

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES



**SOCIAL REINTEGRATION OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS WITH SPECIFIC
LEARNING DISABILITY (SpLD)**

BY

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**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MA
SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES DEGREE.**

JULY, 2017

DECLARATION

I, Sheila Ohenewa Brenya, hereby declare that except the references to other people's work which were duly acknowledged, this dissertation is as a result of my own independent work which was carried out at the Centre for Social Policy Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, under the supervision of Professor Brigid Sackey and that this has not been presented partly or wholly elsewhere for the award of another degree.

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DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family, who taught me that the best kind of knowledge to have is that which is learned for its own sake.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I am most grateful to God who continues to make the impossible possible.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Sackey for the patience, continuous support, motivation, and immense knowledge. I could not have imagined having a better supervisor and mentor for my MA study.

My sincere thanks also goes to Makafui, PhD student at the Centre for Social Policy Studies for the support.

Finally, to Mr Tetteh, the librarian at the Centre for Social Policy Studies, ASP Sarfo Patrick of The Senior Correctional Centre (Borstal), Emmanuel Nansen-Chayo, and all the good people who supported me in different capacities.

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate how juvenile delinquents with Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) are reintegrated into society after rehabilitation.

Fifteen (15) respondents were categorised into stakeholders of juvenile justice administration and correctional facilities; an NGO (Special Attention Project) and the Special Education Division (Sp.ED) of the Ghana Education Service (GES); inmates and ex-inmates and their parents at correctional facilities (Junior Girls' Correctional Centre; Senior Correctional Centre for boys), and the Juvenile Justice Court. Descriptive analysis from the sample showed that there is a link between SpLD and juvenile delinquency. Respondents realised the importance of screening juveniles for SpLD in order to identify those who need special educational programmes for effective rehabilitation and reintegration. The study also revealed that respondents are aware that delinquency is often addressed based on socioeconomic factors, broken homes and lack of parental guidance. Yet, the lack of education is usually not considered. This, they believe, will spark their career interests and provide new possibilities for the future. They also believe that with special educational programmes, the cycle of juvenile delinquency will be reduced.

The recommendations of the study include staff training to help them work effectively with imprisoned juveniles with learning disabilities and its characteristics; involving parents and guardians to assist staff at correctional centres to work effectively with imprisoned juveniles with learning disabilities; special education policies and guidelines should ensure that incarcerated juveniles with learning disabilities receive the services they need and, to which they are entitled ; and development of an extensive reintegration and aftercare (post-reintegration) services.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CSP	Chief Superintendent of Police
GES	Ghana Education Service
IE	Inclusive Education
IEP	Individualised Education Plan
JD	Juvenile Delinquency
JGCC	Junior Girls' Correctional Centre
NTVI	National Vocational Training Institute
PWD	Persons with Disability
SAP	Special Attention Project
SCC	Senior Correctional Centre
Sp.Ed.	Special Education Division
SpLD	Specific Learning Disability
WASSCE	West African Secondary School Certificate Examination

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

In order to investigate juvenile delinquents with specific learning disability (SpLD), it is necessary to know the meaning of juvenile delinquency in general. The term juvenile delinquency is a violation of the law committed by a juvenile and not punishable by death or life imprisonment. In Ghana, a juvenile delinquent by official definition is a person below 18 years in conflict with the law (Juvenile Justice Act, 2003).

In every society, juvenile delinquency is a big social problem. Though it is a common phenomenon in many developed and developing countries, in much of Africa and Ghana, factors influencing juvenile delinquency are under-researched (Ellis et al., 2009). The United Nations Guidelines for the prevention of juvenile delinquency (1990), reports that juvenile crime rates have seen an increase by more than 30% in many Eastern Europe and Commonwealth countries since 1995. According to the Ghana Prisons Service 2013 report, the daily lockup of juvenile delinquents at the Senior Correctional Centre is 98. This represents a yearly admission of 19,800 (male: 19, 144 and female: 656), a yearly increase rate of 6.5%, with recidivism rate at 4.5% (GPS report, 2013).

According to Farrington & Welsh (2007), the most studied predictors of juvenile delinquency in western studies looks at two major factors: (1) individual factors such as low academic achievement, high daring, impulsivity, low IQ; (2) common family and neighbourhood factors which include parental conflict, deviant family, poor supervision, broken family, parental abuse,

low family income, lack of parental involvement and disadvantaged neighbourhood. These similarities are however found in almost every class and cultural context.

Subsequently, one notable research on juvenile delinquency in Ghana by Boakye (2013), was conducted from a sample of 264 boys aged 12-18 in three correctional facilities and public schools in Southern Ghana (Accra and Swedru). The study examined numerous factors from individual and family domain. These included academic difficulties, impulsivity, daring or risk-taking, empathy, low religiosity, poor supervision, large family size, divorce and family socioeconomic condition. Academic difficulties, impulsivity, and low religiosity showed particularly strong relation to juvenile delinquency. The strong relationship between these factors and juvenile delinquency in Ghana is noteworthy especially because previous studies in Ghana and Africa have generally emphasized family factors as responsible for juvenile delinquency. Suggestively, the best predictor of juvenile delinquency was academic difficulties or learning disability. Research also indicates that juvenile delinquents and students with learning disability, labelled Specific Learning Disability (SpLD), possess the same characteristics.

Hitherto, there are quite a number of children who suffer from Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) which they or their social environment may not be aware of because it is one of the disabilities that are characterised as 'invisible'. Invisible disability is defined as disabilities that are not instantly obvious. Such disabilities include people with learning differences or difficulties, visual or hearing impairments who do not wear glasses or hearing aids, and consequently such a disability may not be obvious to the onlooker, though it can sometimes limit the performance of their daily activities. As stated earlier, such children may not be aware of their disability and attendant challenges; they may not have been even diagnosed of it. Therefore, they may not know what they need.

Learning disabilities have been interpreted in various ways. When children have learning disabilities, they barely are able to achieve their maximum potential. The learning disability is established through academic activities such as reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic and physical education. They may also experience problems with the speed of processing information, working memory, sequencing and organisational skills, and coordination. Research indicates that young individuals with learning disabilities are more likely than individuals without disabilities to engage in delinquent behavior (Pryor-Kowalski, 2013).

Theories explaining the causes of juvenile delinquency focus on many biological, psychological, and sociological variables. However, these theories overlook individual characteristics such as learning disabilities. Yet, as cited earlier, juvenile delinquents and students with learning disabilities have been said to possess many of the same characteristics. For instance poor academic success, short attention spans, impulse control problems, and lack of motivation are characteristics associated with both learning disability and delinquency. Other shared characteristics include negative self- concepts, low frustration tolerance, greater prevalence of males than females, poor academic problem solving, and weak social skills (Gallico et al, 1988; Winters 1997; White et al, 1990).

Studies have been conducted which examined the cause and effect relationship between learning disability and juvenile delinquency. Smykla and Willis (1981) investigated the incidence of learning disabilities among delinquents under juvenile court jurisdiction. The findings in this study demonstrated that there was a high percentage of learning disability among delinquents, suggesting a connection with juvenile delinquency. These results were similar to the findings of Swanstrom, et al. (1981) who found a high incidence level of learning disabilities among juvenile delinquents based on mathematics and reading difficulties.

In Ghana, a study was conducted by Special Attention Project (SAP, 2011) with juveniles from three correctional centres to establish the link between SpLD and juvenile delinquency. The study revealed that out of 46 juveniles (41males and 5 females), 15 juvenile (30%) were found to have learning disabilities.

Research indicates that out of the classroom, the learning levels of many of these children are far below the level they should attain in school. This group of children, as described above, are often in conflict with the law. The pattern is that they mostly drop out from Primary level (majority from Primary class 3), after which they stay at home for a year or two and then resort to the streets (SAP, 2011). Their life in the streets exposes them to social vices and crime, though they can be smart children who are capable of surviving on their own in the streets, and usually have incredible skills in making money.

However, while illiteracy and poor academic performance are not direct causes for delinquency, investigational studies strongly confirm the link between literacy skills and the likelihood of being in conflict with the law.

With this evidence, this study therefore intends to investigate the structured approach and educational programs designed to rehabilitate and reintegrate juvenile delinquents with SpLD at the correctional centres. This will add to more knowledge, the importance of developing an effective program to reduce the prevalence of juvenile delinquency and recidivism.

1.2 Organisation of study

The study is presented in five chapters. The first chapter focuses on the background to the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, significance and organisation of the study. This chapter gives a brief overview of SpLD and its link with juvenile delinquency. Chapter two deals

with review of relevant literature and theoretical background underpinning the study. Chapter three looks at the methodology which consists of the study area, research design, study population, sample size and sampling techniques, methods of data collection, data analysis and ethical consideration. Chapter four looks at findings of the study while chapter five concentrates on the summary, conclusion and recommendations.

1.3 Statement of the problem

A number of researches (e.g. Swanstrom et al, 1981; Culliver & Sigler, 1991; McCauley, 2002; Pryor-Kowalski, 2013) show that the presence of Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) is found among delinquent children. It has been suggested that continuous school failure generates rejection and poor self-concept for the student and, ultimately, leads to juvenile delinquency.

According to the study conducted by Special Attention Project (SAP) Ghana, 67% of children who are in contact with the Justice system were found to have been out of school for more than one year, averagely before they were arrested, as a result of SpLD.

A number of studies (Malmgren & Leone, 2000; Leone et al., 2002) have provided evidence that incarcerated juveniles with a history of school failure, poor academic skills and disabilities can make significant achievement gains with intensive instructions in a short period of time.

Despite the link between Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) and juvenile delinquency, and its effects on juveniles, families and the society as a whole, there is little information on a structured approach and effective programmes designed for the rehabilitation and reintegration of delinquent children with SpLD at Correctional Centres. Also, countries around the world such as the USA are taking effective measures to address the problem of juvenile delinquency with particular attention to quality education as an intervention. Without these interventions, delinquency and reoffending remains the same. For this reason, there is the need for effective rehabilitation and social reintegration programmes to address the needs of children with SpLD in the juvenile justice system to prevent recidivism in Ghana.

It is from this background that my dissertation seeks to investigate how delinquent children with SpLD at correctional centres are reintegrated into society after rehabilitation.

1.4 Objectives of study

The objectives of the study are:

- To investigate the level of knowledge of Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) in correctional centres in Accra.
- To find out if there is any form of special educational programme targeted at children with SpLD.
- To find out how these children at the correctional centres are re-integrated after rehabilitation.

1.5 Relevance of study

A child is socialised by the family, therefore, the family is responsible for teaching the child how to control behaviours that are unacceptable while respecting the rights of others. They also provide rules and encouragement that guide the juvenile. The same way, the family can teach children violent, unacceptable behaviours. Gorman-Smith et al., (1998) assert that, when the family has a history of criminal behaviour, harsh parental discipline, and family conflict, it is most likely that it will influence the child's behaviours. Research (Wright and Wright, 1994) suggest that factors that have a high risk of causing delinquent activities include broken homes, children rejected by their parents, inadequate supervision, family conflict, and large family size. Delinquency affects both the child and the family, and the society as a whole.

It is therefore not unpredicted that in Ghana, juvenile delinquency is often researched from sociological and psychological perspective. Though imperative, it does not take into consideration the impact lack of education has on juveniles. Evidence from research, centre on

crime, community, and culture (1997), point out that an increased level of academic competence reduces the rate of delinquent behaviours and recidivism.

The National Inclusive Education Policy of Ghana was launched in 2016 to cater for learners with disabilities such as Specific Learning Disability, who form a significant proportion of the out-of-school population (Inclusive Education Policy, 2016). The Policy indicates the role of relevant stakeholders including school units from preschool to tertiary, but it is not clear on providing special education for juveniles with SpLD at the correctional centres.

Additionally, a study by Special Attention Project (SAP) established the link between SpLD and juvenile delinquency in 2011, yet, there is no information on interventions targeted at this category of children at correctional centres. There is also no information reintegration of juveniles with SpLD and aftercare services.

This current study will bring to light, the importance of developing a well-structured educational programme for this juvenile delinquents with SpLD at correctional centres during rehabilitation and reintegration, and aftercare services.

Furthermore, the study intends to help in the formulation of new policies or review existing policies to include intervention strategies for juvenile delinquents with SpLD in correctional centres.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review for this study looked at the definition of SpLD and its varied characteristics. The chapter also dealt with the theoretical framework underpinning the link between Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) and juvenile delinquency.

2.2 Definition of Specific Learning Disability (SpLD)

The negative consequences associated with SpLD have been well-documented. Nonetheless, the definition of SpLD is still indeterminate (Cottrell, 2014). SpLD is a new terminology, coined in 1963 to brand a selection of dysfunctions which appeared to prevent otherwise normal children from learning at the expected level (Murray, 1976). According to Murray, the term "learning disabilities" was first given prominence by Samuel Kirk in the early 1960's. He emphasised that learning disabilities was intended as a label, that is, an appropriate way of denoting a collection of learning difficulties which were essentially not caused by low cleverness, emotional disturbance, physical disabilities, or incompetent teachers. Since it was used as a label, SpLD was not originally intended to have diagnostic usefulness. In the 1970s, the term rapidly achieved extensive use and was accepted as official definitions of SpLD (Murray, 1976).

The U.S. Office of Education (1968), defined SpLD as: A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations.

An operational definition of SpLD delivered by U. S. Office of Education in 1976 (52404-42407) defined SpLD as:

A specific learning disability may be found if a child has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability in one or more of several areas: oral expression, written expression, listening comprehension, basic reading skills, mathematics calculation, mathematics reasoning, or spelling. A 'severe discrepancy' is said to exist when achievement in one or more of the areas fall at or below 50% of the child's expected achievement level, when age and previous educational experiences are taken into consideration.

The U. S. Office of Education definitions of SpLD were also criticised by Kavale & Forness, (2000), for not stating the “discrepancy” between a child’s achievement and intellectual ability mentioned in the definition of the construct as well as the intellectual and achievement measures that should be used to identify a “discrepancy”. In accordance with Kavale & Forness` criticism, Hammill (1990), stated that it is hard to comprehend how to effectively “identify, diagnose, prescribe treatment for, teach, motivate, or help to improve the life of a person with SpLD” with no perfect appreciation of the nature of SpLD including processes used to identify SpLD.

Based on the above argument, the criticism by Kavale & Forness, (2000), may be based on the fact that without indicating the “discrepancy” between intellectual ability and academic achievement, schools cannot determine the children who are eligible for special education services. There has to be an indication of a “mismatch” in order to be eligible. However, according to Foorman & Torgesen (2001), the “discrepancy” criteria is harmful to children because interventions will be delayed due to the fact that the child would have to wait until his or

her achievement is significantly low before the “discrepancy” can be achieved. Hence, some definitions exclude the discrepancy criteria all together.

Some researchers such as Kavale & Forness (2000) indicated that SpLDs are the result of a problem in the central nervous system or basic psychological processes. Others such as Coles (1989) are of the opinion that SpLDs are caused by environmental deficits. Yet still, various causes associated with SpLDs were identified by some other researchers. For instance Cortiella (2009) affirm that SpLDs are biological in nature.

2.3 Characteristics of SpLD

Cortiella (2009), points out that Specific Learning Disability may be mild, moderate or severe, hence students are at variance in their coping skills. According to the author, some try to adjust to learning disability so well that they go through as if they do not have the disability at all. Others also battle all through their lives to even perform easy tasks. Notwithstanding the differences, learning disability at all times start in childhood and always remain a life-long disorder.

An extensive diversity of characteristics have over the years been recognized by parents, educators and other professionals (Gargiulo, 2010). Clements (1966) sites ten attributes: “Hyperactivity; Impulsivity; Perceptual-motor impairment; Disorders of memory and thinking; Emotional lability; Academic difficulties; Coordination problems; Language deficits; Disorders of attention; Equivocal neurological signs.”

Hale et al. (2010), also identified nine learning disabilities: “Disorders of attention; Reading difficulties; Poor motor abilities; Written language difficulties; Oral language difficulties; Social

skills deficits; Psychological process deficits; Quantitative disorders; Information processing problems.”

In 1974, the label 'learning disabilities' was developed for those children and youth whose challenges involved dyslexia, dysgraphia, aphasia, perceptual and motor deficits, poor inter-sensory integration, and minimal brain dysfunction. Since time immemorial, most researchers have perceived learning disabilities as the 'cure all' or as the 'dumping ground' for children and youth who have behaviour challenges (Cruickshank, 1977). Haight (1980) supported the belief that learning disabilities is a 'battered discipline' in which many children and youth with behaviour and learning problems are placed in special education.

In a manual written for court personnel, judges, and attorneys, Zaremba et al. (1979) summarized the characteristics of specific learning disabilities as (a) a poor memory for recalling sequences of events, (b) a constant need to have questions repeated, and responses with answers that are irrelevant to the question, (c) responds with a shrug of the shoulders when addressed, (d) reading difficulties (oral, comprehension), (e) problems with conceptualizing, hyperactivity and a short attention span, (g) clumsiness, (h) cannot follow directions, (i) problems with directionality, (j) repetition of meaningless behaviour, and (k) habitual truancy.

Cortiella and Horowitz (2014) expound that the diagnosis requires persistent difficulties in reading, writing, arithmetic, or mathematical reasoning skills during formal years of schooling. Symptoms may include inaccurate or slow and effortful reading, poor written expression that lacks clarity, difficulties remembering number facts, or inaccurate mathematical reasoning.

2.4 Examples of Specific learning Disability

2.4.1 Dyscalculia

Children with dyscalculia have difficulties with the branch of mathematics that has to do with addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. When solving problems, they often do not understand the type of arithmetical operation asked for. They generally have a difficulty reading and writing numerals.

2.4.2 Dyslexia:

Affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling

2.4.3 Dyspraxia:

Difficulty staying seated, following instructions and low self-esteem

2.4.4 Dysgraphia:

Illegible handwriting, poor letter formation and not finishing words in sentences

2.4.5 Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):

Trouble paying attention and focusing on tasks, impulsivity, talk and laugh too loud, or get angry unnecessarily

2.4.6 Autism:

This is characterised by challenges with speech and nonverbal communication, social skills and repetitive behaviour. They may not necessarily look obviously different from others.

2.5 Policies and Institutions that protect the juvenile and persons with disability.

2.5.1 Juvenile Justice Act (653) 2003:

The Juvenile Justice Act (653) was passed in 2003 and regulates justice administration for juvenile offenders. The Act restates the Welfare Principle, whereby the interest of the child is the highest priority. It does not specify the type of rehabilitation, treatment or training, reintegration or aftercare services for children detained in correctional centres. It also does not include provisions for persons with disability (PWD).

2.5.2 The Children's Act (560) 1998

The Children's Act of Ghana is based on the interest of the child, a priority in any situation. It gives a general plan of children's rights and specifies regulations for foster care and child protection, and deals with situations of abuse but there is no provision specifically for juvenile justice.

2.5.3 Persons with Disability Act (715) 2006

The Persons with Disability Act of Ghana 2006 (Act 715), hereafter Disability Act, states that rehabilitation centres shall be established in regions and, as far as possible, in districts for persons with disability to offer guidance, counselling, and appropriate training. It also defines who a person with disability is in Ghana, which says "a person with physical, mental or sensory impairment including a visual, hearing or speech functional disability, which gives rise to physical, cultural or social barriers that substantially, limits one or more of the major life activities of that individual." This definition is however not clear on persons with Specific Learning Disability. It has a closed definition, while the UN Convention on the Right of Persons

with Disability has an open definition to permit the inclusion of emerging categories of disability because UNCRPD recognises that disability is an evolving concept.

2.5.4 The Education Act (778) 2008

The Education Act covers provision of education in Ghana, and has one article (Article 5) on Inclusive Education. The article deals with infrastructural issues, and provides the underlying values of Inclusive Education. The Act does not provide for education to individuals in correctional facilities.

2.5.5 United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)

The CRPD covers a wide range of rights issues concerning persons with disability, based on the principle that persons with disability should be fully included. On access to justice, the Convention states that appropriate facilities should be provided and that appropriate training should be given to those working in the field of justice administration.

2.5.6 Inclusive Education Policy (2016)

The Inclusive Education (IE) Policy which was launched in 2016, is based on the value system which holds that all persons who attend an educational institution are entitled to equitable access to quality teaching and learning. The policy recognises the varied learning needs of learners and requires all stakeholders in the education sector to address the diverse needs of different groups of citizens in the Ghanaian education system under the universal design for learning and within a learner friendly environment for all.

The Education Act of 1961 was introduced by the government, realizing that education was important in national development, which made primary and middle schools free and compulsory for all children. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana also required that basic education

became free and compulsory for all Ghanaians of school going age by the year 2005, but this has not been possible for all Ghanaians of school-going age to have access to school because learners with disabilities who form a significant proportion of the out-of-school population were not catered for. For this reason the Ghana Government's Education Strategic Plan 2010-20 set a strategic goal for: "To provide education for those with physical and mental impairments, orphans, and those who are slow or fast learners, by including them within the mainstream formal system or, only when considered necessary, within special units or schools."

By the end of 2011, the Government of Ghana through the Special Education Service has implemented Inclusive Education on pilot programmes in 529 schools in 34 districts of the Central, Greater Accra and Eastern Region. Activities include sensitization of communities and key government officials, screening of school children, training of teachers on identification of children with special educational needs (SEN) including those with disability, and managing children with disabilities in classrooms.

The policy includes all children with special needs. The term 'learners with special educational needs' covers learners beyond those who may be included as having a disability and those children who are failing in school because they experience barriers that prevent them from achieving optimal progress in their learning and development. These persons include: Persons with Intellectual Disability; Gifted and Talented Persons; Persons with Physical Disability; Persons with Specific Learning Disability; Persons with Autism; Persons with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder; Persons with Speech and Communication Disorders etc.

Aside the Policy, the Standards and Guidelines for practice of Inclusive Education in Ghana has been designed to provide assistance and guidance to educational institutions in their provision of

minimum access required in various types of school building, gadgets, learning equipment and materials, as well as curriculum and pedagogy for the practice of IE. In addition to this, an implementation plan has also been developed to provide an overview of the expected deliverables over a five year period (2015-2019). Stakeholders include Ministries, Departments and Agencies and others. The policy however, does not provide for correctional centres.

2.5.7 Department of Social Welfare (DSW)

The Department of Social Welfare is statutorily mandated by the Children's Act to oversee the administration of juvenile justice and the protection of children in general. Juvenile Justice Administration is located within the Department. The social workers who work within juvenile justice are employees of DSW. The Department also manages the remand homes and Junior Correctional Centres. The Social Welfare and Community Development training manual developed has little information on guidelines for reintegration and aftercare for juveniles, and those with disabilities, though it specifies the guideline for prison aftercare service for adult prisoners.

This study focuses on two juvenile correctional institutions in Accra, namely The Junior Girls' Correctional Centre and The Senior Correctional Centre for Boys.

The Junior Girls' Correctional Centre is under the Department of Social Welfare which oversees the correctional programs for girls serving their sentences. However, there is no formal education nor special education for both girls with and without learning disability.

The Senior Correctional Centre for boys on the other hand, provides formal and non-formal education for juveniles, but no special education targeted at juveniles with SpLD. This may be due to the inability of educators at the correctional facilities to identify such juveniles for referral

and screening for SpLD in order to design special educational programs for them. Though the Senior Correctional Centre registers inmates for Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), they do not fall under Ghana Education Service (GES), and therefore do not benefit from facilities GES provides for public schools, such as the inclusive education program under Special Education Division (Sp. Ed.).

The Ghana Education Service (GES), governed by The Ghana Education Service Council, is mandated to manage pre-tertiary schools and controls recruitment, postings, transfers, promotions, training and development, effective inspection, supervision and monitoring.

2.6 Identification/Referral/Evaluation of juveniles for SpLD

Mallett (2011) supports research that prove the link between learning disability and juvenile delinquency, and argues that juvenile delinquents with disabilities dominate the juvenile justice population. Mallett (2011) further suggests a screening procedure to bring out children with SpLD. He opines that all children and youth, including those in public and private schools, street children and those at correctional facilities, must be identified. Schools must locate and evaluate all children and youth with these disabilities and determine which are receiving special education services.

Flanagan (1995), affirms the need to assess children suspected of having a learning disability. Therefore, correctional facilities must obtain parents' permission to evaluate, use a variety of assessment tools to conduct the evaluation, and must conduct the evaluation in the child's native language. It suggests that re-evaluation must occur at least every three years until age 21, and may be requested by the child or youth's parents or teachers at any time.

The evaluation determines that the child or youth is in need of specialised education services, and therefore schools are required to have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in effect at the beginning of each academic year for each child and youth with an identified disability. Accordingly, the IEP team must include the child's parents or guardians; at least one regular education teachers of the child; one special education teacher or service provider, if appropriate, of the child; someone who is able to interpret the evaluation results (e.g. school psychologist, speech/language therapist, remedial reading teacher); a qualified public school district representative; the child, if necessary; and others, with parental consent.

In contrast, Ghana does not seem to have such guidelines as exist in the USA. In Ghana, the Inclusive Education Policy draws on a number of national and international commitments to the provision of education for all, based on best practices around the world. It is based on the fact that every child has the right to quality education, therefore all children should have equal opportunity to access education. It states that changes need to be made throughout the education system and with communities, to ensure that the education system adapts to the learner, rather than the learner to adapt to the system. The policy targets public and private schools in all ten regions of Ghana. In contrast to the public schools, a few educational programmes operated by the correctional facilities do not recognise the impact of learning disability on juveniles with regards to delinquency, in order to offer special education for them to reduce recidivism after reintegration.

2.7 Challenges with implementation of rehabilitation programs at correctional centres

Leone et al., (1997) points out that there are challenges with the implementation of quality academic programmes within the juvenile correctional facilities. Challenges may be associated with behaviour problems, substance abuse and deficits in skills of juvenile's when committed.

Furthermore, these institutions do not have the capacity to deliver quality educational interventions for the juveniles. All of these present some challenges in the educational programming of the correctional centres all around the world, even in the most developed countries.

According to Wolford (2000), one difficulty surrounding the provision of education services and special education services in correctional facilities is the lack of administrative cost and funding governing education of juvenile delinquents committed at these facilities across the United States. This makes it difficult to provide holistic treatment and reintegration of juveniles into society.

2.8 Special Education as part of rehabilitation in correctional centres

In the United States, an important component of the curriculum in many correctional facilities apart from individualised or specialised education, include a vocational training centre, literacy education and computer skills. Most educational programs in the juvenile correctional institutions are designed to assist students in only passing the General Education Development (GED).

Special education services are provided at most Juvenile Correctional Facilities, however, programmes do not always satisfactorily meet the needs of juveniles with learning disabilities.

Administrators and educators who are not familiar with special education services often do not have the experience or expertise to guide and support the development of educational programmes of high quality. Teachers in correctional facilities employ a range of behavioural techniques, including certificates of achievement, ‘student of the week,’ and cooperative learning strategies to motivate their students (Leone et al., 2002).

This practice however falls within the mechanism employed at both correctional centres and Special Attention Project (SAP), Ghana. The Centres offer juveniles basic and life skills training as part of the rehabilitation process.

2.8.1 Functional Assessments

Functional assessment is used to develop an understanding of a child's challenging behavior (Carr et al., 1994; Sugai et al. 2000). This helps to identify the reason why a child behaves as he/she does in specific situations. It involves direct observations, interviews, record reviews from medical records, lesson plans, and individualized education plans.

2.8.2 Functional Curriculum

According to Leone (1991), this educational curriculum is one that meets a student's individual needs with focus on social, daily living, and vocational skills, instead of only focusing on GEDs. Offenders with learning disabilities often lack the functional skills that will enable them for instance find a job, ability to interact appropriately with others, read basic regulatory and commercial signs, and learn to be independent.

2.8.3 Functional Instruction

According to Leone (1991), the primary focus of instruction must be on reinforcing appropriate academic and social behaviours in the classroom. This means using positive and direct instructional strategies to teach functional curriculum in juvenile correctional education programmes.

2.9 Reintegration of juveniles with SpLD into society

The reintegration process in correctional programmes is very crucial, therefore there is the need to employ services that effectively link correctional education programmes to the juvenile's

previous public school programmes, and also educational and community services needed to support the juvenile offender with learning disabilities following rehabilitation. Leone (1991) & Mallet (2011) affirm that reintegration, needless to say, have been the most neglected component of correctional education programmes. No agency wants to accept responsibility for providing transition and after services. One challenge is that the identification of offenders with learning disabilities is often slowed because of difficulty in obtaining previous educational records.

Haberman and Quinn (1986), suggest that many juvenile offenders do not adapt well to changes in their environment, or the expectations that society has for law-abiding behaviours when they are reintegrated. Therefore, the movement of juveniles with learning disability from correctional facilities to the community and schools is a task that requires coordinated efforts by the correctional facilities, educators, families, probation officers, and after-care professionals.

One model developed by Webb et al. (1985), to promote the reintegration of juvenile offenders into society is the Juvenile Correctional Inter-agency Transition Model. This model identifies the problem areas that interferes with the successful reintegration and develop reintegration strategies to correct it. The strategies are divided into four broad areas: awareness activities, transfer or records to respective schools and community, pre-placement planning, and maintenance of placement and communication. This model has been implemented extensively in Washington and other jurisdictions. The model is said to have minimal cost, and most importantly, it had a positive impact on the reintegration of juveniles into the public school. There is however little information to measure its impact on juveniles.

Webb et al. (1985) suggest that reintegration programmes must ensure continuity of services in especially the academic areas as well as social and vocational skills training for both juveniles with learning disability and those without.

2.10 Aftercare services (post-reintegration)

There is little information or lack of guidelines for rehabilitation, reintegration and aftercare services in Ghana, including the aftercare experiences of juveniles with SpLD, in order to identify gaps to address the challenges reformation process. The Social Welfare and Community Development Training Manual (2014) provides for prison aftercare service for adult prisoners, but lack guidelines for juveniles in general.

According of the U.S Department of Education 1989, public school programmes and the high rate of dropout among juveniles receiving secondary special education services in general suggest that many juveniles with disability do not return to school after leaving correctional facilities.

Leone (1985), emphasize that comprehensive and coordinated linkages often do not exist among the juvenile courts, the public schools, correctional education programmes, and aftercare programmes. It is suggested that interagency communication and cooperation must be established whereby juvenile court judges make sentencing and placement decisions that take into account the youthful offender's special education needs; both educational records and the youthful offender are transferred into and out of correctional education programmes; and aftercare programmes are linked to the correctional education programme and the public schools to provide continuous and meaningful special education services.

2.11 Theoretical Framework

The study is based on the School Failure Rationale as espoused by Murray (1976) which explains the link between SpLD and juvenile delinquency. Research has proven that academic performance is one of the strongest and most links of delinquency. In other words, students who are weak turn to delinquency for status, enjoyment, money and self-esteem because of their inability to achieve all of these rewards in school. Agnew (1985b), posits that low grades are negative experiences that lead to delinquent behaviour. Therefore, poor academic performance motivates them to commit crime.

With regards to this study, the theory of School Failure Rationale is relevant in understanding the effect of academic failure on juveniles in order to design effective special educational programmes at the correctional centres as preventive mechanisms in order to prevent recidivism and reduce the rate of delinquency. However, it is also important to note that these steps will not deter all juveniles from other troubles.

2.11.1 Application of Theory of School Failure Rationale

It is not automatically obvious that a learning disability will cause delinquency. A causal chain is implied. The SpLD produces effects which in turn produce other effects that ultimately lead to delinquency (Berman, 1975).

According to Murray (1976), the School Failure Rationale refers to three effects on the learning disability: the child is labelled as a problem child by his or her teachers, but do not know that this is due to his disability; subsequently the child struggles with making progress in class; the child think his peers find him to be odd and ridicule him. Furthermore, because of the child's negative self-image, he drops out of school.

I tend to agree that the labelling process may give the child a wrong identity in the sense that when a child is mistakenly identified as a slow learner or described as a problem child, it set the destructive cycle rolling. This may result in the child actually exhibiting behaviour that fits the label that has been associated with him or her which and as a consequence become a failure in school. Children tend to become what they are told they are, therefore, the more the labelling, the more the effects.

Two main mechanisms for linking SpLD and delinquent behaviour are also discussed. Firstly, as the saying goes; 'the devil looks for work for the idle hands,' this implies that the drop out child has too much time on his hands to fall into bad peer influences. Secondly, the drop out lacks the marketable skills to make a living, therefore the only option is to engage in crimes such as theft.

It should however be noted that from earlier discussions, there are often other important factors for school failure, including family difficulties, low income status, negative peers, low parental educational attainment, and unidentified school-related learning problems. These other factors may already aggravate the effect of learning disability on juveniles, which will in turn trigger delinquent behaviour. It is important to address the problem of delinquency by first tackling family and neighbourhood factors by designing intervention programmes to improve parenting skills. However, this may take a longer period to achieve results, therefore designing effective special educational programmes targeted at school children, children at-risk of delinquency and delinquents at correctional centres will lower the rate of delinquency and recidivism after reintegration.

2.11.2 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is shown in Figure 2.1 below. Based on the School Failure Rationale, there are three effects on the learning disability. The child begins with early problems, showing attention problems at home, prior to school but it is written off as bad-tempered and difficult. This is evidenced by teachers punishing and ridiculing the child for failure or for behaviour problems that he cannot control. With such labelling in mind, the child, already gets used to the fact that he won't be able to excel as expected of him even in school. His peers perceive him as odd.

Murray (1976), believe that the behavioural signs become even more obvious because the child would not face the embarrassment of continual failure in front of friends and teachers and therefore he clowns around and disrupts everybody's attention. The teachers, instead of dealing with the learning problems, rather concentrate on how to handle or deal with the child's behaviour.

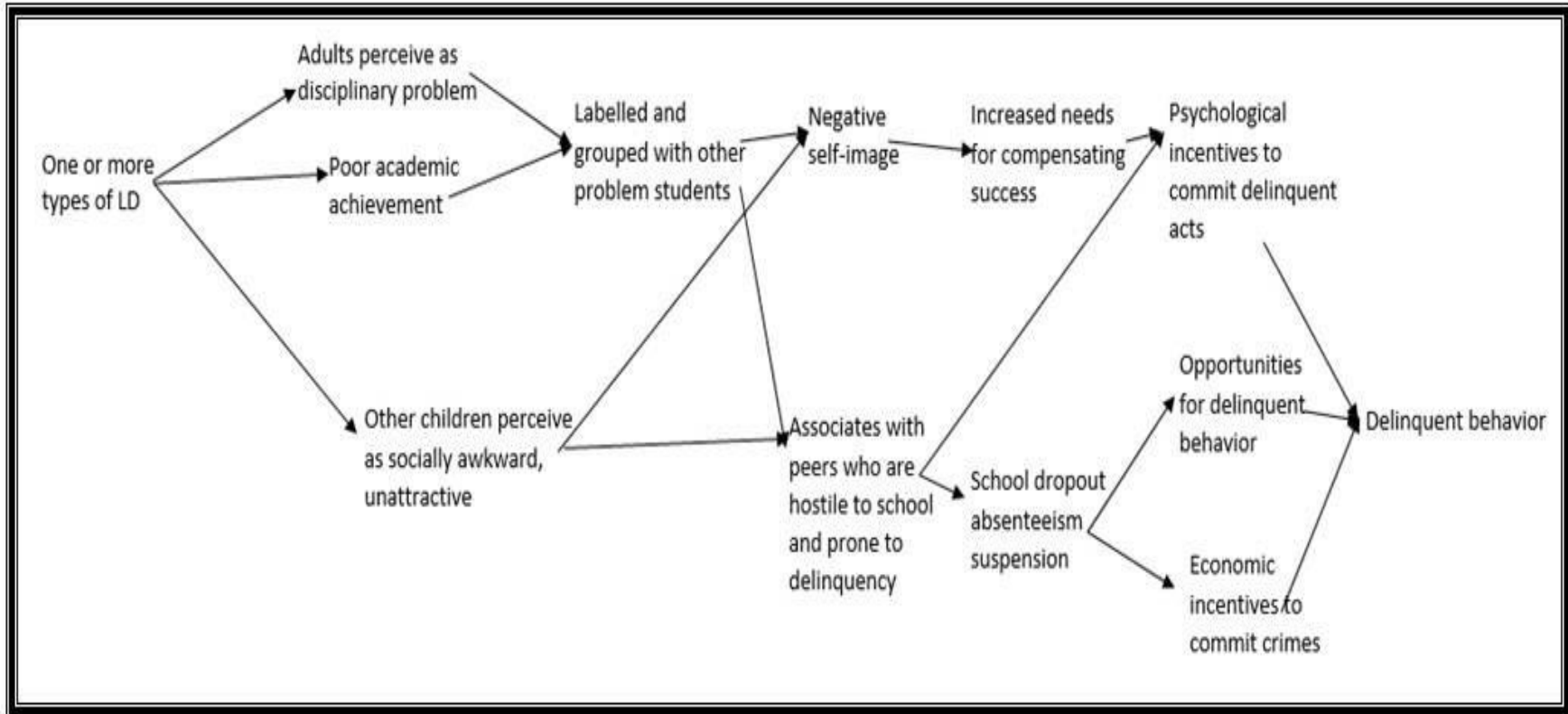
According to Elliott & Voss (1974), the child is labelled as a problem child and grouped in class with other problem students, therefore he begins to associate himself with the students who are like him. The child's negative self-image is reinforced by adults as well as by his peers. His desire for success is intensified, and looks for other ways to compensate his poor academic achievement. Psychologically, a child experiencing neglect exhibits disobedience, therefore it is an incentive to commit delinquent acts. Consequently, the child lags behind in class, becomes more of a problem, begins to absent himself from school gradually, and drops out of school or is suspended for 'bad behaviour.'

It is also perceived that there are other motives associated with the dropout. The drop out has more time on his hands, therefore it is an opportunity for delinquent behaviour. Another motive that leads to delinquent behaviour is economic incentives, because the child lacks the necessary marketable skills and therefore commit crimes such as theft to survive.

With regards to this study, the effect on the learning disability based on the School Failure Rationale was used to analyse the level of knowledge of SpLD among personnel and inmates at correctional centres, including parents of juvenile delinquents undergoing rehabilitation. This looked at early detection of signs exhibited by these juveniles at home, school and correctional centres; and challenges associated with this disability with regards to delinquent behaviours.

The explanation of the conceptual framework has been put in a diagram below.

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework of the School Failure Rationale linking Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) and juvenile delinquency based on Murray's Theory



Source: Adapted from Murray, (1976).

2.12 Conclusion

The knowledge about the existence of SpLD and its negative consequences has been established long ago. However, coming out with an accepted definition and identifying its causes have been problematic. Notwithstanding the challenge of having an acceptable definition of SpLD, its characteristics are used to identify children affected by it.

Another positive finding about the issue of SpLD is that its various types have been identified with their causes. The available literature has confirmed that there is a link between learning disabilities and juvenile delinquency. In view of this, there are various interventions and special educational programmes that are designed to assist juvenile offenders who are associated with SpLD by addressing a variety of their needs and offending behaviour and helping them achieve a more productive and satisfying lifestyle.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the various methods employed in answering the objectives. It also describes the study population, sampling techniques and explains the data collections and analysis processes. It also presents the ethical consideration of the study.

3.2 Research Design

The approach used to obtain information from respondents was qualitative research approach, which is a means of exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2007). This approach is also to understand the contexts or settings in which participants in the study address a particular problem or issue. This can only be established by a face-to-face interaction over time. Some methods of qualitative research include focus group discussions, individual interviews, and participation/observations. For the purpose of this study, an in-depth interview was done. This gave room for the researcher to ask more open ended questions, allowing for a discussion with the participants rather than a straight question and answer format. Observation method was also used where a number of participants were examined in their natural setting, and recorded as a written description of their actions.

3.3 The Study Area

The study was conducted in Accra at the Junior Girls' Correctional Centre (JGCC), Osu, and the Senior Correctional Centre (SCC) for boys. The choice for these areas was influenced by the fact that the Girls' Correctional Centre is the only correctional centre for girls under the Department of Social Welfare. The Centre does not offer any form of formal education. However, through

literacy skills and vocational training, teachers are able to identify juveniles with SpLD based on the characteristics.

The Senior Correctional Centre is the only functional male reformatory Centre in the country that caters for young offenders and juveniles by giving them tuition in the classroom, ICT, vocational training and moral education. It therefore admits the largest number of juvenile delinquents. In order to identify juveniles with SpLD, it was important to collect data from the Senior Correctional Centre where formal education is offered, and where, in the absence of statistics on juveniles with SpLD, teachers would be able to identify such students based on known characteristics of SpLD.

It was also restricted to Accra due to limited time and the rather long process of receiving approval before data collection. Delinquents have migrated from several parts of Ghana.

3.3.1 Background of Senior Correctional Centre (Borstal Institute)

The Institute was established in May, 19th 1947 and dedicated to “save the young and careless boys” from a wasted life of crime, and ensure their reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration into the larger society, with the motto: “I shall rise again” (SCC report, 2015). In other words, the training at the institution was geared towards preparing the children for social inclusion that would make them less vulnerable in their communities.

The Borstal Institute, as it is popularly known, is under the jurisdiction of the Ghana Prisons Service, situated at Roman Ridge in Accra between James Camp Prison and the Prison Officers Training School. It is the only Institution/Centre of its kind in the country that admits juveniles between ages 13 - 17 years, and young offenders between 18 – 21 years who have passed through juvenile courts and sentenced for detention period ranging from one month to three years

depending upon the gravity of the offence. Field data revealed that though a juvenile is a child below 18 years, the Juvenile Justice Act, 2003 (Act 653) was amended to accommodate two categories of offenders: juveniles (13-17years), and young offenders (18-21years). This information is not clearly stated in the Act. However, according to the Act, it is “to provide a juvenile justice system, to protect the rights of juveniles, ensure an appropriate and individuals response to juvenile offenders, provide for young offenders and for connected purposes.” The Centre currently has 181 juvenile offenders. Offences include stealing, unlawful entry, robbery, rape, defilement, causing harm, indecent assault, aiding and abetting, narcotics, among others.

Rehabilitation programmes include: non-formal education (reading, writing and arithmetic); and formal education (Junior High School system). The Institute engages the inmates in ICT training and vocational training such as: welding, auto electrical and auto mechanic, general electronics, ceramics, carpentry, tailoring, shoemaking, bamboo craft, beads making/macramé as well as farming techniques.

3.3.2 Background of Junior Girls’ Correctional Centre

The Centre has been in operation since 1950 and is under the Department of Social Welfare with the mandate of reforming girls who have committed crimes. Crimes such as unlawful damage, prostitution, indecent assault, possession of stolen properties, stealing. It admits girls who are in conflict with the law, and have been sentenced to serve their time. The Centre has five (5) girls serving their sentence, and receives only a few number of delinquents as compared to the boy, which supports findings that boys commit more crimes than girls. The girls are between the ages of 15 and 18. The reformation of the girls include literacy education and vocational skill training such as hair dressing, sewing, catering and beads making. This is done by professional instructors, with a few doubling as Social Workers.

3.3.3 Background of Special Attention Project (SAP)

SAP is a Ghanaian Non-Governmental Organisation that improves the lives of out-of-school children who live in the streets of Accra as a result of SpLD. These children, as the organisation found out, are often in conflict with the law. The vision and mission of SAP are spelt below:

Vision: All children with SpLD in Ghana are included in mainstream education.

Mission: To take the lead in inclusion of children with SpLD in mainstream education in Ghana by doing research, awareness creation, training and advocacy on SpLD and prepare children who are out-of-school as a result of learning problems for mainstreaming.

3.4 Sampling Technics

Purposive sampling technique was used to focus on particular characteristics of the population that are of interest, to glean knowledge from individuals that have particular expertise, and which best enabled the researcher answer the research questions. This also opened doors to other participants and since there is a lack of practical evidence in this area. Again, other research in this area of study may take a long period of time before the findings can be uncovered.

3.5 Research Instrument

The data from respondents sampled for the study were collected using an open-ended interview guide that gave respondents the flexibility to express themselves. It also gave the researcher the flexibility in asking question in any order. Some questions may have even be added or missed as the interviewed progressed. Electronically recorded interviews were transcribed, while other hand-written interviews were presented for analysis. Electronic recording was not allowed at the SCC and the juvenile court.

Interviews were conducted in English, except for a few cases where mothers of the juveniles under the SAP project had to be interviewed in one of the local languages (Twi) because of low levels of formal education. The institutions of law and justice are heavily influenced by the English legal and justice system because of the country's history as a former British colony until 1957 (Arthur, 1996).

3.6 Methods of Data Collection

Qualitative research was employed for the study. Primary data were collected from the respondents using in-depth interviews. The data from the respondents sampled for the study were collected using open-ended interview guide that gave the respondents the flexibility to express themselves thoroughly.

The observation method of data collection was also used to study inmates and officers of the Senior Correctional Centre for boys (Borstal Institute). These were examined in their natural setting with regards to how juveniles suspected of SpLD were handled in class, as well as teacher-student relationship. This was recorded as a written description of the officers' and juveniles' actions.

The process involved an introductory letter from the Centre for Social Policy Studies, University of Ghana which was taken to the Department of Social Welfare for approval, before proceeding to the Junior Girls' Correctional Centre to set an interview date. There, the researcher requested to interview the Director, Programmes Manager, a Social Worker and a Probation Officer. After days of follow up the Director and Programmes Manager (who also doubled as a Social Worker) of the Centre were interviewed. There was no probation officer and therefore the researcher was referred to the Boys' Remand Home or the Juvenile Justice Court.

The researcher also requested to be introduced to former inmates suspected of having SpLD and their parents to be interviewed but it was impossible though the programmes manager confirmed they had such cases. At the time of data collection there were juveniles suspected of SpLD (autistic) but the researcher was not given the opportunity to interact with them for the reason that they may not be forthcoming with information due to timidity and fear. The Manager was unable to provide details of ex-inmates with SpLD and their parents for interview.

Further, the researcher went to the Boys' Remand Home to interview the probation officer and other officers but found out it was only a transitional place for the boys until their cases have been dealt with, and not a correctional centre.

The next setting for the study was the Special Attention Project (SAP) at Kaneshie. There, the programmes manager was interviewed. The juveniles at SAP however, were in conflict with the law and have been screened for SpLD though they had not been sentenced to any correctional facility. SAP targets such children and prepares them for mainstream education. The researcher was introduced to three parents of the juveniles for interviews but was limited to two because one parent was difficult to reach. After several attempts to set an interview date, the researcher settled for a phone interview because of time constraint. An interview was conducted with one juvenile and two parents.

The researcher again took an introductory letter to the Senior Correctional Centre for boys (Borstal Institute), unaware that the letter would have to be approved at the Ghana Prisons Headquarters before making contact with the Centre. One of the officers was helpful by introducing the researcher to an officer at the headquarters to assist and avoid the process of going back with a different letter addressed to the Prisons Headquarters. Though there was

assistance, it took the researcher more than a week to receive an approval letter. The researcher requested to interview two authorities, a social worker, a probation officer, three inmates suspected of having SpLD, two ex-mates also suspected of having SpLD and their parents. This was not possible because the Centre does not make follow ups on inmates after release and therefore had no contacts. There was no in-house probation officer, and one respondent doubled as the social worker of the Centre.

At the Senior Correctional Centre for boys, interviews were conducted with the Head of Education and Counselling Unit, Deputy Head of Education (who also doubled as a Social Worker), two officers, and two inmates who were suspected to have SpLD. One ex-inmate, who had been contacted by the Centre, was interviewed through phone at the time of writing the report. After the interviews the researcher sat through class sessions to observe behavioural patterns of some inmates suspected by officers of having SpLD. A total of 105 inmates were observed; Lower primary (35 inmates); Upper primary (30 inmates); JHS 2 (20 inmates); and Pre-SHS (20 inmates).

The last setting for the study was at the juvenile justice court. The researcher requested in the introductory letter to interview the senior social worker, a probation officer, a judge, and also sit through court proceedings for observation of how juveniles are handled, and also to find out if SpLD is considered when the juveniles are committed. After numerous visits the researcher was referred to a probation officer for the interview. The researcher was not given an opportunity to sit through court proceedings or speak with a judge because of the sensitive nature of juvenile cases.

The last respondent was the Education Coordinator at Special Education Division (Sp.Ed.) under GES to enquire about implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy.

3.7 Research Population

The study population included three (3) categories of respondents: stakeholders of the juvenile justice administration and correctional centres (seven respondents), including two inmates and one ex-inmate of the SCC for boys; Programmes manager at Special Attention Project (SAP), including one student and two parents of children with SpLD who have gone through the SAP programme; and a Coordinator for Inclusive Education, GES, Special Education Division. The reason for the choice of these categories of respondents was to enable the researcher find out the level of knowledge of SpLD among stakeholders, giving the opportunity to inmates, ex-inmates and students of SAP, together with parents share their experiences during the rehabilitation programme. In all, fifteen (15) respondents were interviewed, and 105 inmates were observed in a classroom setting.

3.8 Data Analysis

Descriptive and thematic analysis was used to analyse data and present results in this research. Relevant terms are defined below to give clarity to the process of analysis and presentation of results.

Theme: Data analysis and results were presented as themes. Themes are collective presentation of contributions that relate with identified objectives of this study. Three levels of themes emerged in the data analysis; these were global themes, organizing themes and basic themes.

Code: A captured unit of response that contributes to an area of relevance in the data analysis.

Basic theme: The simplest representation of contributions that relate to research objectives.

Organizing theme: The collection of two or more basic themes similar in contribution and direction to identified research objectives.

Global theme: A collection of two or more organizing themes that addresses a research objective.

Six emerging issues were identified from the interviews conducted. These emerging issues are;

1. Knowledge of Specific Learning Disability
2. Identification and screening of juveniles with SpLD at the correctional centres
3. Rehabilitation process at correctional centres
4. Impact of rehabilitation on juveniles
5. Reintegration process
6. Experiences of inmates, ex-inmates and parents at the correctional centre

Coding for thematic analysis was guided by the above listed emerging themes.

3.8.1 Transcription

Eleven (11) qualitative in-depth interviews and four (4) phone interviews were conducted with respondents. Voice files of all conducted interviews were transcribed and hand-written interviews were both presented for data analysis. Transcription made provision for word fillers and audible communication cues that could imply meaning to statements that were made during the stakeholder interviews. All interviews used the same symbols for transcription.

3.8.2 Respondent identification

All interviewed respondents were assigned identification symbols. Respondent identification consists of the letter “R” and an attached number. A total of 15 respondents (as at the time of writing this report) had been interviewed and identified. R1 and R2...R15 was used to represent respondents in profiling, coding frameworks and extracted sample quotes for illustration. Respondent identification numbers were ordered by the time transcribed interviews were turned in for data analysis.

3.8.3 Respondent Profiling

A table of general and detailed profile of respondents are presented in a table. Six variables were used to profile respondents. These are their name, gender, age, marital status, educational level, position/institution and number of years in position.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

The study conformed to the Ethics Committee for Humanities (ECH) of the University of Ghana rules. Participation in this research was completely voluntary. The selected participants had the right to end their participation or refuse to answer any questions asked during the interviews. There were no risks to participating in this study, and information was handled confidentially. Also, approved letters were received from the Ghana Prisons Headquarters and Department of Social Welfare respectively before interviews were carried out. Finally, respondents were allowed to read the Volunteer Agreement Form and signed before interviews begun. Thus, any respondent who wanted to drop out of the study had the free will to do so. Ethical considerations of the centres where the data was collected were also adhered to as mentioned in the data collection procedure discussed above.

3.10 Field experiences/Limitations

The researcher would have wished to interview ex-inmates with SpLD who had finished serving their sentence at the Junior Girls' Correctional Centre and Senior Correctional Centre for boys, including their parents. This was to share their experiences at the Centre, their views on the rehabilitation programs and their behaviour in school/communities after reintegration. Due to the inability of the centres to detect juveniles with SpLD, it was impossible. For that reason the researcher interviewed two parents and one juvenile from Special Attention Project (SAP). The juveniles at SAP are delinquent children who are going through rehabilitation, but not all the juveniles have been through correctional facilities.

Another reason was due to the lack of records on ex-inmates and non-existence of an aftercare services from the Centre. Interviews with inmates were also limited to two.

Out of these two, I encountered one juvenile who clearly had difficulties in communication and processing information. He was not forthcoming with answers, therefore I had to shorten the interview. Later on, one of the officers confirmed that he understood the questions, but due to effects of drug abuse, which he had been exposed to at a very early age, he had problems with communication. It was also stated that he was struggling with withdrawal syndrome, but was however an intelligent child.

Due to ethical regulations surrounding children in "rehabilitation," only limited access was possible. This means that only a short time was available since the process of obtaining approval at the Ghana Prisons Headquarters was longer than expected. Also, the researcher would have wished to sit through court proceedings to witness the process involved in juvenile trials, but due to the sensitivity of juvenile cases and limited time this was impossible to convince the

authorities in charge to have access.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on the data analysis and discussion of findings. The presentation of results was mainly based on the study objectives. This study aimed at investigating how juvenile delinquents with SpLD at the correctional centres are reintegrated into society after rehabilitation. Thus the specific research objectives were addressed in this chapter: demographic characteristics of respondents, the level of knowledge of Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) in correctional centres in Accra, forms of special educational programme targeted at juveniles with SpLD, and finally how juveniles at the correctional centres are reintegrated after rehabilitation. It is important to mention that in the presentation of results, the information obtained from participants were interposed with requisite quotations to expound their views on the research objectives. Accounts from one parent and one ex-inmate were also presented.

Overall 15 respondents were sampled for the study. That is the Director and Programmes Manager of the Junior Girls' Correctional Centre; Programmes Manager at Special Attention Project (SAP), including two parents and one student; Head of Counselling/Education Unit and Deputy Head of Education Unit; two officers/trained teachers at the Senior Correctional Centre for boys, including two inmates and one ex-inmate; one coordinator from the Special Education Division, GES; and one Probation Officer at Juvenile Justice Court.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of respondents in relation to their age, gender, educational status and marital status. As observed from the transcript, most of the

participants were male. Also it was observed that the minimum and maximum age was 15 and 57 years respectively. Most of the interviewee and discussants were above 40 years. Similarly, it was revealed that most of the respondents were married. The highest level of education attained by the participants was tertiary education and the least educational status of respondents was JHS.

Table 4.1 The demographics of respondents in absolute figures, 2017.

Respondents	Sex	Age	Marital status	Educational background	Position	No. of years in position
R1	F	57	Married	Tertiary	Director, GCC	7months
R2	F	45	Married	Tertiary	Programs Manager	2 years
R3	M	31	Married	Tertiary	Programs Manager	2years
R4	F	52	Married	Tertiary	Head, Counselling/Education Unit. SCC	2years
R5	M	47	Married	Tertiary	Dep. Head, Education Unit. SCC	2years
R6	M	55	Married	Tertiary	Tutor, SCC	11 years
R7	M	53	Married	Tertiary	Tutor, SCC	15 years
R10	F	40	Married	Tertiary	Coordinator of education, Sp.Ed. GES	2 years
R11	M	53	Married	Tertiary	Probation officer,	10years

					juvenile court	
Respondents	Sex	Age	Marital status	Educational background	-	No. of years in SCC
R8	M	15	single	BECE		11 months
R9	M	17	single	SSCE		1 year
Respondents	Sex	Age	Marital status	Educational background	-	-
R12	F	38	Single	-	Trader	
R13	F	42	Single	-	Trader	
R14	M	17	Single	JHS	Student/JHS leaver	
R15	M	25	Single	SHS	Sales representative	
Total	15					
Observation						
Class	Sex	Age	Number of inmates		-	-
Lower primary	M	12 - 24	35			

Upper primary	M	12 - 24	30			
JHS 2	M	15 - 21	20			
Pre-SHS	M	18 - 24	20			
Total			105			

Source: Field Data, 2017

4.3 Knowledge of Specific Learning Disability (SpLD)

This section sought to assess the knowledge of participants on Specific Learning Disability (SpLD). That is, to find out the level of knowledge of SpLD among stakeholders of the Juvenile Justice Administration and correctional centres.

This finding may be explained by the School Failure Rationale which implies that children with learning disabilities may simply have less intellectual ability to know their limits or control their behaviours, which leads to class room disruptions, removals and eventually suspension (Keilitz, 1986; Matta-Oshima et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2005). This means that lack of knowledge of SpLD and early detection by school personnel may motivate more punitive measures in an effort to curb this problem. Also, lack of knowledge of SpLD by stakeholders of the juvenile justice administration means that this form of ‘invisible’ disability may not be considered when juvenile delinquents are committed and rehabilitated, therefore the process of rehabilitation and reintegration of juvenile delinquents may not be effective. This finding demands further investigation because it is a serious concern, and also because the earlier a juvenile is involved with the juvenile justice courts, the more likely recidivism will occur.

From the data, it emerged that most of the respondents had some knowledge about SpLD. According to the respondents, a child may be very good in mathematics, however in terms of reading and writing that child may have a difficulty. Other forms of SpLD mentioned were attention deficit disorder, dyslexia (difficulty in reading) and difficulty in controlling behaviour. According to some participants, some of the children have attention deficit disorder, so it is very difficult for the child to pay attention. It is important to note that some respondents were only able to identify characteristics of SpLD upon further explanation by the researcher, but were initially not aware of its meaning or implications. These are some excerpts from interviewees:

“... When I talk about learning difficulties I’m talking about a specific area of difficulty that affects a child. So children with learning difficulties some of them are very good in say mathematics but in terms of reading and writing that’s where they have the difficulty. Others also have behavioural problems...” (R3, Programs Manager, SAP).

Another interviewee made this remark:

“...Yes. The type of disability you are talking about is learning disability. So some of them have reading problems, some of them it’s with figures, some too are autistic... The person might not be able to write...” (R1, Director, JGCC).

This is an excerpt from a parent:

“... Oh yes I know what it means. When I went to SAP it was explained to me that his problem was SpLD which means that he had a difficulty in learning. He was very clumsy and could not concentrate...” (R12, parent, single, trader).

This finding corresponds with the definition of SpLD in literature which states that SpLD is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written. This may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. Other shared characteristics include negative self- concepts, low frustration tolerance, poor academic problem solving, and weak social skills (Gallico et al, 1988; Winters 1997; White et al, 1990).

4.3.1 Relationship between Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) and juvenile delinquency

This subsection investigated the relationship between Specific Learning Disability and Juvenile Delinquency. From the data, it was revealed that there is a direct relationship between SpLD and juvenile delinquency. Most of the respondents believed strongly that there is a link. They explained that when a child has this disability, it becomes very difficult for the child to excel in school hence dropping out from school which may lead to juvenile delinquency. It was further explained that the child drops out of school because he is ridiculed by teachers and other students and therefore he loses his self-image and eventually drops out of school. Respondents realise the importance of screening juveniles for SpLD in order to identify those who need special educational programmes. Respondents were also of the view that delinquency is often based on socioeconomic factors, broken homes and lack of parental guidance. Yet, the lack of education is usually not considered. They believe that with special educational programs, the cycle of juvenile delinquency will be reduced, and will spark their career interests and provide new possibilities for the future. Here are some excerpts from some of the interviewees on the link between SpLD and juvenile delinquency:

“...So all the children we admit are children who as a result of learning disabilities have migrated onto the streets... So they are very vulnerable in terms of criminality so over the years we have been liaising with the courts...” (R3, Programs Manager, SAP).

“...My son never brought any report card home and so whenever I made a trip to the school his teachers would complain that he can’t even write his name, let alone answer questions. I knew he wasn’t intelligent that was why he couldn’t stay in school and always moved around with bad company. He has been arrested once...” (R14, parent, single, trader).

“...If the child sees that he has a difficulty and he is not getting any help, then he looks for things that amuse him. That is what gets him into delinquent activities. We need to tackle the issue of education seriously, as a factor of delinquency, instead of blaming only families for not caring for their children...” (R10, Coordinator, Sp.Ed. GES).

This foregoing findings support the numerous research which show that the presence of SpLD is high among delinquent children and therefore there is a link between SpLD and juvenile delinquency. Malmgren & Leone, (2000); Drakeford, (2001) also suggests that poor academic performance motivates them to commit crime. Most respondents, stakeholders of juvenile justice administration and educators, viewed juvenile delinquency as a particularly disturbing result of learning disabilities, therefore supports the school failure rationale theory. They further explain that the child’s difficulties in learning lead to classroom failure which, in turn, lead to a greater probability of delinquency. According to some respondents, while there are other factors to delinquency, a child is frustrated in school when he/she is lagging behind, which makes the child aggressive because his peers and teachers ridicule him/her. In effect, he/she will try to put on a tough skin to save face. When the child’s needs are not met, attention is sought by being

deviant. Consequently, they cannot control their behaviour and this affects all aspects of their lives. They finally drop out because they find fulfilment in the deviant behaviours they are involved in.

According to Murray (1976), the School Failure Rationale theory states that adults recognise the child as being a problem child; the child is naturally handicapped in achieving academic success; his peers perceive him as socially awkward and generally unattractive and ridicule him. When he is not able to face this labelling he rebels, and eventually drops out of school.

It is important to however, make the point that one of the respondents disagreed that there is link between SpLD and delinquency. The respondent argued that SpLD has nothing to do with juvenile delinquency, since the juveniles he comes into contact with in the juvenile court are very intelligent children who are well able to survive on their own in the streets, and often show amazing skills in making money. This also support findings that states that it is not automatically evident that a learning disability will cause delinquency. Hence, the reason why most theories that explain the causes of juvenile delinquency focus on many biological, psychological, and sociological variables such as low IQ, impulsivity, deviant family, lack of parental involvement, and disadvantaged neighbourhood.

4.4 Identification and Screening of juveniles for SpLD

This section sought to examine the screening process the correctional centres (Senior Correctional Centre for boys and Junior Girls' Correctional Centre) follow in identifying juveniles with SpLD. The screening process is aimed at coming out with an initial assessment that indicates whether there is the likelihood that the child has SpLD. From field data, officials from the correctional centres indicated that there is no form of screening for SpLD of juveniles.

Thus the correctional centres do not have any formal instrument in screening the children for SpLD when they are committed. However, treatment or rehabilitation plan at the correctional centres is only determined after a series of adjustment and career counselling and therefore SpLD is not taken into consideration. Below are some excerpts from some officials from the correctional centre:

“... We don't have any instrument to screen or detect such children but because I teach I know those with SpLD. They show disinterest, others leave the class but we try to keep them in class because it's our mandate to give them some form of education before they are reintegrated back into society. For this category we bring them here from 8-10am for the non-formal education before we take them to the vocational training centre. ...” (R5, Deputy Head of Education, SCC).

Another official indicated:

“...We are not able to pick such students out to give them any special education but when we identify them we counsel, and educate them. When they come we assess them before we place them in school...” (R6, tutor, SCC).

This contradicts literature (Mallett, 2011), which suggests that all children and youth, including those in public and private schools, and street children and those at correctional facilities, must be identified. Schools must locate and evaluate all children and youth with these disabilities and determine which are receiving special education services. In an interview with a SAP official it was indicated that there is a formal instrument used in screening children with SpLD and their outfit has trained many correctional centres in Ghana on how to use them. Their screening process includes testing a child's knowledge in primary colours; testing on numbers; writing of

numbers 1-10; knowledge of sounds and auditory; rhyme testing and fine motor control of children. Practical training skills is also given to parents and teachers, which they can use for this category of children in an attempt to retain their attention. An example of such training is to ensure that such children are not seated at the back of the class but instead seated in front in order to have direct contact with the teacher. Another way is to identify their interest areas in order to give them the opportunity to participate actively. This will reduce the energy level of children who suffer from Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD). This is an excerpt from the SAP interview:

“... So we take them through the eligibility scan to help us determine whether they have learning difficulty... So we also meet parents during PTA meetings to educate them on learning difficulties. We collaborate with GES to train teachers. So for instance we tell the teachers that such children they don't have to sit them at the back of the class but instead bring them forward...” (R3, Programs Manager, SAP).

Officials from the SCC noted that they have been trained on how to screen children for SpLD as well as designing treatment plans for their rehabilitation and reintegration, but data collected shows that this is not the practice. From field report, this is due to lack of formal instrument used in screening children and other facilities needed to facilitate the rehabilitation programme at the Centre, lack of qualified personnel in the field and overall coordination of programmes run by the Centre.

However, officials added that juveniles with learning disabilities are easily identified, therefore during class sessions more effort is directed towards juveniles who show characteristics of SpLD. The behaviours of some juveniles suspected of having SpLD was confirmed through

observation during class sessions in Lower primary (35 inmates); Upper primary (30 inmates); JSS 2 (20 inmates); and Pre – SHS (20). Although tutors showed much concern for such individuals during class sessions, it is important to note that, the actions of tutors could be attributed to the fact that they were under observation at that particular time, and does not necessarily confirm the general practice of the Centre. Effective screening of juveniles suggests that those detected with SpLD will have specialized education with proper coordination from the Special Education Unit of GES.

4.5 Rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents with SpLD

This section of the study reported on the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents with SpLD. The second objective of the study sought to find out if juvenile delinquents with SpLD at correctional centres are given any special education as part of the rehabilitation. Findings on general rehabilitation for juveniles as well as rehabilitation for juveniles with SpLD are presented in this section.

The main aim of the correctional centre is to reform juveniles in order to be reintegrated back into society as responsible citizens. When respondents were asked about how juveniles are rehabilitated, most of the respondents indicated that the rehabilitation programme is premised on education since most of the juveniles who are committed at the correctional centre are drop out and few also had no formal education. In an interview with an officer at the Senior Correctional Centre for boys, it was explained that the Centre runs two sections of educational program to cater for all juveniles:

- a) Formal education for JHS 1, 2, and 3: The Centre takes JHS and SHS leavers through further counselling as they (JHS) are prepared for higher education.

b) Non-formal education which consist of Lower and Upper primary: In order to determine where to place them, juveniles who are committed are placed in lower primary where they are assessed for a period of six months, regardless of the age and educational background. Inmates who excel are promoted to Upper primary, and later to JHS 1 where they are prepared and registered for BECE. Inmates who do not show any interest in continuing their education or do not show any improvement remain in Lower primary where they are equipped with literacy and numeracy skills from 8:00am to 10:00am, after which they are sent to the vocational training centre to learn a skill for the day. Vocational training includes welding, auto electrical and auto mechanic, general electronics, ceramics, carpentry, tailoring, shoemaking, bamboo craft, beads making/macramé as well as farming techniques. Those who excel are registered to write the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) examination (NVTI Grade 1). Before any inmate is assigned to any workshop to learn a trade of his choice, the inmate goes through career counselling to help him make an informed decision. Additionally, inmates have counselling sessions and resource persons who come daily as part of the reformation process.

It was also explained at the Junior Girls' Correctional Centre that the Centre is mainly for character reformation. They are engaged in literacy education to equip them for vocational training with the help of trained instructors. There is no formal education though some of them had some level of education before their arrest. Vocational training includes beads making, hair dressing, dress making and catering.

4.5.1 Special educational programmes for juveniles with SpLD

This subsection sought to find if there are any forms of special education which target juveniles with SpLD. Based on this, officials from the correctional centres were asked if juveniles with SpLD are given any special or individualised education. In response, most of the officials from the correctional centres intimated that the Centres have no form of special education for juveniles with SpLD. Some officials attributed this to the lack of resources and the lack of screening of juveniles. It was however revealed that one official at the Girl's correctional centre, on her own initiative, train instructors on how to handle juveniles who have difficulties. This is because she has had some training in dealing with such children, and is therefore able to identify them. Here are excerpts from some officials:

“... They are here for reformation, so we look at those who are good and help them further their education. Those who are interested in vocational skills training learn a skill, but we do not have specialized education...” (R4, Head, Counselling/Education Unit, SCC).

“... When they come, it is mainly for character reformation. We have hairdressing, dress making, beads making, and catering. Social workers are in charge of their character reformation. People come here to talk to them, council them, preach to them. So spiritually, physically, emotionally they are attended to. We don't offer formal education so we don't have specialized education for them ...” (R1, Director, JGCC).

An inmate had this to say:

“... They don't have any special education here for us, but I wish they had because I have difficulties in some subjects, especially Maths. I think the Centre has plans for that but there is no help from government...” (R9 SCC).

According to Carr et al., (1994); Sugai et al. (2000), practices have been employed to support meaningful special education programmes in correctional Centres. One of such is functional assessment. The functional assessment involves direct observations, interviews, record reviews from medical records, lesson plans, and individualized education plans. This information is used to understand patterns of the child's challenging behavior: what happens before the occurrence of behavior, what it looks like and what happens after.

This method has however been employed by SAP in providing special education for juveniles, while the correctional centres lack the capabilities and professionals to practice this method.

In an interview with an official at SAP, it emerged that they target juvenile delinquents with SpLD and provide them with individualized education according to their type of learning disabilities. Aside the academic work which is run from Monday to Friday, the NGO also exposes them to vocational training because the organisation acknowledges the unique talents that these juveniles have and therefore help them to develop those skills. Some of the vocational training include batik tie & dye, photography, barbering, shoe making, carpentry, beads making, and also computer training. Also from the interview, it was revealed that since these children are used to street life and are therefore difficult to retain in class, the organisation provides them with breakfast and lunch to motivate them to stay in class. They are also taken through basic home keeping such as cleaning, washing, and basic skills they need in life.

SAP collaborates with the Methodist School at Kaneshie and other Charity Organisations who enrol juveniles with SpLD at no cost when they are ready to go back to school. Also, juveniles with interest in vocational training have the opportunity to go for apprenticeship programmes through NGOs whose mandates are in line with SAP, or deal with children. NGOs such as Chance For Children (CFC) and Catholic Action for Street Children (CAT) have their own mandate but provide some kind of support for street children. The organisation does monitor the progress of the juveniles they send for enrolment. This initiative is only targeted at street children with SpLD, and who are constantly in conflict with the law, but does not include juvenile delinquents at correctional centres. This is an excerpt from SAP:

“... The idea is to prepare them and re-integrate them into mainstream education. We provide them with individualised education according to their disorder ...” (R3, Programs Manager, SAP).

This correlates with literature by Leone (1991) that also uses functional curriculum as a special education mechanism. It states that educational curriculum is one that should meet a student's individual needs with focus on social, daily living, and vocational skills. The correctional centres were also found to provide this type of education to juveniles.

4.5.2 How juveniles cope with rehabilitation process

From observation and interviews with officers at the correctional centres including the NGO (SAP), juveniles cope well with the rehabilitation process though respondents confess that they are difficult to deal with. At SAP, there are professionals in their field who know how to handle this category of children, so though they may pose some challenges, they have the skills needed to control and shape their behaviour. Observations at the SCC (during class session) and SAP

(approximately 15 children at the time of data collection) confirmed this finding. At the SCC, inmates associated well with their instructors in and out of class as compared to people's negative perceptions of what happens at these correctional centres. Inmates were free to share their ideas with tutors and also moved around freely though movement is restricted for safety reasons. For instance, during class lesson, inmates from Form 2 class asked to be permitted to take a break by weeding the compound for an hour because they were losing concentration and this was granted. From an onlooker who is not aware of this kind of flexibility, this may look like a punishment. According to officers at the SCC, public perceptions are that these children are frequently punished for being stubborn. From observations and interactions with inmates, this was contrary to such views. An interviewee expressed this view:

“... They respond well. The thing is that they need love and that is what we are giving them. Because as you are counselling them they get to the realization that they do not have to go into those activities again...” (R1, Director, JGCC).

“...We don't punish them; we go according to the law. Those you see over there weeding are the form 2s who said they were tired of sitting and wanted to stretch their legs by weeding...” (R7, tutor, SCC).

Some officials however lamented that some of the inmates do everything possible to frustrate them, because of the perception they had towards the Centre before being committed. Perceptions include facing corporal punishment for the least provocations as they are already aware that they are delinquents. According to the officials some inmates give them tough time but they are still willing to help them. These are excerpts of some of the experiences and challenges shared by managers and officers at the correctional centres:

“... Some of them have a difficulty in pronouncing certain words that children their age should be able to pronounce at their age but you can see that they are not able to. So I try to constantly be in touch with them because I know their behaviour...” (R5, Deputy Head of Education Unit, SCC).

“... When you come here we don't treat you according to your offense... a radio station did some random interview and they said that the correctional centre is a place for corporal punishment, but that is not true...” (R2, Programs Manager, JGCC).

“... These children, some of them just want to frustrate you. Some of the inmates had their own perception about this place before they came. They imagined that they would be whipped at the least provocation and be called names since they know they are called 'nkwarabone' (stubborn children). But when they come they realise that it's different. ...”
(R7, tutor, SCC).

4.5.3 Challenges with rehabilitation

In spite of the enormous contributions that were found to be associated with rehabilitation of juveniles, some factors were found to hinder the smooth execution of the rehabilitation among juveniles and those with SpLD. The challenges were related to the different behavioural problems juveniles bring to the Centre, and the ignorance of some parents. Other factors are inadequate logistics, lack of buildings, financial constraints among others. The challenges that impedes rehabilitation among juveniles have been discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

- a) Lack of logistics: The correctional centres have inadequate furniture, desks, teaching and learning materials, stationery as well as offices. The teaching staff are equally inadequate and are also handicapped in supply of teaching materials to go about

their lessons and therefore it is pathetic to know that inmates who are given tuition at the school premises (SCC) are not supplied with adequate learning materials to go through their lessons.

b) Lack of offices: The correctional centres does not have enough offices to accommodate its staff and due to this, most personnel are compelled to discharge their duties without permanent offices, a situation which affects the smooth administration at the Centre. For instance, it was observed that the counselling unit at the SCC which is supposed to be a confidential place for the counsellor and his clients only, is equally shared by other staff.

c) Financial constraints: Due to the non-availability of financial resources, some of the Centre's line of programmes aimed at facilitating reformation and rehabilitation processes are always hindered. For instance, in the area of education it is always difficult to get sponsorship for the candidates who excel in their Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) to further their education. This was confirmed in an interview with one of the ex-inmates who has completed Senior High School and wants to further his education but hasn't been able to find any scholarship. According to him he still makes follow up visits to the SCC for feedback on scholarship opportunities. Again, lack of adequate funds makes it difficult to secure learning kits for most of the inmates after undergoing their apprenticeship at the workshop.

d) Though the government is doing its best to feed the inmates, the centre has to rely mostly on the support of philanthropists, NGOs and the general public to help supplement the ration and to provide basic needs of the inmates. E.g., food items, toiletries etc.

e) Inadequate resources: According to the Coordinator for the Education Unit at the SCC, the reason for the inadequate resources for the educational unit in particular is because they do not fall under the Ghana Education Service (GES), for which reason they do not receive facilities delivered to all government schools. This, he believes, also accounts for inadequately trained teachers. The Centre however hopes that it would change in the near future.

This finding supports literature with regards to challenges correctional facilities face. For example, according to Wolford (2000), one difficulty surrounding the provision of education services and special education services in correctional centres is the lack of administrative costs and funding governing education of juvenile delinquents committed at these facilities. This confirms that challenges faced by correctional centres are not peculiar to Ghana.

4.5.4 How challenges are addressed

According to managers and officers interviewed at the correctional centres, the Centre collaborates with NGOs and Faith Based Organisations for support, though still not adequate, whilst they wait on government to respond to their needs. With regards to challenges with juveniles with SpLD, it was revealed at the JGCC that though staff are not sensitised enough on the effect of SpLD on juvenile delinquents, the programmes manager takes the initiative to educate the staff on how to handle girls with learning disabilities because she has had some experience with them in the past.

An interview at GES, Special Education Division (Sp.ED.) to inquire about the implementation of the Inclusive Education policy (IE) which was launched in 2016, indicated that though they are aware of the activities carried out at the correctional centres with regards to education, the Centres as an entity must make their challenges known to GES in order to be assisted, rather than employing officers with no training background. This would also give all the correctional centres the opportunity to be included in the nationwide sensitisation, training and screening of all school children for SpLD being carried out by the Special Education Division of GES.

Additionally, the officers at the SCC suggested that the educational programmes at the correctional centres should be included in the monitoring and oversight activities of special education services that are run by GES. This is far from reality with regards to the correctional centres in the country since they receive only minimum support from the government.

Below are some views of respondents:

“...Now we want to be under GES. We are not under them and because of that we are not enjoying the facilities other government schools are enjoying, though we run it like the government schools and register the children for BECE. We are supposed to have trained teachers but we are all not trained teachers apart from one Officer. The rest of us do it because we are passionate about these children and want to help...” (R5, Deputy Head of Education Unit, SCC).

“...We have meetings with the teachers, we explain to them that some of the children have disabilities but it not physical for you to see. So when the need arises we tell the families about this disability so that they are aware and not rain insults on their children...” (R2, Programs Manager, GCC).

“...We explain to them that it’s not spiritual and that it’s something that they can overcome...” (R3, Programs Manager, SAP).

4.5.5 Impact of rehabilitation on juveniles

This subsection sought to examine the impact of rehabilitation on juveniles. Thus the study also sought to find out if there is a positive or negative impact of rehabilitation on juveniles. From the data collected, there is a positive impact of the rehabilitation on juveniles. Most of the respondents indicated that there has been some positive impact of the rehabilitation and this has enabled the Centres to successfully reintegrate the juveniles. Data gathered at the Junior Girls’ Correctional Centre indicated that 19 girls have been successfully rehabilitated and reintegrated over the past two years. Similarly, at the Senior Boys’ Correctional Centre, 21 inmates wrote the just ended 2017 Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), the main examination that is used to give students admission into secondary or vocational schools in Ghana.

However, an officer at the juvenile court strongly disagreed with the assertion that rehabilitation has had a positive impact on the juveniles. He has served on the Discharge Board, and can contend that rehabilitation programmes have not had any impact on the juveniles at the Senior Boys’ Correctional Centre over the past ten years:

“...These boys count the months to the release date from the day they are committed, in order to go back to the activities they left behind. Meanwhile as they are here, they share ideas in their dormitories and are waiting to try these new ideas once they are out. They have formed their perceptions already and nothing can change their way of thinking. And even worse, the Centre lacks the necessary resources to work. It’s a system failure. The education provided there is no education at all. You cannot convince me that they have

trained teachers, or social workers, or probation workers, and even professionals, let alone convince me that they can identify children with SpLD..." (R11, probation officer, juvenile justice court).

4.6 Reintegration of juvenile delinquents with SpLD into society

This section sought to find out how both juvenile delinquents and those with SpLD are reintegrated into society after rehabilitation at the correctional centres. Also this section addressed the challenges of reintegration and tried to find out if aftercare services (post-reintegration) are provided after reintegration.

The correctional centres are mandated to ensure the safe custody and welfare of the juvenile delinquents and also ensure that they reform, rehabilitate and reintegrate them back into society. Hence, the successful reintegration of the inmates into society depends largely on how various stakeholders in the society appreciate the role of the Centre in transforming the inmates into responsible citizens. Respondents at the correctional centres discussed how the reintegration process takes place after rehabilitation.

From the data, it was revealed that parents who come to visit their children at the correctional centres are taken through some form of counselling to prepare them to accept their wards during the reintegration since they have no criminal records after release. Some parents are also encouraged to accept their wards since the period of transition from the Centre to the society is very crucial and if not handled well will push the children back to criminality. This is done through phone calls since it has been difficult bringing parents together for counselling sessions.

Also from the data, it was revealed that inmates at the SCC are enrolled into secondary schools, specifically day schools, which they attend daily unescorted. They also have the option of

choosing the school of their choice, which includes St Thomas Aquinas, St Francis Xavier, Accra Technical School and a few others. When officers were asked if juveniles have ever attempted to escape, the response was that they have had only a few cases where inmates attempted to escape but were traced and brought back. According to officers at SCC, inmates are allowed to go to school unescorted because it is believed that this is part of the reintegration process. In other words, they are being trained to be independent individuals, and also to feel a part of the community and mainstream again. Inmates who are given this opportunity have been assessed for good behaviour and character and therefore the Centre has the right to discontinue any inmate found to be of bad influence to other school children. The Centre boasts of one inmate who is now the head boy of St Francis Xavier School because of good character. Enrolment of juveniles into public schools prior to release is however based on the interest of the juvenile to further his education.

With regards to how the public schools perceive the inmates, respondents at the correctional centre pointed out that the inmates' identities are protected, therefore information on the inmates are made confidential. This confirms that the Centre is careful not to go against section 3(2) of the Juvenile Justice Act (ACT 653) 2003, which states that a person who commits an offence of releasing any information for publication that may lead to the identity of the juvenile is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding 250 penalty units or imprisonment not exceeding 12 months or to both.

Moreover, before an inmate is discharged, the inmate is presented before a discharge board where he is assessed. The discharge board consists of the Officer in Charge (OIC), the chaplain, the counsellor, a social worker, and a probation officer. A discharge report is then forwarded to

the National/District Social Welfare Department for release. The family of the inmate is contacted and the juvenile reintegrated.

Managers from the JGCC, indicated that the reintegration process is similar to that of the Senior Correctional Centre. The rehabilitation does not include formal education and therefore enrolment into schools is not considered after reintegration. Juveniles are provided with seed money to set up their own businesses after training at the vocational schools during the reintegration process. Juveniles without families or whose families are unwilling to take them back are sent back to the conviction points in order to be assisted by the district social welfare. A number of them are sent to NGOs who provide for street children.

It is important to mention that the study revealed that the above process of reintegration at the Junior Girls' and Senior Boys Correctional Centres do not take into consideration the reintegration of juveniles with SpLD. This can be attributed to the fact that the juveniles at the correctional centres are not identified and screened for SpLD and therefore there are no specialized programmes targeted at this category of juveniles. Again, there is no provision in the Juvenile Justice Act (ACT 653) 2003, for the rehabilitation and reintegration of juvenile delinquents in correctional centres with SpLD.

According to literature, reintegration has been the most neglected component of correctional education programmes for juveniles with SpLD. No agency wants to accept responsibility for providing transition and after services (Leone, 1991; Mallet, 2011). The reintegration process in correctional centres is very crucial, therefore the movement of juveniles with learning disability from correctional centres to the community and schools is a task that requires coordinated efforts by the correctional facilities, educators, families, probation officers, and after-care professionals.

The reintegration programme at correctional centres does not correlate with the standard practice from literature.

However, in an interview with an officer at the juvenile court, though the probation officer is supposed to be involved in the reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of the juvenile, what is practiced is contrary to the laid down procedures.

4.6.1 Challenges of reintegration

Though some of the juveniles (without SpLD) have been successfully reintegrated into society, there still exist a number of juveniles who are not able to be effectively reintegrated due to the challenges encountered by the correctional centres. A number of challenges were identified from data collected and they are outlined below:

Most of the juveniles, especially the boys, relapse back to criminality for the fact that most relatives are not ready to accept their wards. Sometimes this is due to the inability to trace the whereabouts of the relations of inmates.

- Inmates lie about their relations because they do not want to go back to them since most of them had left home at the time of arrest.
- Inmates are fed three times a day, and therefore are more likely to be fed and supported for the first two weeks of their release, after which some are left to fend for themselves. This may lead to recidivism.
- Also it is difficult for some parents to accept them back. In their communities they are sometimes discriminated against when neighbours become aware that they have been to a correctional centre. This may also be due to the perceptions people have about juveniles

sentenced to correctional centres. One respondent at the correctional centre perceived that when things go missing from their communities, neighbours sometimes point fingers at these juveniles and label them as “coming from prison.” They feel unwanted and labelled as criminals, yet they want to belong.

It is very difficult for the correctional centre and some NGOs like SAP to support the families of the juveniles economically because it is beyond their mandate.

These are excerpts from the interviews:

“...Some parents will not come. They will say ‘ooh that child is a bad child, if only you knew what they are capable of.’ Because of their behaviour their families and neighbours reject them and do not want them close to them. Also, parents sometimes spend the funds allocated to their children to cater for their needs after release...” (R2, Programmes Manager, JGCC).

“...Recidivism is rare, but when things get difficult and they do not receive meals and support anymore they go back to the delinquent behaviours. Sometimes you can see from the demeanour of parents that they are not happy to receive them back...” (R5, Deputy Head of Education Unit, SCC).

4.6.2 Aftercare services (post-reintegration)

This sub-section sought to find out if juveniles from the correctional centres are provided with aftercare services after reintegration. The results obtained from interviews revealed that stakeholders are confused as to who is responsible for the provision of aftercare services or make follow ups. According to the officers at the Senior Correctional Centre, the Centre is only responsible for rehabilitation and reintegration. Their mandate ends after reintegration. Some

officers noted that the Centre does not have the resources to follow up on the juveniles after reintegration. Officers at the SCC believe it is the duty of the probation officers to play that role. On the contrary, the probation officer interviewed also argues that the correctional centres are mandated to make the follow ups.

Different from what is happening at the SCC, managers at the JGCC and SAP, confirmed that Social Workers at the Centre are actively involved in the provision of aftercare services for juveniles because this is very critical for the success of reintegration.

Literature points to the fact that the aftercare services provided for juveniles with SpLD after reintegration is another important component ignored by most correctional centres. Leone (1985) emphasize that interagency communication and cooperation must be established whereby juvenile court judges make sentencing and placement decisions that take into account the youthful offender's special education needs. Both educational records and the youthful offender are transferred into and out of correctional education programmes; and aftercare programmes linked to the correctional education programme and the public schools to provide continuous and meaningful special education services. This is contrary to what the correctional centres, including the juvenile justice administration practice.

Again, as stated earlier, correctional centres are not able to fully support ex-inmates after reintegration due to financial constraints and lack of support. The poor coordination between stakeholders of the juvenile justice administration, correctional facilities, the GES, and the confusion about who is responsible for effective reintegration and aftercare services accounts for this.

Without this, the likelihood that juveniles will go back to reoffending is high, because the juvenile has “too much time on his or her hands,” and lack the marketable skills to make a living, according to the School Failure Rationale.

4.7 Shared experiences of inmates/ex-inmates with SpLD and parents.

As part of the study, the researcher interviewed two inmates and one ex-inmate from the SCC to share their experiences at the correctional centre. Parents of juveniles with SpLD at SAP were also interviewed for their experiences. Some of the interviews are shared below:

4.7.1 Parent 2(R12): 38 years, trader, and single parent.

My son is 16 years. He doesn't go to school. I have changed schools several times and every time I would pay the fees, books, and everything, he would go for a week and stop. He run away from home and I received a call from SAP that he had come there and so they were helping him. I went for him, not to stop him but for him to go to school from home. He run away again and this time because he knew the NGO would call me he didn't go there. He had been living in the streets. He came home some time ago and he told me he cleans window screens of cars but my problem is why he prefers to live in the streets and always in bad company, when he is not homeless. He had been arrested once with these boys but he was bailed out. He told me that the program at SAP is useful, but I don't know why he doesn't go. SAP informed me some screening was done and they concluded he has SpLD. He doesn't have any interest in school at all and they said it's difficult for him to read and write. The NGO said they will help him. In fact they have found an acting school for him, where he is supposed to attend after class sessions at SAP, but he is always absent. He comes home sometimes. I do not know what his problem is anymore.

4.7.2 Ex-inmate (R15): 25 years, Sales representative.

I was admitted at the Centre in 2010 for assault, and I served for three years. I had completed JHS but did not pass well. I was having a difficult time with mathematics in school, but though I was far behind, I stayed in class anyway because I am passionate about my education.

I had been home for let's say a year before the arrest. I was just playing with friends in my neighbourhood, with fire actually, and I didn't know it would cause such harm on anybody. A friend was holding a cigarette that we were all playing with. I lighted it while it was in his mouth, and the next thing I knew there was fire all over him. I wasn't in bad company. We were friends. I was arrested and brought to the Centre to serve my sentence.

While here the Centre allowed me to rewrite BECE. I continued to Accra Technical Training Centre to read Building Construction Technology.

The treatment at the Centre was ok as compared to the perception I had about the place before going.

Movement is restricted but we had a good relationship with the officers, they didn't treat us like "bad boys." If you abide by the rules and regulations you will never get into trouble with anyone. The food wasn't up to standard but everything was ok. I went to school every day unescorted because they trusted me. They normally would assess your behavior before you are allowed. If you show any sign of misbehaviour you would be withdrawn from school. Like I said, I am passionate about school and so I never saw the need to run away, though I was tempted some times, because all my friends were out

there. The administrators of the school knew about my background but no one discriminated against me.

We went through counselling every day, and in a day we could have about five church service because people came in to talk to us and counsel us.

When I was here my father never came to visit though visiting allowed. He was the one who told the police to take me where ever they wanted. I felt abandoned but the Centre was like a home to me. Even after I was released he never showed up. I went home to Winneba in the Central Region on my own and life has been normal since then. At home, I don't think my neighbours knew where I had been. Even if they knew, I wouldn't know. I am a quiet person and was always in my room and so I never experienced any form of discrimination.

I recently got a job with an insurance company. I receive commission as an officer. I really want to go back to school and so I am looking for help. I want to be a role model to the boys at the Centre. The Officers are always happy to see me. They tell me that many of my friends have graduated to adult prison. I go there to follow up on scholarship opportunities to enable me further my education, but I haven't found one yet.

I hope to find some money to enable me go to the University next year.

4.8 Discussions from analysis

The analysis is further discussed in this section in relation to the objectives of the study.

4.8.1 Knowledge of SpLD in correctional centres.

The first objective sought to assess the knowledge of SpLD among stakeholders of Juvenile Justice Administration and correctional centres. It emerged that most of the respondents had some knowledge about SpLD and were able to define it as having a difficulty in a specific area in

terms of education. Some gave an example that a child may be very good in mathematics, however in terms of reading and writing that child may find it difficult. An inmate interviewed also had a learning difficulty in mathematics, though he was unable to define or identify the characteristics. Another characteristic of SpLD was given as attention deficit disorder and difficulty in controlling behaviour. Some parents also made the point that their wards had trouble paying attention (ADHD), and could not read (dyslexia).

Some participants also revealed that there is a direct relationship between Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) and juvenile delinquency. They explained that when a child has this disability, it becomes very difficult for the child to excel in school hence dropping out from school which leads to juvenile delinquency. They added that it is important to revise the treatment plan targeted at juveniles, to screen them for SpLD in order to identify those who need special educational programmes. According to some respondents, this is an eye opener, because delinquency is usually addressed looking at factors such as poor parental guidance or supervision.

The objective one also sought to find out the screening process involved in identifying juveniles with SpLD. Officials from the correctional centre indicated that there is no form of screening for SpLD of juveniles, and do not have any formal instrument in screening the children for SpLD when they are committed at the Centre. Some officials from the Centre quickly noted that they have been trained by SAP to enable them identify juveniles with SpLD, though lack of resources make it impossible to screen them.

An example of such training is to ensure that such children are not seated at the back of the class but instead seated in front in order to have direct contact with the teacher. Another way is to identify their interest areas in order to give them the opportunity to participate actively.

4.8.2 Special education at correctional centres

Objective two was to find out if there are any form of special educational programmes for juveniles at the correctional centres. Most of the officials from the correctional centre intimated that the Centre has no form of special education for juveniles with SpLD. Some officials attributed this to the lack of resources and the lack of detection and screening of juveniles. It was however revealed that one official at the Junior Girl's Correctional Centre, on her own initiative, train instructors on how to handle juveniles who have difficulties. This is because she has had some training in dealing with such children.

The Special Attention Project (SAP), however targets juvenile delinquents with SpLD and provides them with individualised education according to their type of learning disabilities. Aside the academic work, the NGO also exposes them to vocational training because the organisation acknowledges the unique talents that these juveniles have and therefore help them to develop those skills. Some of the vocational training include batik tie & dye, photography, barbering, shoe making, carpentry, beads making, and also computer training.

Some factors were nonetheless found to hinder the smooth execution of the rehabilitation among juveniles and those with SpLD. The challenges were related to the different behavioural problems juveniles bring to the Centre, and the ignorance of some parents. Other factors include inadequate logistics, lack of buildings, financial constraints among others.

The Centres have inadequate furniture, desks, teaching and learning materials, stationery as well as offices. The teaching staff are equally inadequate and are also handicapped in the supply of teaching materials to go about their lessons and therefore it is pathetic to know that inmates who are given tuition at the school premises (SCC) are not supplied with adequate learning materials to go through their lessons.

The Centre does not have enough offices to accommodate its staff and due to this, most personnel are compelled to discharge their duties without permanent offices, a situation which affects the smooth administration at the Centre. For instance, it was observed that the counselling unit at the SCC which is supposed to be a confidential place for the counsellor and her clients only, is equally shared by other staffs.

Due to the non-availability of financial resources, some of the Centre's line of programmes aimed at facilitating reformation and rehabilitation processes are always hindered. For instance, in the area of education it is always difficult to get sponsorship for the candidates who excel in their BECE and WASSCE to further their education. This was confirmed in an interview with one of the ex-inmates who has completed Senior High School and want to further his education but he hasn't been able to find any scholarship. According to him he still makes follow up visits to the SCC for boys for feedback on scholarship opportunities. Again, lack of adequate funds makes it difficult to secure learning kits for most of the inmates after undergoing their apprenticeship at the workshop.

With regards to how these challenges are being addressed, the Centres collaborates with NGOs and Faith Based Organisations for support, though still not adequate, whilst they wait on government to respond to their needs. With regards to challenges with juveniles with SpLD, it

was revealed at the JGCC that though staff are not sensitised enough on the effect of SpLD on juvenile delinquents, the programmes manager takes the initiative to educate the staff on how to handle girls with learning disabilities.

The education coordinator at GES, Special Education Division (Sp.Ed.) believes strongly that though the SCC is not under GES, the Centre as an organisation should make their challenges known to GES in order to be given assistance. It is however worrying that the senior Correctional Centre for boys, the country's only functioning Correctional Centre for juveniles, is not given the needed resources to effectively run the rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.

4.8.3 Reintegration of juveniles with SpLD

Objective three sought to investigate how juveniles with SpLD are reintegrated into society after rehabilitation. It was revealed that parents who come to visit their children are taken through some form of counselling to prepare them to accept their wards during the reintegration since they have no criminal records after release. They are also encouraged to accept their wards since the period of transition from the Centre to the society is very crucial and if not handled well will push the boys back to criminality.

The study revealed that the process of reintegration at the Junior Girls' and Senior Boys Correctional Centres do not take into consideration the reintegration of juveniles with SpLD. This was found to be the unavailability of the necessary mechanisms put in place to identify and screen juveniles for specialised educational programmes.

It was also gathered that the probation officer is supposed to be involved in the reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of the juvenile, as a mandate of the SCC. What is practiced is contrary to the laid down procedures.

Some of the challenges encountered by the correctional centres were also discussed. It was revealed that most of the juveniles, especially the boys, relapse to criminality for the fact that most relatives are not ready to accept their wards. Sometimes this is also due to the inability to trace the whereabouts of the relations of juveniles.

Again, juveniles are fed three times a day, and enjoy basic amenities at the correctional centres. When they are not provided for upon release, some are left to fend for themselves. This may lead to recidivism.

Some of the juveniles also face discrimination from their communities when their neighbours become aware that they have been to a correctional centre. This may be due to the perceptions people have about juveniles who have been to these correctional centres. Fingers are pointed at them when things go missing. One respondent at the correctional centre perceived that when things go missing from their communities, neighbours sometimes point fingers at these juveniles and label them as “coming from prison.” They feel unwanted and labelled as criminals, yet they want to belong.

It is also very difficult for the correctional centres and SAP to support the families of the juveniles economically because it is beyond their mandate. All of these factors may push the juvenile back into criminality.

With regards to provision of aftercare services for juveniles, results obtained from the transcript revealed that stakeholders are confused as to who is responsible for the provision of aftercare

services or make follow ups. According to the officers at the Senior Correctional Centre, the Centre is only responsibly for rehabilitation and reintegration.

Officers at the correctional centre believe it is the duty of the probation officers to play that role. On the contrary, the probation officer interviewed also argues that the correctional centres are mandated to make the follow ups. This only confirms the lack of coordination between stakeholders of the juvenile justice administration and correctional facilities.

Based on the theory of the School Failure Rationale, the findings reveal that stakeholders recognize the link between SpLD and juvenile delinquency. Respondents realize the importance of screening juveniles for SpLD in order to identify those who need special educational programmes, rather than putting all of them together. Respondents were also of the view that delinquency is often addressed based on socioeconomic factors, broken homes and lack of parental guidance. Yet, the lack of education is usually not considered. This, they believe, will spark their career interests and provide new possibilities for the future. They also believe that with special educational programmes, the cycle of juvenile delinquency will be reduced.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study's objectives and the conclusion based on the findings. Policy recommendations are suggested to strengthen the existing policies on persons with disability (PWD) in Ghana.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This study examined the social reintegration of juvenile delinquents with SpLD. Fifteen (15) in-depth interviews were conducted and 105 in-mates of the SCC were observed. The study was conducted at the Junior Girls' Correctional Centre (officials), Senior Correctional Centre for boys (officials and two inmates), juvenile court (probation officer), SAP (programmes manager), Special Education Division (Sp.Ed.) of GES (education coordinator), two parents of juveniles and one student at SAP, and an ex-inmate of the SCC. The following were outcomes based on the three objectives of the study.

The first objective sought to assess the knowledge of SpLD among stakeholders of the Juvenile Justice Administration. From the findings, most stakeholders have knowledge of SpLD and its effects on juveniles. Officials from the correctional centres indicated that there is no form of screening for SpLD of juveniles, adding that though they are trained by SAP occasionally to enable them identify juveniles with SpLD, lack of resources and the necessary facilities make it impossible to screen them. According to them, even if screening is done, they may not be able to provide any assistance to them.

Objective two of the study was to investigate if there are special educational programmes for juveniles with SpLD at correctional centres. Most of the officials from the correctional centres intimated that the Centres have no form of special education for juveniles with SpLD. Some officials attributed this to the lack of resources to identify those with SpLD and screen them in order to provide them with special educational needs. However, at the SCC, rehabilitation is done through counselling, formal and non-formal education. Those who do not show any interest in education learn a vocational skill. At the JGCC, juveniles are taken through counselling, literacy skills, and vocational skills. No formal education is provided for these juveniles though some of them had attained basic level education before the arrest. Lack of adequate facilities account for this. However, at both Centres, respondents added that they are able to identify juveniles with some form of SpLD and assist them in their own way, such as being patient with them and engaging them constantly in order not to lose their attention.

Challenges of rehabilitation were discussed. Some of the factors found to hinder the smooth execution of the rehabilitation among juveniles and those they could identify as juveniles with SpLD were related to the different behavioural problems juveniles bring to the Centre, and the ignorance of some parents. Other factors were inadequate logistics, lack of buildings, financial constraints among others. With regards to how these challenges are being addressed, the Centres collaborates with NGOs and Faith Based Organisations for support, though still not adequate, whilst they wait on government to respond to their needs.

The third objective of the study was to investigate how juveniles with SpLD are reintegrated into society. From the findings, juveniles with or without SpLD are counselled before release. Few juveniles at the SCC are reintegrated into mainstream education but there is no consideration for juveniles with SpLD. At SAP, preparing juvenile delinquents with SpLD for mainstream

education is their mandate. Those who learn a vocational trade at both the SCC and JGCC are given seed money to open their own shops to practice the skills acquired.

It was revealed that parents of juveniles are taken through some form of counselling to prepare them to accept their wards during the reintegration since they have no criminal records after release. They are also encouraged to accept their wards since the period of transition from the Centres to the family and community is very crucial in reducing recidivism.

Though the Centres have been successful with reintegration, they still face a number of challenges such as parents unwilling to accept their children back; released juveniles being discriminated against by neighbours; lack of continuous support after release which causes them to relapse into criminality.

5.3 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate how juvenile delinquents with SpLD are reintegrated into society. Using effective quality education for incarcerated juveniles as an intervention is a practice most countries around the world such as the USA have adopted to address the problem of delinquency, because it has been proven by research that SpLD is closely linked with delinquency. This study however revealed that incarcerated juveniles with learning disabilities are not receiving the specialised education that they are entitled to, because correctional centres fail to identify such juveniles and screen them for SpLD. With no structured mechanism designed for an effective reintegration, reoffending remains the same for majority of juveniles with SpLD.

The Centre on crime, communications and culture (1997), assert that higher levels of academic competence are associated with lower rates of recidivism. This means that countries that are

serious about reducing cases of delinquent activities or youth crime and graduation to adult prison, will ensure an effective educational programmes in Juvenile Correctional Centres. Though these steps will not deter all youth from further troubles, I sincerely believe that early detection and screening, and a well-developed educational programme for juveniles with or without SpLD in schools and Juvenile Correctional Centres will ensure fewer delinquent behaviours and recidivism.

5.4 Recommendations.

On the basis of findings from this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Staff training must be available to help them work effectively with incarcerated juveniles with learning disabilities and its characteristics such as behaviour problems and difficulty in following instructions. Otherwise their behaviour may be interpreted as insubordination or misbehaviour that permits disciplinary sanctions and be excluded from correctional educational programmes. Parents and guardians should be involved.
2. Screening of children for SpLD should be done at my “first day of school”.
3. The Juvenile Justice Act (560) 1998 should be reviewed to include standards and guidelines and an implementation plan to deliver effective treatment programmes at correctional centres.
4. Education Acts should also be revised for the provision of special education for incarcerated juveniles with learning disabilities.
5. Correctional educational programmes should be included in the monitoring activities of special education services that are conducted by the Ghana Education Service. This will strengthen programmes and ensure that eligible juveniles receive special education services.

6. Special education policies and guidelines developed by the government, should ensure that incarcerated juveniles with learning disabilities receive the services they need, to which they are entitled.

7. An extensive reintegration and aftercare (post-reintegration) services need to be developed and implemented by a reintegration and aftercare team.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Studies

1. Future studies should consider conducting a longitudinal study by identifying samples of SpLD and 'normal' children at an early age. This will allow for a better understanding and prevention of delinquency.

2. Also, large sample studies in future research to ensure external validity of findings should be conducted.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Interview Guide for Data Collection

My name is **Sheila Ohenewa Brenya**. I am a student of the Centre for Social Policy Studies, University of Ghana and I am undertaking a research on Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) and juvenile delinquency. I would like to ask for your concern to take part in this study. Confidentiality of your information is assured. Thank you.

To be filled by Interviewer before Start of Interview

Interviewee's Name:	
Location Address of Interview:	Date of Interview:
Start Time:	Time Completed:
Interviewer's Name:	

Demographic Data

1. Name of Respondent: _____
2. Sex of Respondent: M _____ F _____
3. Age of Respondent: _____
4. Marital Status: _____
5. Educational level: _____
6. Position in Organisation: _____
7. Number of years in Position: _____

SECTION 1: KNOWLEDGE OF SPLD AMONG STAKEHOLDERS (JUDGE, SOCIAL WORK OFFICERS AND PROBATION OFFICERS AT THE JUVENILE JUSTICE COURT)

1.1 Kindly tell me the role you play as a Judge/Social Work Officer/Probation Officer

1.2 How long have you been working with the juveniles?

1.3 What have your experiences been with juveniles and their families with regards to the correction procedures? Do they give you a hard time or not?

1.4 What do you know about Specific Learning Disability (SpLD)? Could you please give some examples? Are you able to identify children with SpLD?

1.5 What link do you see between juvenile delinquency and SpLD?

1.6 Does SpLD influence the way juvenile delinquents are treated in the courts?

1.7 What challenge(s) do you face with regards to children with such cases?

1.8 What will you recommend as to how children with juvenile delinquency should be treated in the court system?

**SECTION 2: SPLD AND TREATMENT OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN
CORRECTIONAL CENTRES AND SPECIAL ATTENTION PROJECT (SAP)
(DIRECTORS AND MANAGERS)**

2.1 How long has this centre/organisation been in existence?

2.2 How many children do you have currently? Boys and Girls within the ages of 12-15 and 16-18?

2.3 Are there children with SpLD in your Centre? What are their problems and severity of the cases?

2.4 What type of programs are designed for these juveniles with SpLD? Do you have any special educational programs for these juveniles? Who takes them through?

2.5 How do they respond to the rehabilitation process? What challenges do you face with these children?

2.6 What is the process of reintegration of juveniles with SpLD?

2.7 How many of them have you successfully rehabilitated and reintegrated into their families?

2.8 What challenges do you face in terms of reintegrating these children? Do you make follow-up to make sure they are properly reconnected with their families?

2.9 What measures have you taken to overcome these challenges to prevent recidivism?

SECTION 3: EXPERIENCES OF JUVENILES AND FAMILIES OF JUVENILES WITH SPLD AT SAP.

3.1 Is any of your children suffering from SpLD e.g. Autism, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, ADHD?

3.2 If yes, how do you handle him/her? How did you know about SAP?

3.3 What were your experiences with the rehabilitation of your child at the SAP? How were they treated?

3.4 How does he/she cope at home and school?

3.5 How does he/she cope in society i.e. among the peers and other people in society after rehabilitation?

3.6 Has the rehabilitation program had any impact on him/her?

SECTION 4: EXPERIENCES OF INMATES, EX-INMATES

4.1 What brought you to the Centre?

4.2 How long were you out of school before you were brought here?

4.3 Did you have any difficulties with any subjects in school? How did it affect you?

4.4 What are/were your experiences with the rehabilitation program? How are/were you treated?

4.5 How do/did you cope at the Correctional Centre?

4.6 Are/were your families restricted with regards to visits?

4.7 Has the rehabilitation program had any impact on you?

SECTION 5: IMPLEMENTATION ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY

5.1 How has the Inclusive Education policy been implemented so far?

5.2 Has there been any successes or challenges?

5.3 Do you think that there is a link between SpLD and juvenile delinquency?

5.4 Is this policy also targeted at Correctional Centres?

Appendix 2

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



Official Use only
Protocol number

Ethics Committee for Humanities (ECH)

PROTOCOL CONSENT FORM

Section A- BACKGROUND
INFORMATION

Title of Study:	Social Re-integration of Juvenile Delinquents with Specific Learning Disability(SpLD)
Principal Investigator:	Sheila Ohenewa Brenya
Certified Protocol Number	

Section B-CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN
RESEARCH

General Information about Research

The study aims to assess the level of knowledge of children with Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) among stakeholders in the Juvenile Justice Administration; to ascertain whether SpLD influence how such delinquents are treated in the Juvenile Justice Administration; and to examine how such children at the correctional centres are re-integrated into their families/society after rehabilitation.

This is an interview session that will require about thirty minutes of your time. In a situation whereby you cannot read, a research assistant will be available to translate them to your local language in order to aid the process.

Benefits/Risk of the study

Your participation in this study will not affect you in any way because it is solely for research purposes. There is no tangible personal benefit to you for the time that you spend participating in this interview.

Confidentiality

You are highly assured that your responses will be kept confidential. In line with this, though it is meant for academic purposes, your consent to this study implies making the findings available to the general public in academia especially.

Compensation

There are no compensation packages provided to individuals that participate in this research.

Withdrawal from Study

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You have the right to end your participation. You may refuse to answer any questions asked during the interview. You should ask the interviewer any questions you may have about this research study now or in the future.

Contact for Additional Information

You can contact Sheila Ohenewa Brenya: 0249161349 for any answers to any questions about the research.

Section C-VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

"I have read or have had someone read all of the above, asked questions, received answers regarding participation in this study, and am willing to give consent for me, my child/ward to participate in this study. I will not have waived any of my rights by signing this consent form. Upon signing this consent form, I will receive a copy for my personal records."

Name of Volunteer

Signature or mark of volunteer

Date

If volunteers cannot read the form themselves, a witness must sign here:

I was present while the benefits, risks and procedures were read to the volunteer. All questions were answered and the volunteer has agreed to take part in the research.

Name of witness

Signature of witness

Date

I certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research have been explained to the above individual.

Name of Person who Obtained Consent

Signature of Person Who Obtained Consent

Date