. Yamoson, Special Coordinator).

"Last year one of the girls with multiple disability could not write anything. She only scribbled. I took her for assessment. The report indicated that she could not write the BECE so; I took her to the Rehabilitation Centre. Currently, she is learning sewing and her mates are in SHS".

(Sir Abu, Special Education Teacher 2).

Furthermore, the interview revealed that where there is more number of CWDs in a particular class the academic standard is bound to fall.

"The academic standard is bound to fall when CWDs are many but if it is just one like I am handling now I can focus on the main class".

(Miss Akuffo, Class 1A Teacher).

Though the number of CWDs in the class may lead to lowering academic standards other regular teachers were of the opinion that the number does not really matter but rather time spent on CWDs is what actually lead to lowering academic standards. As a result, some regular teachers are not able to complete their syllabus for the academic term or year.

"It lowers academic standard as I have told you, now I will have to spend more time with him (Joseph)".

(Mrs. Bruce, Class 1B Teacher).

"It brings the academic standard down because as I have said earlier, I have to have time for one person while they are 55 in the class".

(Mrs. Lartey, Class 4 Teacher).

"It lowers academic standard in the sense that it is time consuming. Therefore, I am not able to complete the expected topics for the year or term".

*(*Mrs. Okai, JHS 1Teacher).

"

…*because they cannot write, they cannot do anything, so, it lowers academic standard. The instructional hours is not used effectively"*

(Miss Wood, Class 2 Teacher).

Others did not think IE lowers academic standards. For them once they have the syllabus to follow they do not see how IE could lower academic standard. Irrespective of the caliber of students in the class, all a teacher has to do is to work to achieve results through assessment at the end of the academic year. In fact, according to these regular teachers IE does not lower academic standards at all.

"To me, I don't think it lowers academic standards in the sense that I am teaching the children without disabilities and those with disabilities as well, I have the syllabus to follow, and so at the end of the day I need to achieve that, that is why I have the assessment at the end of the term. It does not lower academic standard at all".

(Sir Gideon, Class 6A Teacher).

"Not lowering per se but I will not be able to meet my target".

(Mr. Owusu, Class 6B Teacher).

4.4.5 Difficulties faced by teachers in Inclusive Education (IE) settings

Enormous challenges confront the schools in implementing the IE policy. This section of the narration reports on the findings of the study concerning challenges participants experienced during IE implementation in their various respective capacities. The finding identified that the disability common fund is insufficient to cater for all the children who apply to access the fund.

> *The disability common fund is not able to go round all the children who apply for it. So sometimes, it becomes a worry when parents approach me to ask why they have not been given the disability common fund to access certain materials or equipment for their children.*
>
> (Mr. Yamoson, Special Coordinator).

The Special Education Teacher confirms this assertion:

> *The disability common fund one only assesses it once and s/he cannot go in for it again.*
>
> (Sir Abu, Special Education Teacher 2).

4.4.5.1 Inadequate Teaching Learning Materials and Human Resource

Besides, suppliers such as perkins braille's and others do not come on time and when they do come, they are in short supply. In fact, according to one of the Special Education Teachers, the learning material aids CWDs with poor attention span or poor memory and therefore due to the teaching style of using multiple intelligent approach more of these learning materials are needed frequently.

> *"Another thing is that these hearing aids, Perkins braille's and other teaching learning materials don't come on time for us to distribute to the schools. Sometimes you can't imagine the shortage of probably braille sheets".*
>
> (Mr. Yamoson, Special Coordinator).

Furthermore, the headmistresses mentioned that specific gadgets like ear hearing aid, computers etc. are also specific needs of CWDs in most of the schools implementing IE. The absence of these learning materials force teachers to treat CWDs just like the children without disabilities most of the time.

> *"Some of them need the ear hearing aid; some of them also need computer because they cannot write properly".*
>
> (Mrs. Asante, Headmistress 1).

> *"The use of the gadgets that will make the learning easy for them, are the main challenges that they face here. So, teachers are forced to treat the CWDs most at times just like those without disabilities".*
>
> (Mrs. Armah, Headmistress 2).

Teaching and learning materials for CWDs are often not available. Materials such as pencils, pens, erasers and exercise books are not available because of the perception that these CWDs could not use them effectively.

> *"We don't have any teaching and learning material for CWDs. Even buying writing materials, parents have it in their minds that such children will not bring anything good at the end of it. So buying of pencils, pens, erasers, exercise books, and textbooks at times is a problem for the teacher because mostly they come without any material, parents need to support".*
>
> (Sir Gideon, Class 6A Teacher).

From the findings, there is a serious lack of adequate teaching learning materials for teachers and CWDs. The few that they have available are from the teachers own pocket money and the collection of used things provided by the children themselves. This makes teaching and learning difficult for both teachers and CWDs. These were some of the views shared by participants:

"Actually, we don't have any teaching and learning material for CWDs in this school. I am telling you the truth (laughs). The Special Education Teacher is trying his best to get aid from the disability common fund for the CWDs, which is always not easy".

(Mrs. Asante, Headmistress 1).

"I don't have access to teaching learning materials just the ones that I created myself using cardboard and marker. Sometimes we ask the children to bring cardboards and get markers from the head. We don't have any for CWDs".

(Miss Wood, Class 2 teacher).

"The cardboard? I buy them with my own personal money. The school doesn't provide".

(Mrs. Okai, JHS 1 teacher).

"I don't have enough; those that I have were made from my own personal pocket money and they are just few and cannot cater for all the subjects and the children that I teach".

(Mrs. Lartey, Class 4 teacher).

"I can tell you that ninety percent (90%) of those hanging there I bought them on my own with my own money".

(Mrs. Bruce, Class 1B teacher).

"...the ICT, I bring my own laptop".

(Mr. Owusu, Class 6B teacher).

According to the head of Richard Akwei Memorial on the other hand, her school seems to have some teaching and learning material.

> *"Reading chart, maps, and globe, what do l even call it? If you go to the lower primary, they have many things but in general, we have the textbooks, blackboard and word card".*
>
> (Mrs. Armah, Headmistress 2).

From her, her school had their source from capitation grant, although what comes in a particular year is what should have come within last two years and from their internal generated fund (ie sale of pure water).

> *"Normally, that is what we use our capitation to buy. Although what will come in a particular year is what should have come within last two years and from sale of pure water. Therefore, we always assume it is coming".*
>
> *(Mrs. Armah, Headmistress 2).*

> *"I have flash card, drawing on manila cards, cut shapes, sand tray and used things provided by the children. I did a lot myself and a few provided by the school".*
>
> (Miss Akuffo, Class 1A teacher).

Training inadequacy of human resources is another nerve-racking challenge of the policy of the IE. According to the IE policy, before a school can be called an inclusive school there should be a Special Educator. According to participants, there is seriously lack of Special Education Teachers and teachers trained to provide support services to CWDs and so admitting more is a problem.

> *"On the question of human resource, how many special educators do we have? Before you can call a school inclusive, there should be a special educator who would provide support services to CWDs".*
>
> (Mr. Yamoson, Special Coordinator).

We don't have Special Educators to assist CWDs. Look at this cluster of schools; I am the only resource teacher here.

(Sir Abu, Special Education teacher 2)

My work as a Special Education teacher for Circuit 13, I have to handle about six public schools and twelve private schools in addition to my mother school.

(Mr. Ganyo, Special Education teacher 1)

Further, to the regular teachers they did not have any prior training in teaching CWDs in the training college and no in-service training before the implementation of the IE policy.

"No intensive training for human resource. We don't have proper training and so admitting them; CWDs is most of the time difficult".

(Mrs. Asante, Headmistress 1).

"I didn't have any formal training in handling CWDs".

(Miss Akuffo, Class1A teacher).

"Actually, I wasn't prepared in any formal way. I'm just being a mother to the child. No formal training".

(Mrs. Bruce, Class One B teacher).

The disability nature of these children create more work for these teachers. In fact, due to their hearing and speech impairment, intellectual disability etc. they delay the whole class and the teachers as well. Meaning the teachers spend more time with these CWDs. They scribble and copy wrongly, what is written on the board, walk out of class at will, disturb the children without disabilities and make it difficult for teachers to really impact knowledge.

"They create more work for us because; they can't talk and hear if teachers tell them something it takes a long time for them to understand. Those who have low vision when teachers write on the board they copy wrongly into their exercise books".

(Mrs. Asante, Headmistress 1).

> *"Rosemary is in a different world. When teaching and learning is ongoing she picks other pupils pencils and be drumming with it. She can hold their necks and be turning. She can get lost from class and go and sit in another class or be playing outside. I have to stop everything and comb the whole school for her. Sometimes she soils herself in class (urinates or defecates) and the other children will be shouting".*
>
> (Miss Akuffo, Class1A teacher).

According to the teachers, the unsteadiness of these children make them conduct themselves in manners that are appalling. They are always all over the place causing inconveniences for other pupils and teachers in the class:

> *"He doesn't understand anything. He is always causing trouble in class. He asks permission to go to washroom and over 45mins he will not be back. I have to stop everything and look for him. When the parents come, they tell me 'Madam wodze nyaabotare ma yen'; Madam exercise patience for us*".
>
> (Mrs. Lartey, Class 4 teacher).

> *"They will go and take somebody's chair, go and sit at somebody's place. I will have to stop whatever I am doing to resolve that before I can continue. They write what they like, tear papers and litter in the class".*
>
> (Mrs. Okai, JHS One Teacher).

Findings revealed initial sore societal attitudes towards CWDs, though the special education teacher immediately conceded there has been improvement because of workshops to educate and create awareness with stakeholders on the policy. Now most parents and stakeholders have embraced and accepted the concept and are willing to cooperate with special educators to see to the success of the programme.

> *"Another challenge has to do with societal attitudes towards CWDs and IE. In fact, regarding the attitude I must say that there has been*

improvement because of the workshop. Now the parents, stakeholders are beginning to accept the concept and are willing to cooperate with special educators to see to the success of the programme".

(Mr. Ganyo, Special Education teacher 1).

In spite of the fact that some parents and stakeholders have shown some level of appreciation to the policy and programme of IE, others are still having some apathy and reservation about the IE. According to the Special Education Teacher, the unwilling and lukewarm attitude of some parents show some level of lack of interest for their wards is worrying. Complaints from parents is lack of money to send their wards for screening and assessment is the order of the day. This has put extra burden on special education teachers, which invariably does not attract additional remuneration.

"The parents sometimes when invited to come to the school for discussion concerning their wards they are not willing to come. In addition, when they are referred to send their wards to health facilities for further assessment they complain that they don't have money".

(Sir Abu, Special Education Teacher 2).

"The Special Education Teacher got money from the disability common fund to purchase a laptop for a child with multiple disabilities and the mother of the boy who received the money wanted to spend it. It became a quarrel between the boy's mother and the Special Education Teacher".

(Mrs. Armah, Headmistress 2).

Lack of parental corporation, care and attention is also very much necessary in handling CWDs. In fact, they are very much needed because they have a direct relationship with their CWDs. It appeared as one of the problems noted by the regular teachers. They mentioned lack of cooperation and care and attention.

"She could soil herself in class any time. Other children have to carry her to 'wewe' and bring her back and a whole lot. The parents too did

not care. So, when she is coming to school instead of the parents to wear her pampers, they leave her just like that".

(Mr. Okai, JHS One Teacher).

"Oh! Sometimes the parents are not cooperating. They don't even come to find out how their children are performing, they don't care".

(Mr. Owusu Class 6B Teacher).

4.4.5.2 Attitudinal challenge

Apart from the children without disabilities teasing CWMDs for which teachers have to intervene, some parents also travel with their CWDs during school days and this call for the teachers to have extra time for the children involved.

"At times, the children without disability make joke over the CWDs. Therefore, we have to talk to the children without disability that disability can happen to anybody any time".

(Mrs. Asante, Headmistress 1).

"They tease them and they come to complain to me, Sir, Sir, they are calling me 'gyimigyimi' or 'buulubuulu' and I go to educate them about it that they can fall victim to this condition. As for disability within a second, one can be disabled".

(Mr. Ganyo," Special Education teacher 1).

"Consistency in attendance for instance is a problem because CWDs' parents cannot travel and leave them with anybody. Therefore, any time the parents have to travel out then it means they have to send them. What happens is if the mother is going to spend about two weeks. The child will be away for those two weeks. Last term for instance Rosemary didn't write the end of term exams because she travelled with the mother. Therefore, punctuality is a problem".

(Miss Akuffo, Class 1A Teacher).

Generally, the study found that teaching CWMDs requires a lot of time and skill as suggested by the narratives below:

> *"Well, in a class where I don't have CWDs, when I give instruction, they all get to understand and so I move on but those with disabilities, I need special attention for them. Therefore, it means an extra work (ie love and special time for them)".*
>
> (Miss Akuffo, Class 1A Teacher).

> *"More task to play, more time for the CWDs so that at least if not at par with the children without disability they can come to a certain level with them".*
>
> (Sir Gideon, Class 6ATeacher).

> *"The difference is that with the none IE we treat the children at the same level but with the inclusive we have to come down to the level of CWDs and make sure that they catch up with the children* without disabilities".
>
> (Madam Betty, Class 3 Teacher).

> *"They waste our time as we spend more time on them; pay more attention to them to feel as one of the children without disabilities in the classroom"*
>
> *(Mrs. Bruce, Class 1B Teacher).*

> *"Eii! You must go the extra mile to…"*
>
> (Mr. Owusu, Class 6 Teacher B).

From the above, CWDs take more of the teachers' time. The teachers' time in the class must be shared equally with all manner of students yet, it appears CWDs get more time from the teachers than the children without disability and to these regular teachers it is a huge problem.

Personally, Special Education Teachers shared their views on positive or negative attitude of teachers towards IE. Their responses showed that most teachers are ready to embrace CWDs, but there is a caveat to their positive attitude. These are lack of knowledge and skills about handling CWDs and inadequate funds for them is affecting the programme.

> *"Yes and No. The good ones are there. We have some. Oh, Yes! Most teachers show positive attitude to embrace IE. You go to the schools and you see them hugging CWDs giving them peck, kisses here and there. They tell us they are ever ready to implement the programme but they also complain about one thing, that is their lack of knowledge and skills about handling CWDs and lack of adequate funds for us is affecting the programme".*
>
> (Mr. Ganyo, Special Education Teacher 1).

Some participants also indicated that the IE system is very tedious and tiresome to handle.

> *"It is very difficult to handle. It is a very tedious work".*
>
> (Mrs. Okai, JHS One Teacher).

Finally, some of the regular teachers also mentioned that they find it difficult teaching CWDs. CWDs slow down their teaching because they are slow to learn.

> *"It's not easy to teach them. Actually, we have not been teaching them because we have not been trained. They are just in the class".*
>
> (Madam Stella, Class 1C Teacher).

> *"They slow down the teaching. I try as much as possible as a teacher to help them but…"*
>
> (Miss Wood, Class 2 Teacher).

> *"They retard my teaching. Sometimes l will be on them aah! Before l realize the time is up. I am not able to achieve what I planned to teach.*

Therefore, I insult them. It is not my fault. It is because I don't know how to do it".

(Mrs. Lartey, Class 4 Teacher)

"... After standing and teaching the general class I have to go to him one on one to explain further, he is really pulling me back..."

(Mrs. Bruce, Class 1B Teacher).

4.5 Strategies to Enhance Teachers' Experience of Inclusive Education (IE) Policy

This section of the findings reports suggestions on strategies participants think may enhance inclusive education (IE) to be successful. The special education teachers suggested a proper role definition for stakeholders of the IE policy and further resourcing of facilities and staffs.

"We have to create awareness about IE policy for everybody to know his/her role. As parents what are they supposed to do in IE, as teachers what are we supposed to do, as coordinators, GES, parents, all these people need to be educated, sensitized to know their respective roles to play in the scheme of IE".

(Mr. Ganyo, Special Education Teacher 1).

"Ministry of Education should try as much as possible to train more resource teachers to be in the regular schools to assist these children".

(Sir Abu, Special Education Teacher 2).

"Teachers should be trained, at least in-service training, short training; short courses should be ran for teachers".

(Miss Akuffo, Class 1A Teacher).

"Training, training, training for teachers and then there should be facilities, the structure should be friendly to CWDs. At least when we are taken through the in-service training we will understand but if we have not gone through the training sometimes we see it as a burden"

(Mr. Owusu, Class 6B Teacher).

> *"I think we the teachers currently in the field should be given more in-service training and those in colleges should be given detailed knowledge on how to handle and teach CWDs when they come to the field".*
>
> (Madam Betty, Class 3 Teacher).

While some teachers suggested basic training for teachers, others suggested more money to train human resource and to provide other resources for the IE programme to impact on CWDs.

> *"The success of every programme depends largely on finance. Whatever we have to do we need money before we can train our human resource?"*
>
> (Mr. Ganyo, Special Education Teacher 1).

> *"Our existing buildings should be made disability friendly. The compound should be leveled to make it very smooth – put rails arrow and provide teaching learning material".*
>
> (Sir Abu, Special Education Teacher 2).

Secondly, some also suggested a conducive environment of the classrooms for both teachers and CWDs so that both can operate effectively. According to this particular regular teacher a nicely tiled place, the painting should be very colorful: red, orange, yellow etc. more of teaching aids to assess their performance.

> *"When they are building the schools, they should consider CWDs and then make the environment friendly to them".*
>
> (Madam Betty, Class 3 Teacher).

> *"Maybe they should consider the structure of the school buildings, that is, the facilities we use should be disability friendly".*
>
> (Mr. Owusu, Class 6B Teacher).

Other regular teachers suggested the organization of workshops and seminars for parents with the sole purpose of educating and encouraging these parents on educating children with disabilities. Participants also suggested an all-inclusive syllabus as well as teaching and learning materials.

> *"Workshops should be organized for parents for them to know that even though their children are having disabilities they should educate them. At the end of the day, they can also achieve something like their children without disability".*
>
> *(Sir Gideon* Class 6A Teacher).

> *"When the syllabus is drawn, I think the CWDs should be factored into the drawing of the syllabus for the schools and even the textbooks. You can see that these textbooks are written for the children without disabilities. At least we can have reading books for the special needs children".*
>
> (Sir Gideon, Class 6A Teacher).

> *"They should give us teaching/learning material".*
>
> (Madam Stella, Class 1C Teacher).

> *"We should be provided with resources, teaching/learning materials that will help us to be able to help these children with special needs".*
>
> (Madam Betty, Class 3 Teacher).

> ***"…****and give us teaching learning material".*
>
> (Mrs. Okai, JHS One Teacher).

Other regular teachers indicated a reduction in class size would help them to be very effective in handling CWDs.

"The schools with CWDs' class sizes should be reduced so that the teachers can be effective in teaching these children".

(Sir Gideon, Class 6A Teacher)

4.6 Suggestions from children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs)

Child participants gave their views on how they want their mates, the GES and teachers in these schools to treat and make learning comfortable for them.

"I want my mates to help me to learn by explaining things to me in class and those who have been insulting me should stop".

(Tracy, Class 6, epilepsy & learning disability).

"I want my mates to continue to play with me".

Bismarck, Form 1, speech impairment, hard of hearing & learning disability).

"I want my mates to teach me so that l can also understand what is taught".

(Ofei, Class 5, physical, dysgraphia & learning disability).

"I want my mates to help me to learn so that I'II be promoted to Class 2".

(NiiAryee, Class 1, physical, Intellectual, dysgraphia & speech Impairment)

From the responses of participants, they want playful mates as well as mates who would assist them to understand what they are taught in class. Further, participants stated the way they want their teachers to behave and treat them in school and in class:

"The teachers should not always punish me to dispose refuse when I come to school late".

(Bismarck, Form 1, speech impairment, hard of hearing, & learning disability).

"I want the teachers to be explaining things to me so that I can also understand, stay in school and complete JHS".

(Ofei, Class 5, physical, learning disability & dysgraphia).

"I want my teachers to tell the children to stop making noise, stop insulting me and help me to learn".

(Vincent, Form 1, Intellectual, dysgraphia & learning disabilities).

"I want my teacher to explain the things I don't understand to me so that I can also understand".

(Nii Aryee, Class 1, physical, Intellectual, dysgraphia speech impairment).

The study also found that, participants want GES to provide all the necessary resources needed to make learning smooth for them. This is what one of them had to say:

"1. I want GES to help me to read by providing me with the learning material. 2. They should help me financially because when I get to JHS my father will not provide my learning materials because he is a miser and very difficult. Sometimes when I collapse and they call him he gets angry. He has no patience. When I collapsed and hurt my leg, he said I should go and sell pure water".

(Tracy, Class 6, epilepsy & Intellectual disability).

Comparing the CWMDs' responses from both schools indicated for example, that the children faced bullying from the other children without disabilities. On a positive note, in both schools, responses indicated that children without disabilities help the CWMDs.

In contrasts, the Richard Akwei Memorial School is better resourced with facilities such as a resource centre, and some teaching learning material for the lower primary, unlike the Central Mosque Basic School.

4.7 Conclusion

From the analysis, there are children living with different types of disabilities. Although the key informants and the regular teachers gave different definitions for Inclusive Education, they were all talking about the same thing. The IE policy did not take off in all the schools in 2015 as stipulated. It is being implemented in some districts in 2016. All the participants have different types of roles they play. As human institution, there are some lapses, which are making it difficult for them to carry out successfully their roles with ease. These need to be addressed.

4.8 Discussion of Findings

4.8.1 Introduction

The discussion of the findings of this study was based on the themes generated from the analysis and influenced by the theoretical framework. It focuses on how children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs) describe their involvement in inclusive education (IE), what inclusive education meant to teachers and their experiences as persons teaching pupils with disabilities.

4.8.2 Types of Disabilities in the Schools

The findings of this study recorded various types of disabilities in these schools. They include hearing impairment, visual impairment, intellectual disability, autism, cerebral palsy**,** learning disabilities, speech disorders, epilepsy; attention deficit hyperactivity disorders (ADHD), dysgraphia and physical disabilities. However, children with learning disabilities were in the majority at the Central Mosque Basic Schools. Out of a student population of one thousand one hundred and ninety-six (1196), only one hundred and fifty-eight (158) children are with disabilities (CWDs). This represents about thirteen percent (13%) of the student population. This attests to the findings of Tiwari, Das, & Sharma, (2015) that people with disabilities comprise a minority group in society.

4.8.3 The Meaning of Inclusive Education (IE)

Though the meaning of Inclusive Education (IE} is widely contended (Ainscow & Howes, 2003), most of the participant managed to define and explain IE their own way. This finding indicates that the special education teachers, special coordinator and the head teachers clearly understand what inclusive education is all about. In fact, the finding revealed that IE is a process that brings children with disabilities into regular mainstream

schools where they will be supported to learn with their peers without disabilities. Thus, the definition by Booth (2000) which describes inclusive education as the process of increasing participation and decreasing exclusion from the culture, curriculum and community of mainstream schools is in consistent with the explanation given by the participants of this study. Consistent with Booth (2000), Ainscow (2006) maintains that schools should focus on increasing the participation and attainment of groups who have historically been marginalized.

The findings of this study revealed that there was a delay in the take off-of the inclusive education policy as planned by the Ministry of Education and thus, the policy was implemented in 2016 in twenty districts and fourteen other districts were being enrolled to practice IE. The delay in implementing such a policy to the benefit of CWDs was unsatisfactory and this was due to the fact that, the available teachers were not trained to handle children with multiple disabilities as well as there was not enough teaching and learning materials. This is in line with other studies that showed that Ghana is not the only country and that in most countries the policy framework on inclusion is not always implemented (Croft, 2013: Mcconkey and Bradley, 2010).

Again, the findings showed that the government of Ghana has put in place several measures to ensure the success of inclusive education policy. These measures include training special educators, providing resource centres for screening of CWDs, sensitizing parents and members of the community, providing disability friendly buildings, and modification of curriculum. The study noted there has been some improvement on measures put in place by government compared to what was found by Kuyini (1998), Ofori-Addo et al. (1999) and O'Toole et al. (1996). In their studies, they found that there

were limited teacher knowledge and skills to provide instructional adaptations towards meeting the needs of included students.

4.8.4 The Roles Played by Special Education Teachers to Ensure the Success of Inclusive Education (IE) Policy.

The finding disclosed several roles special education teachers play to ensure the success of IE policy. These roles were rigorous screening of children from kindergarten to primary three for identification of children with special educational needs, issuing of referral notes to students to appropriate health institutions for diagnoses and treatment.

The above finding of the study supports the assertion of Rogers (2007) that teachers perform multiple tasks, which focuses on communication, academic performance, social interaction and emotional stability of the pupils with multiple disabilities. The focus demands that teachers perform different roles to ensure that the children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs) enjoy a comfortable and welcoming stay in the school environment. The special education teachers also offer counselling services, advocacy role, and solicit of financial support from district common fund, education and awareness creation about IE program and organizing of school base in-service training for regular teachers.

The study also supports the findings of Jenkins, Pious and Jewel (1990) that the classroom teachers and special educators work in partnership to make adaptations in the curriculum and to structure the classroom in a manner that will promote social and academic integration of all children. Therefore, the role of special education teachers was never a hindrance compared to what Greco & Sloper, (1993) found in a study.

These authors found that barriers to inclusion include specialist help that is disruptive of classroom routine, excessive traffic through the classroom created by the coming and going of children and specialists, and lack of sufficient time for planning and collaboration

with specialists. It appears therefore that Special Education Teachers know how to go about their roles without creating a hindrance to regular teachers in the classroom. In sum, administrative support is seen as crucial to the success of inclusion (Janney et al., 1995). Therefore, this finding is also in consistent with Sage & Burello (1994) finding that Special Education Teachers have the responsibility of communicating the school's inclusion vision to teachers, students and other stakeholders.

Even though the findings of this study clearly showed that, the special education teachers were sensitizing parents about the awareness of IE at PTA meetings, in the mosque, churches and the community, it showed that not many parents were aware of IE. This is due to the total number of CWDs in the schools at the time of this study. Thus, the special coordinator advised that parents should be sensitized to know what IE is all about, as their awareness would lead to the success of IE policy. The finding of this study is in line with Nevins & Garber's (2006) view when they opined that mainstreaming CWDs is a complex endeavour that requires careful consideration of parental readiness factors among others, which contributes to its success as well as the finding of (Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004). According to Mertens & McLaughlin (2004), parents provide a rich source of information about the strengths, and needs of their children; their unawareness will lead to the failure of IE policy if nothing is done about creating awareness.

Again, from the perspective of the special education teachers, special coordinator and headmistresses that were interviewed the findings of this study showed the willingness of parents to send their CWMDs to the mainstream schools than segregated schools. In fact, the findings showed a high level of enthusiasm among parents. The implication is that parents simply think the mainstream will give their wards a better exposure. The parents have a valid point for choosing to take their CWMDs to mainstream schools as against

segregated schools. This finding is in consistent with Hilbert (2014) when he found that parents agree that inclusion is beneficial for children with disabilities and consistent to the findings of Rafferty & Griffin (2005).

4.8.5 Experiences of Children with Multiple Disabilities (CWMDs)

Primarily, the findings of this study revealed both positive and negative experiences of children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs) as regard the Inclusive Education (IE) policy. Marshall & Rossman (1999) noticed that the point of view of children is required as they offer new bits of knowledge. Children are particularly vital in training where they are most influenced by strategy and program choices but usually are missing from request. Ndhlovu (2008) demonstrated that children are at the focal point of encountering the difficulties, also echoes this.

Negatively, this study's findings showed that some CWMDs were not happy with the IE policy because the policy is not helpful to them and it makes them feel different being in the same class with children without disabilities. The findings showed that CWMDs suffer mockery from children without disabilities about their disabilities and this makes it difficult for them to learn. They do not seek support from their peers without disabilities whenever they needed academic help. Further, the disrespectful attitudes of their colleagues whereby they use their weakness to insult, tease and bully CWMDs also made them felt different being in the same class with children without disabilities. These attitudes resulted in them being ignored and having difficulty forming friendships with peers. This finding conforms to Mallick & Sheesh (2013). They found that isolation, which took the form of either being ignored or having difficulty forming friendships with peers, was a common phenomenon in Bangladesh and as a result, many children with

special needs form their own small groups outside and play by themselves. However, some of the regular teachers are of the opinion that this phenomenon is common among children at that level (from primary, i.e. from lower class up). This finding is however not in total agreement with Mantey's (2014) finding which notes that the incidence of teasing and bullying come from the Junior High School (JHS) section rarely happens in the lower class. Though teasing was on the moderate level, those who encounter it felt uncomfortable.

Aside the difficulties CWMDs have with their peers without disabilities, the study's findings further showed that some of the teachers took CWMDs for granted and used them always to perform needless tasks such as emptying "*bɔlar*" *(*trash bin), clean the blackboard and others use condescending words to insult and cane CWMDs. Again, the finding showed the defenseless of these CWMDs concerning isolation and bulling. Some were isolated from sporting activities because of their disabilities. In some cases, children without disabilities bullied them by killing housefly and dropping it in their food while others stoned and teased them. When they report to the teachers who should be their mouthpiece, they do nothing about it rather; the teachers say to them that they like complaining. This is just because of their disabilities and it is disdainful. This clearly shows a huge sign of discrimination on the part of the children without disabilities and their teachers towards CWMDs. For a child who has to live with disabilities to feel isolated, bullied and discriminated, could be stressful for the child. These demoralizing abuses are what most CWMDs had to go through every day. The experiences of CWMDs supports the findings of Baffoe (2013). According to Baffoe (2013), in the event any form of exclusion, it may prompt societal avoidance, harassing, animosity, criticism and downgrading of the self-esteem of individuals. These could achieve abuse against such

people in every aspect of life including the capacity to get lodging, keep up customary business, get to training, take part in significant connections and appreciate personal satisfaction. Therefore, based on this, it is imperative to ensure inclusiveness at all level. It is believed that will ensure acceptance and equity especially between children with multiple disabilities and children without disabilities.

The experiences of CWMDs continued digging and the study found that CWMDs were not very happy with facilities and the kind of environment that they have in these schools (Richard Akwei Memorial Basic School and Central Mosque Basic School). Thus, the findings revealed that the school buildings are inaccessible. The compound was full of big stones, unleveled ground (erosion), unsafe verandah and stairs, no ramps, holes in the classrooms, hot and very dark classrooms as the classrooms are without opened windows for those with poor eyesight. Few tables, chairs, and toilet facility for CWDs. Those with mobility challenges had to be carried to class in their wheel chairs by their peers without disabilities. Mallick and Sheesh (2013) made similar findings in Bangladesh where participants mentioned the school environment as being physically inaccessible for children with special needs (CSN), and a major problem is physically getting into school. Schools do not have concrete pathways that would make it easier for the wheelchair to move.

The findings of this study are also consistent with Mantey's (2014) findings that observed that the school buildings and classrooms were inaccessible. Not all schools visited had ramps or wide doorways. These exceptional children have to find other pupils to assist them get to their classrooms, playgrounds and washrooms are difficult to use. Those with wide doorways had higher threshold, which makes it inaccessible for the wheel chair and

cane user. In addition, there are no specific toilet or adapted toilet for CWDs. Their peers without disabilities could only use the existing ones.

Finally, the study revealed that the opinion of children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs) with regard to repetition is an embarrassing situation for them due to their conditions. In fact, they think repetition should not be mentioned at all, as far as CWMDs are concerned. It is obvious that repeating children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs) would be met with much apprehension even though it is a normal practice in all schools when students perform poorly. This supports the finding of Norris & Closs, (2003) that many children with multiple disabilities feel so humiliated that they prefer to stay at home than to face the humiliation from their friends without disabilities and in this way, they are denied training and significant social encounters. However, findings of this study on withdrawal disclosed that for the love of the schooling CWMDs would not want to withdraw from school. Yet, some were not happy in their present school. For that matter, would want to withdraw to another school because the mockery and jokes were too much for them to bear.

These negative findings debunk the Intergroup Contact theory. In fact, these findings are sharply opposed to the Intergroup Contact theory, which posits that bringing members of opposing groups together under conditions including cooperation, equal status, and personal acquaintance can improve attitudes toward the out-group and facilitate intergroup harmony (Pettigrew, 2011). With what this theory is positing, it is expected that there would be some harmony between the teachers and children with disabilities. As stated by Allport (1954), not all types of contact between diverse groups could lead to acceptance of each other. In conflict with the regular conviction that simply gathering differing

gatherings of individuals together encourages acknowledgment of each other, Allport (1954) reasoned that there is no equation to set up effective contact. As appropriately shown by Allport (1954) three factors that impact the intergroup contacts are equivalent status inside the circumstance, shared objectives and expert help and since these factors are largely absent with these participants the theory will not be applicable here.

4.8.5.1 Positive experiences of Children with Multiple Disabilities (CWMDs)

Contrary to the above findings of this study, are some positive aspects of the inclusive education (IE) policy. It is noted that the IE policy, despite the negatives associated with it, is good and helpful. The study found that children without disabilities have been assisting CWDs to the washroom or to the bush to ease themselves. When the children with epilepsy collapse, the children without disabilities usually fan them to revive. The children without disabilities push a child in a wheel chair from his house to school and carry him to the classroom. They also contribute money for a child with disability's mother to send the child to hospital. This study therefore found out that as the children without disabilities schooled together with the CWDs they get to know that there are people with challenges. They learn to live together and appreciate one another in the larger society. This helps because there is no segregated society for persons with disability. The study also revealed that the school provided a dynamic environment where both children without disability and CWDs are able to interact in a healthy manner under the direction and guidance of the teachers. The decision of some students to remain in the school and enjoy mass promotion with their colleagues clearly depicts the valuable nature of the socialization they relish. This finding clearly supports the revelation by Abeywickrama, Jayasinghe & Sumanasena (2013) that CWMDs consider the school as a great environment to socialize, make friends and feel loved.

Again, this notwithstanding, the study also revealed that some teachers were very kind to these CWMDs to the extent that they teach them privately, and to a very large extent pay their fees and even contribute for their medical bills, provide pencil, crayon, eraser and ruler for them. This is praiseworthy and these teachers in this study should be recognized for the good work they are doing. In other words, the picture is not as bad as part of the finding of this study, some studies and literature suggest. According to this aspect of the findings, regular teachers interacted with CWMDs and routinely give them hug, which the whole class has emulated and started hugging CWMDs in the class. The findings showed a warm friendship between CWMDs and children without disabilities. However, most of the CWMDs were friendly to those in the same conditions as them. This finding is natural; people tend to shift to people who are similar to them.

Another positive finding revealed that CWMDs were very happy with the IE policy because the policy in their view would aid them in learning and the fact that they are mates with peers without disabilities make them happy. The findings also disclosed that some CWMDs were happy schooling and mixing up with students without disabilities in class. They were also encouraged by compliments such as *study hard*; whiles some teachers sometimes gave *thumps up* for correct answers to questions. This is quite different from a general perception in a study, which found that teachers have negative perceptions about pupils with disabilities (Dupoux, Wolman & Estrada, 2005; Loreman, Forlin & Sharma, 2007; Barco, 2007; Ross-hill, 2009). They found that numerous instructors have not as much as inspirational mentalities towards CWDs and their consideration by and large training classrooms but agrees with Mantey's finding (2014) that teachers attitude towards

including CWDs was moderately favourable in the two regions and not completely negative.

The combined effect of these findings confirmed the Intergroup Contact Theory (ICT). The theory suggests that presence of elements or conditions such as cooperation, equal status, and personal acquaintance, people from different backgrounds can interact peaceably to reduce stigma and discrimination. In this study, the fact that all the children were primarily defined as students and had a common purpose of knowledge and skills acquisition was enough to make them feel equal. This status fostered the interaction between them, ensured that they learn to accommodate each other, tolerate each other, and gradually adjusted to the living circumstances of one another. Further, the incidence of rejection and exclusion reduced as majority members (children without disability) readily offered help and support to the minority group (CWMDs).

However, Amir, Sharan & Ben-Ari, (1984) stress that contact between various gatherings might be basic for positive communications; it is not adequate without anyone else's input. Thus, though some positives have been reached as evidence from this study's findings, it is not enough compared to the negative findings. The negative experiences outlined seemed diverse and varied compared to the positive experiences. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that CWMDs would prefer to dwell in the regular school environment to socialize and get love from their other counterparts. In their experiences, the systems, structures and values that mar their beautiful experiences should be removed to make their stay in their educational environment complete and fulfilling.

The above findings also confirmed the theoretical framework underpinning this study. The benefits of forming relationships, equality among the children, acceptance from each

category of children included in this study as well as teachers and special coordinators, improvement in attitude towards each other and so on conforms to the Theoretical Framework as posited by Allport, (1954). According to the framework, the factors that have a positive influence on the intergroup contacts are cooperation, equal status within the situation, common goals and authority support. It posits that bringing individuals from contradicting bunches together under conditions including cooperation, equal status, personal acquaintance with authority support can improve attitudes and enhance dispositions toward the out-gathering and encourage intergroup amicability (Pettigrew, 2011).

As stated by Allport (1954), not all types of contact between diverse groups could lead to acceptance of each other. In disagreement with the common belief that merely assembling diverse groups of people facilitates acceptance of each other, Allport (1954) concluded that there is no formula to establish successful contact. It was however echoed that, "prejudice may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of a common goal. He also believed the effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports" (Allport, 1954; p. 281).

4.8.5.2 Views and Experiences of Teachers towards Inclusive Education (IE)

The findings of this study have thrown more light on the experiences of teachers in the two schools under study. The study noted both positive and negative attitude of teachers. Their responses showed that most teachers are ready to embrace CWDs but there is a caveat to their positive attitude and their lack of knowledge and skills about handling CWDs and lack of inadequate funds is affecting the programme.

The study noted inadequacy of human resource. The special education teachers have more than they can handle. They are not able to provide the support service to the CWDs and the regular teachers. The regular teachers did not have any prior training to teach CWDs. They were not fully prepared for the IE policy. The findings exposed the fact that there was no formal or official training for regular teachers. They were just trying to improvise base on the law establishing IE. The little experiences that they have gathered over the years with regard to handling children. Nevertheless, only one regular teacher had had the opportunity to attend short course regard teaching CWDs sponsored by the school's PTA Chairman. This means there is limited skills and knowledge among regular teachers to handle CWMDs and a barrier to IE. This finding corroborates what Mantey (2014) found in her study that lack of appropriate training and skill acquisition contributes to negative teachers' attitude towards IE and contributes to most regular teachers' unpreparedness to meet diverse needs of learners in their classrooms, becoming a barrier to learning. Again, this finding of the study is consistent with Kuyini (2004) and Kuyini & Desai (2006) report that some Ghanaian principals and teachers possessed limited knowledge of the requirements of inclusion and those educators were unlikely to have any reasonable capacity to provide appropriate instruction.

Further, finding of the study indicated that there is a serious lack of adequate teaching learning material for the teachers and CWDs. The few that the regular teachers have are provided by the teachers themselves with their own pocket money and from collection of used things provided by the children themselves. This makes teaching and learning difficult for both teachers and CWDs. This finding is in agreement with Ackah (2010) who conducted a study to find out teachers' background characteristic and attitudes toward IE. Findings from this study showed that generally mainstream classroom teachers do not

support IE because of teachers lacking the necessary equipment and training to handle disability issues they encounter in the classroom.

Moreover, the disability nature of the special children creates more work for the regular teachers. Due to their intellectual disability, hearing and speech impairment, they delay the whole class and the teachers as well. Their disability nature makes them conduct themselves in manners that are appalling. They are always all over the place causing inconveniences for other pupils and teachers in the class and school. The teachers spend more time on CWDs. To the teachers it is time consuming. Instructional hours are not used effectively as teachers have more tasks and extra attention for CWDs. IE is very tedious and tiresome to handle. As a result, some teachers are not able to complete their syllabus for the academic term or year. Hence lowering of academic standard. Therefore, some regular teachers recommend special or segregated school for CWMDs. This finding of the study corroborates the study by Agbenyega (2007) which indicated that children with sensory impairment should be educated in the special schools since placing them in the mainstream increase the teachers' workload that leads to their inability to complete syllabus during school term. Most significantly, it may affect the academic performance of their class. Another study that supports the findings of this study is Campbel et al., (2003). From their study, regular education teachers have not been in favour of the influx of students with special needs warranted by special education law. Some of the reasons given include their inability to accommodate students with special needs in the classrooms. Notwithstanding the above observation, other regular teachers did not think IE lowers academic standards but teachers will not be able to meet their target due to time spent on CWDMs.

The finding also noted that academic standard and progression of CWDs are assessed and evaluated with their peers without disabilities in their internal and external exams. They are always promoted because according to the heads there are some who due to their condition cannot do anything. They only have to go through the system. The heads only worry is how their performance negatively affect their results in their BECE and School Performance Appraisal. Mantey, (2014) made a similar finding when she observed that 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.

Another finding made by this study is the negative and lukewarm attitude of some parents of CWDs towards their wards education. This study identified lack of interest for the education and parental cooperation with special education teachers and regular teachers. These parents do not visit the school. When the special education teachers or the regular teachers invite them for discussion concerning their CWDs, they are unwilling to honour the invitation. When the special education teachers ask them to send their wards for screening, assessment or refer them to hospital for treatment they complain of lack of money. This has also put extra burden on teachers, which invariably does not attract additional remuneration. This report is in line with Mantey, (2014). According to this author parents financial incapacity disorient them to make time to get involved in their children's education, which is beneficial. 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 the school and leave them.

Another finding of the study was the fact that some regular teachers indicated they were willing to have certain type of disabilities in their class. These selective tendencies of these

teachers could be excused because of lack of proper training to programme their minds about what was coming with regard to CWDs. This explains why some teachers exhibited a selective distasteful attitude towards these CWMDs. In other words, this pick and choose attitude of these teachers showed a negative attitude towards CWMDs. In spite of the zeal demonstrated by teachers from the findings above, it appears they lack adequate knowledge of how to handle CWDs. The findings showed that most of the teachers lack knowledge in handling CWDs. Be that as it may; absence of information among educators is by all accounts a worldwide issue, since the investigation done in Turkey and Spain, additionally indicated absence of learning among instructors who are showing students with visual disabilities (Kesiktas & Akcamete, 2011; Simon et al., 2010). Moreover, Studies done in Tanzania also agreed with this particular finding that educators do not have enough learning of instructing in inclusive classrooms (Lewis & Little, 2007; Miles, 2003; Mmbaga, 2002).

According to the findings, they would accept CWDs with hearing or sight impairment but not accept physically challenged with other form of disabilities. Thus, this pick and choose attitudes of the regular teachers demonstrate a feeling of rejection, unpreparedness and fearfulness to work with CWDs. This corroborated the findings by Mallick & Sheesh (2013) in Bangladesh where it is reported that there were instances of rejection, isolation, or discrimination towards CWDs.

This pick and choose attitudes of regular teachers towards CWDs are a disclosure that needs further in-depth studies

4.8.6 Challenges of implementing inclusive education (IE)

As part of the experiences gathering from the three stakeholders, that is, the special education teachers, special coordinator and the headmistresses, the study found that challenges such as insufficient disability common fund and inadequate learning materials were problems both schools were facing. This supports Simon et al., (2010) findings in a study conducted in Spain, in which he discovered that schools do not have the 31 suitable instructing and learning assets to enable students with visual impedances to learn better in inclusive classrooms.

Again, the study discovered that students without disabilities have formed the habit of teasing CWMDs and making fun and jokes of their disabilities. This finding again is contrary to the Intergroup Contact theory, which sets that bringing individuals from restricting gatherings together under conditions including collaboration break even with status, and individual colleagues can enhance dispositions toward the out-gathering and encourage intergroup congruity (Pettigrew, 2011). In this finding, there was nothing like equal status, or corporation among peers, since it is clear that CWMDs see themselves very different from the children without disabilities hence the making of fun and jokes about them. In other words, the theory is again not relevant in this scenario since no rapprochement can be facilitated and no greater understanding between members of different groups can foster interactions (Pettigrew, 2011).

The findings also revealed some problems in assessing CWMDs. In other words, assessing them in terms of examination on the same level with children without disability. The findings revealed a form of modification to the questions specifically for the visually impaired ones but not all CWDs. Inadequacies of human resources also emerged as a

nerve-racking challenge of the policy of IE and this dog tailed into increased workload for the few human resources available.

The findings again revealed that CWMDs have to go through the system due to their condition, meaning they are promoted on wholesale basis whether they pass their end of term examination or not. This implies that they are never asked to repeat or withdraw from a class or school.

Further, almost all the regular teachers agreed that the policy of IE is good and that it molds CWMDs better. It will help these children bring out their God given talents. However, on another breath others did not think like that and said that the policy could have been better if teachers were trained and resources made available.

On the issues of support service, the finding showed a dissimilar answer to this question. Whereas some regular teachers were of the opinion that there is resource centre for special needs pupils in the school and this resource centre has facilitators who periodical assess these children with the purpose of identifying children with special needs and disabilities, others were of the view that there is nothing like that. The only support services put in place to aid IE are the special education teachers. To sum on this particular finding the researcher would imply that there is some support service in the form of special education teachers.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter of the study is composed of the summary of the findings. This is followed by the conclusion and recommendations to help sustain the inclusive education (IE) policy in Ghanaian schools.

5.1 Summary of the findings

The schools have children with different types of disabilities (visual impairment, intellectual, disabilities, dysgraphia, hearing impairment, physical disability, low vision, epilepsy, learning disability and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Those with learning disability were in the majority. The participants understood what inclusive education (IE) is all about. According to the findings, IE did not start in all the schools in 2015 as stipulated in the policy. It was implemented in twenty districts and fourteen other districts were being enrolled to practice IE.

The findings also indicated that all the teachers have been trained as professional teachers to teach children without disabilities in regular school. They all have done further studies. Few have diploma, one has 'A' Level, a few have first degree, and a couple of them have second degree. Special education teachers have several roles they play to the success of the IE policy. These roles included rigorous screening of children from kindergarten to primary three for identification of children with special educational needs, issuing of referral notes to students to appropriate health institutions for diagnoses and treatment, counselling both children with special needs and their parents, play advocacy role and soliciting of financial support from the district common fund.

On the experiences of children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs), the findings showed both positive and negative experiences. Negatively, some of the CWMDs were not happy with the IE policy because they suffer bully, mockery and tease about their disability from their peers without disability. As such, they do not seek support from the peers without disability. They feel different and not happy. The policy is not helpful to them. When they report to the teachers, the teachers tell them they like complaining. However, the teachers are of different view. To the teachers, it is not that the CWMDs have been singled out and mocked, teased or bullied. It is a common phenomenon among children. Some of the teachers themselves insulted CWMDs. They took them for granted and used them always to perform needless task such as empting of trash bin and cleaning of the blackboard.

In addition, CWMDs were not happy with the facilities and the kind of environment that they have in the schools. According to the findings, the school environment is not disability friendly. The buildings were inaccessible. The compound was full of big stones, unleveled ground, unsafe verandah and stairs, no ramps holes in the classrooms, hot and dark classrooms (the classrooms are without windows), insufficient tables, chairs and toilet facility. A challenge for those with bad sight. Those in wheel chair are carried into the classroom.

This notwithstanding, the study made some positive observation. Some of the teachers were kind to the CWMDs. They teach them privately, pay their fees, contribute for their medical bills, give them hug and peck that other children without disabilities have emulated. Further, some of the CWMDs were happy schooling and mixing up with children without disabilities and did not see themselves as different.

In addition, both positive and negative views were sought on the experiences of the regular teachers. Most of the regular teachers think and believe that IE policy is good. They are ready to embrace it but there is caveat to their positive attitude. Thus, lack of formal training for them. Therefore, their lack of knowledge and skills in handling children with multiple disabilities (CWMDs). There is also inadequate special education teachers, facilities and funds, inadequate teaching and learning materials for both CWMDs and the regular teachers with large class size. Moreover, the disability nature of the CWMDs create more work for the regular teachers. They consume more time and delay the whole class. Instructional hours are not used effectively and syllabus not completed hence lowering of academic standard. However, some of the regular teachers did not think IE lowers academic standard but rather regular teachers will not be able to meet their target due to the time spent on CWMDs.

They also indicated that CWMDs write the same examination with their peers without disabilities and the same marking scheme used in both internal and external examination (BECE). CWMDs are always promoted, not repeated nor ask to withdraw because to the headmistresses some of them cannot pass. They only have to go through the system. The heads only worry is how CWMDs affect their schools' BECE results and at the Schools Performance Appraisal Meeting (SPAM). This, the Special Education Division of the GES is strongly against. This is because some of the schools are going down the league table because of CWDs. They call for it to be discontinued. CWDs will be assessed at the school level. Those found incapable of writing the BECE with the consent of the child with disability and parents s/he will be sent to Rehabilitation Centre under the GES, Social Welfare to learn a trade of his/her choice. Some of the regular teachers indicated they were willing to have certain type of CWDs in their class.

The study also noted that some parents are aware of the IE and prefer that for their wards than the segregated school. They showed much interest in their CWMDs' education. Some of them even threatened to withdraw their CWMDs to stay with them at home, if they are asked to send them to a segregated school. Their reason is that in segregated school, some of the CWDs' condition is more severe that their influence on their wards will be negative.

On the other hand, some of the parents have negative, lukewarm attitude and lack of interest towards their CWMDs' education. They do not visit the school. When they are invited by the teachers to discuss issues concerning their CWDs' education they are unwilling to attend. When they are to send their CWMDs for screening, assessment or hospital for treatment they complain they do not have money. Even when the special education teachers are able to solicit fund from the disability common fund, which is not enough to serve all the children with special needs for the CWDs, the parents want to spend the money because they feel the child will not bring any qualification home. Therefore, they just take them to the school and leave them without providing any learning material for them.

5.2 Conclusion

Inclusive education has taken off in some of the basic schools in Ghana. Some CWDs are now in the mainstream school. Based on the findings and discussion of the study, it can be concluded that, indeed inclusive education has come to stay. However, it has been marred with quite a number of challenges. Furthermore, it can be concluded that, the implementation of the inclusive education has been met with several experiences both

from the perspective of children with disabilities and teachers responsible for these children with disabilities under the inclusive education system.

It can also be concluded that these experiences under the inclusive education system has been both positive and negative at the same time for the children with disabilities. Some of these positive experiences include the ability to mingle and form relationships with children without any form of disability, while some of the negative experience is the stigmatization and bullying of these children with disabilities by children without any form of disability.

5.3 Recommendations

Inclusive Education has come to stay. This is being implemented by the Ghana Education Service (GES). Based on the findings and discussion of the study, the researcher suggests the following recommendations with respect to Inclusive Education, especially within the public sector of Ghana. Recommends the following:

First, it is recommended that more special education teachers should be trained by the GES to be in the regular schools to assist regular teachers and children with disabilities (CWDs). Additionally, regular teachers should be trained; those in the College of Education now should be given intensive training on IE. Inclusive Education (IE) should be made a compulsory course for all trainee teachers to effectively handle and teach children with mild to moderate disabilities in our regular schools. Regular teachers already in the field should be given training, in-service training, workshop, seminars should be organized and made compulsory for all teachers to attend during vacation and certificate issued to the teachers who would participate. There should be more slot for teachers to be trained at the University of Education, Winneba (Special Education Division) to equip

them to be able to handle all manner of children with mild to moderate disabilities. They should be granted study leave with pay and made to come back to the teaching service to teach after completion of course of study. In fact, the psychology of inclusive education and everything associated with it should be part of the course.

Secondly, class enrolment should be reduced from fifty-five (55) to about thirty-five (35) for the teachers to be able to give all children equal attention. Teachers should educate children without disabilities who have been insulting CWDs to stop but rather they should respect, love and help them to study. The children without disabilities who have been helping CWDs should be encouraged to continue. In the researcher's opinion, if these are put in place much of the negative experiences across board will be solved largely.

Thirdly, the government through the Ghana Education Service should at least allocate some amount from the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFUND) to provide teaching learning materials for these mainstream schools that admit CWDs. This is recommended because not all-mainstream schools have the privilege to enroll children with disabilities. These CWDs are in fact very few in our communities and therefore not many mainstream schools may have CWDs. Thus, GES could specifically target schools where more children with disabilities may be found and provide or allocate teaching materials accordingly. Further, CWDs should not be assessed at the same level with the children without disabilities. There should be variation in the questions and marking scheme to help CWDs to also progress academically. Government may also support parents of CWDs financially to be able to cater for their CWDs medical bills and education. Government should also increase the current three percentage (3%) of the disability common fund so that more CWDs can benefit from it.

Fourth, conducive and disability friendly environment or buildings should be provided in these schools. These disability friendly school buildings should be made part of the architectural plan of every school building from now forward by the government public schools builders.

Fifth, much (such as sensitizing education parents and teachers as well as children without disabilities on the new system, how to accept children with multiple disabilities, how to curb some of the challenges associated with the inclusive education system) should be carried out by the center for civic education, particularly on the issues (such as discrimination) relating to CWDs. This is recommended because the Center for Civic Education stands a better chance of reaching out to the entire country on the subject matter. This would therefore whip up interest and create greater awareness among parents as far as CWDs' education is concerned.

Sixth, GES should release money for large commercial education (which could be included in the nation's budget) on the subject IE in our media landscape and this should be used to facilitate training, workshops and seminars as well as community and school visitation by trained teachers and personnel. This will create the awareness among parents and the large society as well. It is recommended that interested researchers should probe further into the IE policy by looking at the concept holistically across wider geographical boundaries. This will help either established the problems already discovered in this study and bring out better ways of handling the situation presently prevailing in few studies available.

Finally, Social Workers should be at the forefront advocating for the rights of CWDs. Social Workers could contribute to raising awareness and hammering on the issues with CWDs by bringing out the way forward and this can be achieved through media awareness, workshops and seminars and visit to the various schools to raise awareness. In fact, they should be talking about the inclusion of CWDs, their rights and well-being. Again, Departments of Social Work should admit more teachers so that at the completion of their study, they will go back to the field to advocate for the rights of CWDs.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: EXPERIENCES OF CWMDs AND THEIR TEACHERS AT RICHARD AKWEI MEMORIAL AND CENTRAL MOSQUE BASIC SCHOOLS.

Consent form for Participants

As you can see, there is a voice recorder here. I will record us, so that I can remember everything you tell me. The voice recorder allows me to listen to you without having to write. Is it all right with you if l record our talk?

The questions are intended to seek information on the experiences of CWMDs and their teachers in this school.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You can decide to pull out. The information you provide will be confidential and used only for the purpose of this study.

Thank you.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CWMDs

SECTION A

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Sex of participant
2. Age of participant
3. Class of participant
4. Type of disability

SECTION B

EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF CWMDs

5. How do you understand inclusive education?
6. How helpful is it for you to be in the same class/school with children who do not have special conditions?
7. As a child with a special condition, do you feel any different being in the same class with others?
8. How helpful is it for you to be in a school with children without disabilities?
9. In what ways do your teachers and mates help you academically and socially?

10. Are you vulnerable to any of the following explain :
    a. isolation in the school?
    b. bullying in the school?
11. 11. How will you describe being in this school?
12. 12. Is the school facilities disability friendly? Yes/No, Explain
13. 13. Can you say the school compound is very safe and comfortable to you?
14. 14. What makes you happy in school?
15. 15. How safe and comfortable is the school environment to you?
16. 16. Tell me the kind of encouragement you receive from your teachers
17. 17. How does the sitting arrangement in classroom support you during class hours?
18. 18. How would you like it if you were: a. repeated b. asked to withdraw based on class performance?
19. 19. In your opinion tell me the suggestions you would like to make considering a. your mates b. teachers c. Ghana Education Service to make learning comfortable for you in school
20. 20. Tell me all your experiences in the school.

APPENDIX II

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: EXPERIENCES OF CWMDs AND THEIR TEACHERS AT RICHARD AKWEI MEMORIAL AND CENTRAL MOSQUE BASIC SCHOOLS.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE TEACHERS

SECTION A

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Sex of participant
2. Age of participant
3. Years of teaching in current school
4. Level of qualification

SECTION B

Teachers` views on inclusive education

5. What is your understanding of inclusive education as implemented by Ghana Education Service?
6. To what extent were you prepared to assume current position as a teacher in an IE?
7. With your training college experience how prepared are you in handling CWMDs?
8. How do you think inclusive education is working for all categories of CWDs
9. How different is it being a teacher in an inclusive education as compared to non-inclusive setting
10. What is your class size (class enrolment)?
11. Of what importance relationship is Q10 successful to inclusive education?
12. What are some of the teaching method helpful to you in teaching your pupils? Why?
13. What teaching learning material do you have access to in your class?
14. Who provides the teaching learning material?
15. How would you describe the friendship formation among the CWMDs and the children without disabilities?
16. In your opinion, do you think IE is good?
17. Do you think inclusive education for all CWDs can be achieved?
18. In your opinion, what support services are put in place to aid IE?
19. To what extent has Ghana Education Service and the school helped you to

1. upgrade your knowledge and skills in handling CWMDs?

20. How do you like to have CWMDs in your class?
21. How does CWMDs create work for you in class?
22. On your own grading how would score your level of preparation in teaching children with disabilities?
23. What kind of problems have you encountered in relation to including CWMDs?
24. How does IE lower academic standard?

25. Tell me some of the problems CWMDs face in the school.
26. In your opinion what way has IE policy been implemented failed or assisted CWMDs overcome some of their barriers?
27. What do you suggest should be done to enhance the implementation of IE policy?
28. Any further comment

APPENDIX III

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: EXPERIENCES OF CWMDs AND THEIR TEACHERS AT RICHARD AKWEI MEMORIAL AND CENTRAL MOSQUE BASIC SCHOOLS.

VIEWS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS AND COORDINATOR

SECTION A

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Sex of participant
2. Age of participant
3. Level of qualification
4. Number of years teaching/coordinating in current school.

SECTION B

1. What is IE education?
2. What types of disabilities do you have in the schools?
3. Did the full implementation of IE take off in all the schools in 2015 as stipulated by the GES policy?
4. How would you describe the measures that were put in place for its full implementation?
5. Do you think the measures that were put in place were enough to enhance the smooth and successful take off-of the IE in basic schools in Ghana?
6. In your opinion, do think parents of CWMDs are aware of the policy of IE?
7. To what extent does the GES conduct in-service training and programs for the teachers?
8. What teaching learning materials (visual, auditory) are provided by the GES to the schools to enhance teaching and learning?
9. As the special education teacher/coordinator what are your roles to the success of IE in the school?
10. In your own opinion what challenges are you facing in carrying out your duties?
11. Did the full implementation of the inclusive education take off in 2015 as stipulated by the government of Ghana?
12. ln your opinion to what extent do you think that your school environment is disability friendly ?
13. What skills do you think the teachers need to enhance IE?
14. How would describe the measures that were put in place before the full implementation of lE?
15. What challenges do you encounter as a special education teacher/coordinator?

16. In your opinion, what do you suggest the Ministry of Education/GES should do for lE to be successful?
17. Any further comment you would like to share?

APPENDIX IV

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: EXPERIENCES OF CWMDs AND THEIR TEACHERS AT RICHARD AKWEI MEMORIAL AND CENTRAL MOSQUE BASIC SCHOOLS.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HEADMISTRESSES

SECTION A

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Sex of participant
2. Age of participant
3. Teaching Experiences of participant
4. Level of qualification
5. Year of heading at current school

EXPERIENCES OF HEADMISTRESSES

6. How would you explain IE?
7. What category of CWDs do you have in your school?
8. What are their specific needs?
9. What knowledge do the teachers have in teaching CWMDs?
10. What is the procedure for the admission of the CWMDs into the school?
11. To what extent do the teachers have knowledge of teaching children with disabilities in your school?
12. What is the procedure for the admission of children with disabilities in the school?
13. How is the enrolment in each class affecting teaching and learning?
14. What are some of the teaching learning material that you have in the school?
15. Where do you source your teaching learning material?
16. What is the competence of the teachers in handling CWMDs?
17. What are the teachers' attitude in teaching the CWMDs?
18. To what extent are CWMDs (i) promoted (ii) repeated or asked to withdraw (applicable)?
19. What type of in-service trainings did the teachers including you had before the implementation of inclusive education?
20. How disability friendly is the school compound and classroom for CWMDs?

21. How were your teachers prepared to assume their current position as teachers in an IE?
22. What challenges do your school face in running IE?
23. What are some of the barriers CWMDs face in the school?
24. What challenges do you encounter while including relation of including CWMDs into mainstream?
25. How were teachers involved in drafting the syllabus?