

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, TAMALE

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH
DISABILITIES IN THE JAMAN NORTH DISTRICT OF GHANA

SEIDU JUSTICE ADAMS

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BY

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(UDS/MTD/0011/13)



THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
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DECLARATION

Student

I hereby declare that this dissertation/thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere:

Candidate's Signature Date.....

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Supervisor

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation/thesis was supervised in accordance with guidelines on supervision of dissertation/thesis laid down by the University for Development Studies.

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ABSTRACT

This study explored parental involvement in the education of the child with disabilities (CWD) in Jaman North District of the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study investigated parents' expectations of the CWD in school, parents' involvement in decision making process in the schools of CWD, parents' contributions and collaborations between parents and teachers to enhance learning outcome of the CWD in schools. In conducting the research, a concurrent mixed method was used. The study involved interviewed 110 respondents consisting of teachers, parents of children with disabilities and children with disabilities. A mix of sampling methods was used. Purposive and simple random sampling methods were used in the selection of parents and teachers and the data was collected using a questionnaire through a survey approach. The result of the study showed that parents expected their CWD to acquire basic employable skills, able to live independent lives and contribute to national development. Secondly, the study also concluded that although there was high attendance of PTA meetings by parents particularly mothers, parents are not part of decision making of issues of their wards schools. The study also discovered that parents poorly contribute to learning outcomes of their children because they do not assist them with homework and also un-empowered. Lastly, the study also discovered that there is weak teacher-parents relationship. The study therefore recommended the targeting of parents with CWD to guide and assist them to ensure they have fair expectation of CWD and make them meaningful stakeholders in delivering quality education to children with disabilities.



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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Bawa Tozu and Hawawu Issaka, my parents.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

DECLARATION	II
ABSTRACT.....	III
ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	IV
DEDICATION	V
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	VI
LIST OF TABLES	IX
LIST OF MAPS	X
LIST OF ACRONYMS.....	XI
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	4
1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	6
1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	6
1.5 METHODOLOGY.....	7
1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	7
1.7 DELIMITATION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	8
1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY	9
1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY.....	10
CHAPTER TWO	11
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
2.0 INTRODUCTION.....	11
2.1 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.....	11
2.2 PARENTAL EXPECTATION IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES	17
2.3 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION.....	20
2.3.1 PARENT AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION	23
2.3.2 SCHOOLS BELIEFS ABOUT PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF CWD	26
2.3.3 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.....	27
2.4 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING IN THE SCHOOLS	31





2.5 PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION IN THE LEARNING OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES	37
2.6 PARENTAL PARTNERSHIP WITH TEACHERS IN THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN	40
2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY	49
CHAPTER THREE	50
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	50
3.0 INTRODUCTION.....	50
3.1 PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA.....	50
3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH.....	52
3.3 MIXED METHOD DESIGN	53
3.3.1 SURVEY APPROACH	54
3.3.2 CASE STUDY	55
3.4 POPULATION.....	58
3.4.1 SAMPLING DESIGN.....	58
3.5 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS.....	60
3.5.1 QUESTIONNAIRE.....	60
3.5.2 INTERVIEW GUIDE	62
3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY	64
3.6.1 RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY	65
3.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS	65
3.7.1 SECONDARY SOURCE.....	66
3.7.2 PRIMARY SOURCE.....	67
3.7.3 TRAINING OF RESEARCH ASSISTANTS	67
3.7.4 ADMINISTRATION OF QUESTIONNAIRE.....	68
3.7.5 INTERVIEW.....	70
3.7.6 ACCESS TO THE FIELD AND DATA.....	71
3.8 DATA ANALYSIS	72
3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY	73
CHAPTER FOUR.....	74
PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULT.....	74
4.0 INTRODUCTION.....	74
4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC/ BACKGROUND DATA	74
4.2 PARENTAL EXPECTATION IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES	78

4.3 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING IN THE SCHOOLS	83
4.4 PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION TO LEARNING OUTCOMES OF CWD	88
4.5 PARENT-TEACHER COLLABORATION IN THE EDUCATION OF CWD	93
4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY	100
CHAPTER FIVE.....	101
DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULT.....	101
5.0 INTRODUCTION.....	101
5.1. DEMOGRAPHIC/BACKGROUND DATA	101
5.2 PARENTAL EXPECTATION IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES	102
5.3 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING IN SCHOOLS	105
5.4 PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION IN THE LEARNING OUTCOMES OF CWD.....	107
5.5 PARENTAL COLLABORATION WITH TEACHERS IN THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN	110
5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY	115
CHAPTER SIX	117
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	117
6.0 INTRODUCTION.....	117
6.1 SUMMARY	117
6.2 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	119
6.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY	122
REFERENCES.....	123
APPENDIX	127
APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS.....	127
APPENDIX 2 : INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PUPILS WITH DISABILITY.....	136
APPENDIX 3: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FROM UDS.....	138
APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS.....	139



LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: GENDER OF THE RESPONDENT	74
TABLE 2: ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION OF TEACHERS	75
TABLE 3: EXPERIENCE OF TEACHERS	76
TABLE 4: METHODS OF TEACHING BY TEACHERS.....	77
TABLE 5: PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS OF THEIR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES	78
TABLE 6: PARENTS INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING AT THE SCHOOL	83
TABLE 7: PARENTS CONTRIBUTION TO THE LEARNING OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN	88



LIST OF MAPS

MAP 1: MAP OF BRONG AHAFO REGION.....52



LIST OF ACRONYMS

CWD	Children with Disabilities/Child with Disability
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
SBM	School Based Management
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
SPAM	School Performance Appraisal Meeting
PTA	Parents/Teacher Association
IFSP	Individual Family Service Plan
SEN	Special Educational
SBM	School Based Management
PBF	Pupil-Bound Funding
PWD	People living With Disabilities
SMC	School Management Committee



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Disabilities have been an enigma that have existed from time immemorial and has affected children all over the world in diverse forms for many years. Most of these could be mental retardation, visual impairment, hearing loss and in many other forms. Persons affected with disabilities are usually stigmatized and in some cases isolated, which goes a long way to worsen their plight (Kuyini, 2014).

Historically, adults and children with disabilities (CWD) were oppressed, their human rights were violated, and their access to education was denied. The majority of them were sacrificed and some of them were used as an object of entertainment. Philanthropists felt that individuals with disabilities should be given custodial care to protect them from abuse (Kuyini, 2014, Avoke, 1997; Kirk, Gallagher, Anastasiow, Coleman, 2006). This led to the concept of institutionalization, where individuals with disabilities were placed, fed and clothed as well as protected.

Education as a human right has been recognized and acknowledged by various national and international organizations (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). It recognized the principle that everyone in any society has the right to education. Education shall be free and compulsory, at least in the fundamental stages, and that parents have prior rights to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children (Article 26). Following this declaration, many countries accepted the sentiments of rights of education to all children. Rights of children were also raised in World



Conference on Education for All (1990) at Jontiem. Subsequent to the Declarations of Educational for All, many developing countries honoured the spirit and tried to enhance access to education for typically developing children. Unfortunately, equal priorities for educational opportunities were not provided for the CWD in developing countries. In 1994, representatives of 25 international organizations and 92 national governments met in Spain under the support of UNESCO. This conference gave birth to the 1994 Salamanca Statement on Principles and policy of inclusive education. The principle of inclusive education was seen as a solution to address lack of access, equity and participation in education for children with disabilities. In the conference, it was agreed that regular schools with inclusive orientation are most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving education for all (UNESCO, 2000; Ainscow, 2005; Mittler, 2005). Ghana was one of the first signatories to the principles and policy of inclusive education. Since then, Ghana is said to be practicing inclusive education (Gadagbui, 2010)

In Ghana and in some African countries pupils with special needs, particularly those with visual impairment have been negatively treated and neglected (Kuyini, Eni-Onurula & Ogunleke, 2006). Historically, societal involvement in the education of CWD was primarily one of superstitions. According to MacCuspie (1992), CWD are generally slow learners and can hardly learn at the same pace with their peers without disabilities. This, probably, was the reason that universally culminated in the adoption of the segregation method or what is known today as the special schools. The systematic development of any child, to a very large extent, hinges on parents. To echo the voice of Smith and Luckasson (1992:369), indicated that there is no resource is more important to a child

than his or her parents. Teachers come and go; however, most parents provide major consistent, sustained and unshaken support to their children's needs.

From the researchers experience as a teacher for the past 10 years, when it comes to collaborative work with the CWD, the parent-teacher relationship is often marked with distrust and disillusionment in Ghana. Parents and professionals may view each other as hostile, indifferent, and unable to help the child (Leyser, 1985). However, parents' influence all three domains of a child's academic, language, and social-emotional development, and each domain affects the others (Calderon & Greenberg, 1993; Calderon, Greenberg, & Kusche, 1991; Musselman & Kircaali-Iftar, 1996). Additionally, however, research has shown that parental beliefs and expectations about their children's learning are strongly related to children's beliefs about their own competencies, as well as their achievement (Galper, Wigfield, & Seefeldt, 1997). Parents who evidenced high levels of school contact (volunteering in the classroom, participating in educational workshops, attending Policy Council meetings) had children who demonstrated greater social competency than children of parents with lower levels of school contact (Parker et al., 1997; Rojalin Samal, 2012).

This thesis therefore assesses conditions influencing involvement of parents in the education of their CWD as well as the expectations parents of their wards. The study will further look at the expectations of parents in educating their wards with disabilities. Furthermore the study will look at how parents of children with disabilities are involved in decision making concerning the nature of education offered to their children. Similarly the study will look at the contributions of parents towards the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities. Finally, the study will explore the collaboration between



parents of children with disabilities and the teachers in providing quality education for children with disabilities.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The central issue to be investigated in this study is parents' involvement in the education of their children with disabilities. Studies in Europe showed that parent's involvement in the education of CWD had multiple benefits to the child particularly in promoting development of all domains of the child. On the contrary, it has been found that even the education of the children without disabilities in the Ghanaian society leads much to be desired (Gadagbui, 2000). It is therefore not strange to talk of the lackadaisical attitude of parents towards the CWD. In Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana including Jaman North District it is common to see children with such disabilities being neglected by parents who have been "disappointed" by their wards performance and are now roaming the streets without the necessary skills to live independent lives.

In Ghana pupils spend more time in their homes than in the school environment at the Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High School levels. In Jaman North District many parents do not have understanding and skills on how to engage their wards to continue to learn even if at home. In some instances, there environment is not conducive to learning and so many children do not learn or revise what is being taught when at home. Inherent in this challenge is that many parents are not aware of the roles they are supposed to play to contribute to the learning outcomes of their wards in the country particularly at the district level.

There is limited literature on this works in the case of parents who have children with disabilities. Full participation of children with disabilities within the inclusive education system is a worldwide educational goal (United Nations, 1989; UNESCO, 1994), but



many questions regarding how to succeed with inclusion still remain unanswered particularly in Ghana.

Successful understanding of issue of nature of involvement of parents' of children with disabilities in education of their wards will help to improve the well-being of these children with disabilities. Also, it will help ease the restlessness of parents with children with disabilities. These children with disabilities will further be appropriately trained in schools with their peers, without disabilities. Invariably, it also helps children with disabilities to appreciate the condition of children with disabilities. Finally, enhanced understanding of the role parents with children disabilities play in education of their wards will help to enhance the parent-teacher relationship which will inure to the benefit of the children in general, parents and the country as a whole. In the same vein it will contribute literature to the discourse on inclusive education.

The study therefore is intended to ascertain the extent of parental involvement in the education of their children with disabilities in the normal school setting and how teachers are prepared and resourced to help such children in the Jaman North District of Ghana. In addition the study will explore the expectations of parents in the education of their children with disabilities in Jaman North District of Ghana. Furthermore the study will also investigate how parents of pupils with disabilities are involved in the decision making process in schools in Jaman North District of Ghana. Additionally the study will assess the contributions of parents to learning outcomes of CWD. Finally, this study assessed how schools and parents collaborate to support the education of children with disabilities in Jaman North District of Ghana



1.3 Research Questions

The main research question is to assess parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities (CWD) in the Jaman North District of Ghana. In order to find answers to/for this research question, the following specific research questions were investigated:

1. What are the expectations of parents in educating their children with disabilities in Jaman North District of Ghana?
2. How do parents of pupils with disabilities involve in making decision about the education of their children in schools in Jaman North District of Ghana?
3. What contributions do parents of children with disabilities make regarding improvement of learning outcomes of their children in Jaman North District?
4. How do schools and parents of children with disabilities partner to support the education of children with disabilities in Jaman North District of Ghana?

1.4 Research Objectives

The main research objective is to study parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities in the Jaman North District of Ghana. The research sets out to achieve the following specific objectives.

1. To explore the expectations of parents in the education of their children with any form of disabilities in Jaman North District of Ghana.
2. To investigate how parents of pupils with disabilities are involved in the decision making process in schools in Jaman North District of Ghana.
3. To assess the contributions of parents of pupils with disabilities in enhancing learning outcomes of CWD in Jaman North District of Ghana.
4. To find out how the partnership between schools and parents supports in the education of children with disabilities in Jaman North District of Ghana.



1.5 Methodology

The research adopted a mixed method approach, since the study aimed at investigating parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities in the various schools in the district. The researcher used purposive sampling strategy to select both the participating schools and key informants. Sample size of the study was one hundred and ten (n=110). This included thirty (n=30) parents, fifty (n=50) teachers, and thirty (n=30) pupils. The respondents of the study were selected using detailed sampling process.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The results of this study will disabuse the minds of parents of their perceptions toward their children with any forms of disabilities. In fact, the study will bring to bear that parental love and care are indispensable contribution that parents should give naturally to every child, irrespective of any problem. The study is very likely to create more awareness about the abilities of CWD. In addition it will bring to bear the facts surrounding children with disabilities and the school environment within the study area.

Again, the study will sensitize parents as being active team members in the rehabilitation of their wards. They will also be made aware that they are valuable source of information to the professionals since the facts they provide serve as basis upon which educational training programs can be drawn. In addition, these facts have the potential of informing programs and policy in other establishments.

Furthermore, this will reassure parents that they are capable of serving as co-teachers to train their children. As a result parents can draw collaborative goals with professionals (multi-disciplinary team) since it is easier to work towards such goals and achieve them



as the program drawn are from their own decisions. As a result both parents and teachers will be better equipped to handle children with disabilities.

In conclusion, this study will serve as a source of information to teachers, parents and related professionals. It will again add more information to the existing knowledge in mainstream education and pave the way for more research work to be done in areas of parental involvement in education of children with disabilities or retardation. In effect it will contribute to policy formulation and implementation within the country and also beyond the shores of this country.

1.7 Delimitation and Limitations of the Study

The study was restricted to thirty (30) children with disabilities, (9 visually, 15 hearing, and 6 mentally handicapped), thirty (30) parents, and fifty (50) teachers from schools in the district capital of Jaman North District of Ghana. For this reason, the result of the study is applicable to only children, parents and teachers in schools in the Jaman North District of Ghana.

There were some difficulties associated with interviewing children with disabilities. However, this was overcome by the researcher as he recruited persons who could sign to help with interpretation of the conversations. In addition, the researcher and the assistants were trained on how to interview children with emphasis on children with disabilities. In addition, because this is a very delicate issue the researcher ensured that the research assistants had reasonable years of experience as community researchers. This ensured that the respondents were effectively engaged to ensure the achievement of the objectives of this study.



1.8 Organization of the study

This study is organized into six chapters. Chapter one is the introduction to the study which provides the background of the study, statement of the problem and research questions. This same chapter further contains a brief of the methodology of the study, the significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, organization of the study and finally the summary of the chapter.

Chapter two reviews related literature focusing on children with disabilities, parental expectation in the education of children with disabilities and parental involvement in education. Furthermore the chapter also reviews literature on parental involvement in decision making in schools, parental contribution in the learning outcomes of children with disabilities and parental partnership with teachers in the education of their children. This chapter finally ends with the chapter summary.

Chapter three describes the methodology used for the study in other words the blue print that guided the entire study. This includes the profile of the study area and the research approach. The chapter further narrows down on the specific type of research approach, the mixed method design. Similarly this chapter further specifies the focus of population for the study. Subsequently it spells out the sampling design, procedures and instruments used to collect data. To ensure robustness of the study issues of validity and reliability were addressed. Consequent on the specific type of research approach chosen it determined the methods used to analyze the data collected. Like the previous chapters, this section of the study also ended with the chapter summary.

Chapter four deals with the presentation of data collected and the research results of the study. This was done based on the thematic areas discussed under literature review; parental expectation in the education of children with disabilities, parental involvement



in decision-making in the schools, parental contribution to the learning outcomes of CWD and finally the parent-teacher collaboration in the education of CWD. However these four themes were preceded by presentation of demographic background of the respondents and finally the chapter summary.

Chapter five discusses the findings of the research centered on the literature reviewed for the study. Similarly the discussion under this chapter was also under the four main themes (parental expectation in the education of CWD, parental involvement in decision-making, parental contribution to the learning outcomes of CWD and parent-teacher collaboration in the education of CWD).

Chapter six deal with the summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research. However this chapter was preceded with summary of entire work from chapter one to five. Similarly the chapter was ended with chapter summary. The crust of the study, logical findings and recommendations are presented in this chapter. Finally the entire study and this chapter ended with chapter summary.

1.9 Chapter Summary

The researcher started the chapter with the background to the study. Subsequently, statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives and the methodology of the study were elaborated. Finally the study looked at the significance of the study to stakeholders in education and the society at large. The delimitation and limitation of the study as well as organization of the study were also discussed; and finally, the chapter summary concluded the chapter one. This then ushered the study into the next chapter which is the review of related literature for the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter focused on related literature review for the study. The purpose was to identify gaps to become familiar with research done in the area of parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities and to provide a theoretical framework for the study. The literature was reviewed from related research work done locally and internationally, publications, internet and the social media. The literature review is discussed under the following sub-headings: expectations of parents about the education of the CWD, the involvement of parents in making decision regarding the education of the CW, role parents of children with disabilities play in the learning outcomes of their CWDs and finally collaborations between parents and teachers to support the learning of CWDs.

2.1 Children with disabilities

There are fourteen categories of disabilities defined under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). These include Autism, Deaf-Blindness, Deafness, Developmental Delay, Emotional Disturbance, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Speech or Language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury and Visual Impairment including Blindness.

Hearing loss is considered to be the most prevalent congenital abnormality in newborns and is more than twice as prevalent as other conditions that are screened at birth, such as sickle cell disease, hypothyroidism, phenylketonuria, and galactosaemia (Finitzo &





Crumley, 1991). It is one of the most sensory disorders and is the consequences of sensor neural and/or conductive malfunctions of the ear. The impairment may occur during or shortly after birth (congenital or early onset or may be late onset) caused postnatal by genetically factors, trauma or disease. Since hearing impairment in infants is silent and hidden, great emphasis is placed on the importance of early detection, reliable diagnosis and timely intervention (Spivak et al., 2000). Classification of hearing disability is done according to severity and sometimes differently by different institutions (adapted from Peter V. Paul & Stepheus P. Quingley, 1990 & WHO). The differences notwithstanding are description of types of hearing impairments that turn to be very similar.

According to Ocloo et al.,(2002), the birth of the visually impaired child comes as a shock to parents and families because in the majority of instances there was no reason for any mother to look forward to anything other than the birth of a physically normal child. Blindness can result from variety of causes and many a time not associated with hereditary conditions. Authorities further state that blindness causes many types of reaction: parents' reactions to the situation of having to care for the visually impaired vary according to their different personalities and temperaments. This may show in feelings of anger, disappointment, guilt, over-protection, bitterness, rejection, aggression, and in some cases inclinations toward murder. In fact these attitudes apply to most families to whom any child with any kind of disability is born.

Every child needs approval and acceptance by his or her parents. Not only does this make him or her feel secured and self-respecting, but also the whole of his successful training and education depends on the urge to please his parents for their reciprocal affection. Several characteristics of visual impairment have the relevance for developmental process; age of onset, etiology, type, and degree of vision lost (partial, central vision, peripheral vision) and the prognosis. Usually, the types and degree of

vision lost are reported on the form completed by ophthalmologist or optometrist following an eye examination.

Observation of pupils with blindness at the Ghana National Basic School by Awini A, (2010), in Cape Coast during the 2008/2009 academic year revealed that, compared to typical pupils, those with blindness were more often teased and ignored. Those pupils with blindness were most at times neglected by their teachers and peers. These observations appear to be more consistent with Bryan's (1997), agitation that student without disabilities as well as teachers in general classroom usually do not accept pupils with blindness. Since these negative experiences influence a child's social and academic development it is therefore necessary to delve into such cases and find solutions to them.

Mental retardation is another form of disability associated with children. A number of experts have over the years dabbed into the definition of mental retardation. The earliest definition was that of Tredgold (1937). It states that it is an incomplete development of such a kind and a degree that the individual is incapable of adapting to the 'normal environment of his or her fellows in such a way as to maintain existence independently.

Doll (1994), proposed that any definition of mental retardation had to include six (6) key elements which are, social incompetence, mental sub-normality, developmentally arrested, retarded of maturity, constitutional factors, and essentially incurable. Grossman (1983), define mental retardation as significant sub-average general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficit in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period. However, from the layman's views in the Ghanaian perspective, mental retardation has been classified as a bad omen to those parents, in order to suffer the burden as a result of some atrocities been committed by themselves or by their ancestors. Mental retardation is a condition of restricted or incomplete development of the mind which is especially characterized by slow or incomplete



development of skills, manifested during a particular developmental phase which contributes to overall level of intellectual, language, motor, and social skills.

Available research and literature indicate that parent to whom the child is born (attached), grows up and develops during the formative years (birth-5 years) are the best source of information and any form of development, (Barnes, Guttered, Satter, and Farrer, 1986). Parents therefore are to be made aware of available educational options and information on child rearing techniques, (Bernstein, 1993).

In the United Kingdom, the policy statement special educational needs in the mainstream suggest that the role of parents as partners in the education of pupils particularly during the child's formative years is of major importance, especially in respect of a child with special educational needs. The same policy document further suggests that a child's progress should be made available to parents of children with special needs and parents need to be familiar with provisions offered their children. Parental participation in the education of children with mental retardation is well documented, and because of the documentation, it gives parents a lot of mandate to assume responsibilities for their children. The involvement of parents in the United Kingdom and the U.S.A have assumed such phenomenal level that "Parental Empowerment" as a phrase has emerged as a descriptive label to depict this level of enthusiasm.

In the United States, PL 99-457, part 4 and (IDEA) requires that an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), be developed for each child who is diagnosed as disabled, developmentally delayed or at risk of delay. Mcgonigel, Kaufman and Johnson, (1991), noted that; section 677 of the regulation describes the IFSP as a written plan developed by multi-disciplinary personnel including parents or guardians that contain strategies which parents or guardians can employ to enhance the upbringing of their disabled children. Kirk et al, (1993:28) states that parental empowerment means, "parents no



longer passively and unthinkingly take advice from professionals or a team of professionals about treatment of their children with special needs”. That is parents are now expected to play a major and determining role children’s career, and professionals are to provide needed counsel and specialized advice. In Ghana as a result of inadequate personnel in the majority of service areas, children with disabilities are largely ignored (Gadagbui, 2010).

The U.C.L.A. Family Development Services Intervention Role Profile for parents attempts to first consolidate a helping and working relationship between the interventionist and the parent. Secondly it also attempts to enhance communication of the specialist and enhance parent’s personal adaptation. Finally it also enhances alternative approaches to parent-child interactions (if needed); and provide direct affirmation and support (Heinide, 1992). In the Ghanaian context however, it is clear that there is no adequate legislation on management of children with disabilities and as a result of absence of any effective legislation on special education, CWD are do not receive adequate support from family and government. The disability act legislative instrument is still awaiting enactment.

Also there is a lack of empirical information, which specifically highlights the actual number of children with special needs in Ghana. This is why if the government or private individuals were to provide needed facilities they would be inadequate in terms of catering for the number of children with special needs. In addition there is also a lack of empirical information, which shows the actual factors, which determine the level of inclusion, a child is entitled to and how such features can be beneficial to the community as a whole.





The need to belong (inclusion) is one thing that everyone desires, so no one should be exempted because of one's disability. According to Norman Kuntz, Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs has now been inverted where an individual's personal worth or, worse yet their acceptance into their local community is contingent upon demonstrated skills hence the continued exclusion of individuals who are 'different.' To belong or be included in the society is totally dependent on the attainment of self-actualized goals rather than being acknowledged as a fundamental human need. Exclusion has a detrimental effect upon the children with special needs as it's usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the segregated group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn.

Segregation has a tendency to retard educational and mental development of such children and to deprive them of benefits they would receive in an integrated school system. Snow (2007) provides insight as to why this inclusion and the need to belong are very important by providing comparative data in the Ghanaian context. In addition, the literature reveals the importance of principals' and teachers' perceptions of parental involvement and its influence on the level of parental involvement (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009; Epstein & Becker, 1982; Hughes, et. al, 2005). Barnyak and McNelly's (2009) study noted that beliefs and practices shape their approach to parental involvement. Both teachers and principals play a critical role in parental involvement. To this end, the researcher examined a trend analysis of teachers' and principals' perception of parental involvement over time (1999-2003), if teachers' and principals' perceptions are correlated with the level of reported parental involvement, and whether schools meet their state eligibility requirements. By zeroing in on the perceptions of both principals and teachers over multiple years, the researcher showed whether these perceptions make are associated with parental involvement levels. This historical trend analysis provides

information of school staff perceptions of parental involvement before, during, and after the implementation of NCLB. Because NCLB mandated parental involvement and is currently being implemented in schools, the historical trends of staff perceptions can be useful to district administrators and educators as they continue to work with teachers and principals to design programs that increase parental involvement and train teachers and principals to more effectively interact with parents.

2.2 Parental expectation in the education of children with disabilities

All parents develop expectations about their child's education based on their own experience and information provided by the school concerned, the media and informal networks of parents. Legislation has helped focus attention on what a parent has the right to expect (DES, 1980; 1986). This includes the right of all parents to, for example, be involved in the choice of the school their child will attend, have an annual report on their child's progress and have parental representation on the school's governing body. Similarly in Ghana there are adequate provisions which give parents legitimate demands and therefore expectations of their children with disabilities. Some of these legal instruments include the constitution, the children's act and disability act. Despite these legal frameworks, many parents still feel that the school does not listen to them enough or does not keep them sufficiently informed about how their children's' needs are being met (Lindsay and Dockrell, 2004; Blok, Peetsma, & Roede, 2007).

The concept of "expectancy" forms the basis for virtually all behavior. Expectancies can be defined as beliefs about a future state of affairs. As such expectations represent the mechanisms through which past experiences and knowledge are used to predict the future (Olsen, Roese & Zanna, 1996). Expectations are the subjective predictions about the future' (Russell, 2003). They originate from and affect a person's beliefs, knowledge



and experience and can affect person's behavior during social interaction they have with others (Tajfel & Fraser, 1978).

Studies that have explored parents' expectations of teachers and of the school indicate that parents expect quality of teaching, their child's academic progress and happiness, homework, fair discipline and information (West, David, Noden, Edge & Davies, 1996; Crozier, 1999; Foot, Hower, Cheyne, Terras & Rattrey, 2000; Tartar & Horenczyk, 2000). Parents of children with Special Educational Needs may develop similar expectations but additional legislation associated with pupils with SEN has set out what they have the right to expect in relation to the initial assessment and ongoing review of their child's educational needs (DES, 2001). They will also develop expectations related to their child's individual needs and development and of the services and support they receive but the only studies found concerning expectations of parents of disabled children (Bennet, Lee & Lueke, 1998; Woolman, Garwick, Kohrman & Blum, 2001) have not provided any conclusive information.

However, the passage of the disability act in Ghana has to some extent alleviated the problems of disabled in the country and as it was earlier entrenched in the constitution. The disability act in Ghana clearly provides the framework of what parents and CWD can expect from the immediate family, the community, service providers, the state and the nation as a whole.

First, the disability act according to article 1 guarantees children with disabilities the right to family life and social activities. It states 'A person with disability shall not be deprived of the right to live with that person's family or the right to participate in social, political, economic, creative or recreational activities. Secondly, it also provides differential treatment in respect of residence. The article states that 'except as otherwise





required by the condition or the need for improvement of a person with disability, a person shall not subject a person with disability to differential; treatment in respect of residence. Article 3 further adds that, ‘Where a person with disability has to be put in a specialized establishment, the environment and living conditions of the establishment shall, except as otherwise required by the condition of the person with disability, be as close as possible to those of a person without disability of the same age as the person with disability.

In addition, the disability act criminalizes the exploitation of and discrimination against a person with disability. In article 20, subsection 1 and 2, additional explanatory points are given. The sub-section 1 indicates that a person shall not discriminate against, exploit or subject a person with disability to abusive or degrading treatment. While sub-section 2 explains, an employer shall not discriminate against a prospective employee or an employee on grounds of disability unless the disability is in respect of the relevant employment.

There are specific articles (6, 7 & 8) and clauses which embeds persons with disabilities access to public buildings and as well as access to services. However, these articles are not clearly adhered to in many public facilities and departments including the district education office.

The disability act also creates space to facilitate the employment of persons with disability through public employment centre. Specifically article 9 states; “the Ministry shall through the public employment centers, assist to secure jobs for persons with disability”. The ministry of labor has not been able to facilitate this role effectively.

Expectations originate from and have an impact on an individual’s interaction across their social environment. For example, cultural values will influence the beliefs on which

expectations are based and, through the development and review of expectations, a person gains a greater understanding of their personal experiences. It is therefore useful to examine the origins and effects of parents' expectations using the ecological model proposed by Bronfen Brenner (1977) in his study of human development. This is a study of how a person develops their understanding through interaction with their social environment at different levels. Bronfenbrenner identifies four levels, which are:

- **the microsystem**, or the relationship an individual has with their immediate physical and social environment;
- **the mesosystem**, incorporating the inter-relationships between the most significant settings in which an individual is involved at a particular time;
- **the exosystem**, including other specific formal and informal social structures that impinge on and so influence events;
- **the macrosystem**, encompassing the prevailing ideology and the institutional culture that informs the other systems, including the economic, social, legal, educational and political systems that determine the beliefs and values of a society.

2.3 Parental Involvement in education

Astin (2016) is one of the earliest developers on theories on involvement particularly for pupils. In his theory on Student Involvement he explains how desirable outcome for institutions of higher education are viewed in relation to how pupils change and develop in result to being involved co-curricular. He opined that the main concept of the theory has three key essentials. According to him, the first is a student's "inputs" such as their demographics, their background, and any previous experiences. The second is the student's "environment", which accounts for all of the experiences a student would have during college. Lastly, there are "outcomes" which cover a student's characteristics,





knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and values that exist after a student has graduated college. In this direction parental involvement will also involve these three essentials; demographic characteristics of the parents, parents environment and finally outcomes.

Astin further created five basic assumptions about involvement. He argues that involvement requires an investment of psychosocial and physical energy. Secondly, involvement is continuous, and that the amount of energy invested varies from student to student. Thirdly, aspects of involvement may be qualitative and quantitative. Next, what a student gains from being involved (or their development) is directly proportional the extent to which were involved (in both aspects of quality and quantity). Lastly, academic performance is correlated with the student involvement. This theory has many applications in the world of higher education, and is one of the strongest pieces of evidence for co-curricular student involvement. Furthermore, researchers have continued to study this correlation with similar results. Student involvement in co-curricular activities such as student organizations, leadership positions, and activity in campus residence halls has a positive correlation with retention and academics. Because of the positive aspects of co-curricular involvement, universities have been encouraging pupils to become involved.

According to Astin (1984) involvement is a construct that should not be either mysterious or obscure. Quite simply, student involvement refers to the amount of physical and psycho-logical energy that the student devotes to the academic experience. He explained that the involvement theory has five basic postulates: Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects; regardless of its object, involvement occurs along a continuum; Involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features. The extent of a student's involvement in academic work, for instance, can be measured quantitatively (how many hours the student spends studying)

and qualitatively (whether the student reviews and comprehends reading assignments or simply stares at the textbook and day-dreams); The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program; The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement.

In certain respects the concept of involvement closely resembles the Freudian concept of cathexis, which I learned about in my former career as a clinical psychologist. Freud believed that people invest psychological energy in objects and persons outside of themselves. In other words, people can cathect on their friends, families, schoolwork, and jobs. The involvement concept also resembles closely what the learning theorists have traditionally referred to as vigilance or time-on-task. The concept of effort, although much narrower, has much in common with the concept of involvement.

According to Astin (1984) dictionaries also give meanings of the word involvement. The word, involvement, is an active term, the list uses verb forms. As a result some words and phrases that give meaning of the word 'involvement' from dictionaries and a thesaurus are written in active form. They include; attach oneself to, commit oneself to, devote oneself to engage in, incline toward, join in, partake, participate in, plunge into, show enthusiasm for, tackle, to take an interest in, take part in, to take up to and to undertake. Most of these terms are behavioral in meaning. According to the author these could have also included words and phrases that are more "interior" in nature, such as value, care for, stress, accentuate, and emphasize. However the manner in which the word is used implies a behavioral component. The author further noted that motivation is an important aspect of involvement, but rather emphasizing that the behavioral aspects



are critical: It is not so much what the individual thinks or feels, but what the individual does, how he or she behaves, that defines and identifies involvement.

In this direction parental involvement is the process of acquisition knowledge and skills to appropriately invest resources (time, energy and financial) including emotional and psychological towards the training and education of their children particularly for children with disabilities. Similarly this presents creates space for parental involvement in the education of their children with disabilities to have both qualitative and quantitative dimensions.

2.3.1 Parent and Parental involvement in Education

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)/ No Child Left Behind (NCLB) definition for “parent” includes a legal guardian or other person standing in *loco parentis* (such as a grandparent or step-parent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child’s welfare). Also they refer to ‘involve’ as “to enfold or envelope” thus, involvement implies doing together. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legal definition of parental involvements states, “(32) - the term ‘parental involvement’ means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring: “(A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child’s learning; “(B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child’s education at school; “(C) that parents are full partners in their child’s education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and “(D) the carrying out of other activities, (as specified in section 118 of the act)”(Washington, 2011).



There are multiple definitions and inconsistencies in what defines parental involvement. This multiplicity of definition makes it hard to operationally define and empirically measure (Fan & Chen, 2001). In addition, multiple definitions provide persistent confusion between a range of behaviors, activities, goals, and outcomes for parent involvement (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Sheldon, 2002). These definitions represent multiple behaviors and practices such as parents' communication with teachers (e.g., Epstein, 1991), parents' participation in school activities (e.g., Greenwood & Hickman, 1991), and parents' aspirations for their children (e.g., Spera, Wentzel & Matto, 2009).

Sheldon (2002) agreed with Gronlick and Slowiaczek's (1994) perspective that parent involvement is defined as parents' investment of resources in their children. Chavkin and William (1993) expanded the definition of parent involvement to include (a) ensuring that children have proper school supplies, (b) monitoring the amount of sleep that children get, and (c) supporting the child in arriving at school on time. Feuerstein (2000) defined parent involvement from a range of behaviors including discussing school with children to attending parent-teacher conferences.

There have been several interpretations and conclusions drawn to define parent involvement in different research studies. Much of the discrepancy across such studies stems from the type of data being collected and the design of the studies. Although the role of parents in a child's education was thought to be critically important in their success, it was not until the 1960s that parent involvement was analyzed through experimental design and research. In 1966, Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mod, Weinfeld, and York fostered a national focus on outcomes related to parental involvement by suggesting a substantial relationship between parental involvement in their child's education and their child's academic success.



A number of researchers began to look at parent involvement in an attempt to measure the effect of parent involvement on student achievement. However, the inconsistencies persist because of the different definitions that researchers use to explain parent involvement, and the different behaviors and activities researchers measure. With these practices, it is no surprise that inconsistency remains as an issue in coming up one acceptable definition of parental involvement. This is important to know for this study because the researcher uses a more encompassing definition of parental involvement that is promoted by Keith et al. (1998) to include activities at home, in the classroom, and with the school more broadly.

Parental involvement as a generic concept refers to quite diverse behaviors, depending on the motives of schools and parents, the chosen perspective (the parent or the school perspective) and the activities in which the involvement might become manifest. Epstein (1992) defined six types of parental involvement in schools:

- (1) Assisting parents in child-rearing skills
- (2) School-parent communication
- (3) Involving parents in school volunteer opportunities
- (4) Involving parents in home-based learning
- (5) Involving parents in school decision-making, and
- (6) Involving parents in school-community collaborations.

Essentially parents are involved in three key activities in the education of the child. First parents support and prepare children in their respective homes before they go to school. Secondly, parents collaborate with teachers and other educational stakeholders to make the children stay in schools productively. And finally, parents also play a key role in

ensuring that there is conducive atmosphere at home after to school to motivate children to cultivate skills in personal studies, doing homework and projects.

2.3.2 Schools beliefs about parental involvement in the education of CWD

Many schools believe it is important for parents to feel that they are involved in the education of their child. They inform parents on a regular basis about teaching and special activities. They also approach parents to volunteer at school, for example on school excursions. Schools believe that, if parents participate in this way, they will gain a better understanding of the school's aims and methods, and will feel more closely involved. Some scholars claim that greater parental involvement could contribute to a higher academic achievement of the child (Eccles and Harold, 1993; Georgiou, 1999). Similarly schools communicate the academic performance of their wards to them through the school report cards inclusive of remarks on their behavior and interest. In some instances parents get the performance of their wards during PTA meetings, SPAM sessions and when parents happen to be invited by teachers (Ghana Education Service, 2010).

A common sense hypothesis might be that, the way in which parents become involved moderates the strength of the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement. This hypothesis has been confirmed in a meta-analysis by Fan and Chen (2001). Parents might choose a specific form of involvement, depending on their skills, their availability and requests or invitations from the school. The model then hypothesizes that involvement affects the child's development through mechanisms such as modeling, instruction, and providing feedback. The authors clearly assume that the mechanisms through which the parents affect the child's growth operate in parallel to the mechanisms that are used at school. According to the authors, parental involvement has



corresponding influence on the academic outcome of pupils', its quality is influenced by the socio-demographic characteristics of parents as well as the level and preparedness of teachers and school authorities.

2.3.3 The role of teachers in parental involvement

Teachers seem to play a key role in parental involvement in the education of their children with disabilities. Bandura (1997) emphasizes on the importance of the teachers' sense of efficacy. This sense supposedly influences the level of parental participation. Teachers who are secured in their self-perceived capabilities are most likely to invite and support parents' educational efforts. Teachers' beliefs with regard to parent involvement also seem important. For a number of reasons, teachers might display a rather reserved attitude towards parent involvement (Hoover-Dempsey *et al.*, 1992; Huss-Keeler, 1997). According to the Bandura, efficient teachers adopt innovative measures to enhance parental involvement in education. Hoover-Dempsey *et al.*, (1992) and Huss-Keeler (1997) further confirmed that the nature of the teacher has influence on the manner in which s/he might behave. If the role of teachers to effect parental involvement in the education of their wards is left to their discretion, it will never be pursued and parental involvement in education of children with disabilities will continue to marginalize.

Cultural barriers, limited experience, negative encounters, mistrust or dissatisfaction on the part of the parents and other circumstances might make teachers reluctant to engage with parents. A study by Hoover-Dempsey *et al.* (2002) evaluated an in-service teacher education program specifically designed to improve teachers' beliefs and skills relating to parental involvement. The program was implemented in two public schools with a high percentage of children who were at risk for socio-economic reasons. Although the



program proved effective in that the teachers' perception of their own efficacy – considered being an important antecedent of beliefs about parents– displayed a small gain, the effects on scales representing beliefs about parents and parent involvement were negligible. It seems that teachers' attitudes might be more difficult to influence than is generally thought. This was one of the reasons that the Dutch government decided to invest in an appropriate legislative framework rather than in the alteration of teachers' beliefs.

One challenge associated with parental involvement is the lack of a clear definition. Lee and Bowen (2006) contend there is no unitary definition, model, or measure of parental/family involvement, and there is the tendency to rely on traditional definitions. Some researchers characterize traditional definitions as including parents in school fundraising activities, school plays, or school sporting events (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Sheldon, 2002). However, NCLB promoted the concept of parental involvement as a meaningful partnership consisting of regular communication and parent participation in the development and implementation of a plan for school improvement (Cowan, 2003).

Thwala, Ntinda & Hlanze (2015) in a study of the 'lived experiences of parents' of children with disabilities in Swaziland using a sample of 20 involving 20 primary schools observed that raising a child with disability is a challenge to most parents. The findings revealed that the parents encounter challenges at work, at home, school and in the community such as emotional stress, failure to cope with the children's disability and financial challenges. The study also indicated that the parents were not sure of what was expected of them in making educational decisions on behalf of their children. It also reported that parents of children with disabilities were not trained on how to cope with their children's disability and how to work with educators.



Lastly, the types of activities associated with parental involvement can come in many forms, from talking to a child about their education aspirations, assisting with homework, volunteering at school activities, talking to teachers about a student's progress, and being involved in school governance structures. For instance, McNelly (2001) provided a framework for parent involvement that included four elements: parent-child discussion, monitoring, involvement in school and classroom activities, and participation in school organizations. Other researchers such as Kenbrow and Benhart (1993) focused only on two elements: parent-initiated contact with schools and parent participation in school organizations.

Henderson and Berlas (1994) examination of 85 studies found three common elements within various types of parental involvement programs had positive results on pupils' performance: family interaction patterns, parental behaviors at home, and school interactions. Other researchers such as Desimone, Finn-Stevenson, and Henrich (2000) explored comprehensive whole-school reform models that implement parental involvement in school management and collaborative decision-making models. These shared decision-making models "reorganize decision-making and service provision to develop a cohesive community of parent, teachers, and pupils" (Desimone et al., 2000, p. 270).

Studies show there are many variables that influence parental involvement and such variables have been categorized across both psychological and sociological dimensions. Griffith's (1998) survey of 33,224 parents and 26,904 elementary pupils in 122 US public elementary schools regarding school structure and social environment to parental involvement in schools revealed a set of sociological and psychological variables both at the individual and the school level that contribute to parent involvement. Several researchers have found that there are motivational factors for parent involvement

(Griffith, 2000; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005).

One highly cited research is by Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005), who developed a multi-dimensional model based on four psychological contributing factors of parents becoming involved in their children's education. These variables included (a) parental role construction, or parents' beliefs about what they should do in the context of their child's education; (b) parental self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school, or how much parents believed they could improve children's school outcomes; (c) parents' perceptions of general invitations for involvement from the school; and (d) parents' life contexts such as socio-economic status, culture, and family structure. The first three are psychological aspects while the fourth deals with socio-economic status of parents. These factors are a set of characteristics that illustrate both behavioral and cognitive dimensions of parental involvement.

An examination of these factors by Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) led to the following assertion. Across the findings and suggestions, there are themes of empowerment for all participants in children's schooling and all concerned with respecting and enhancing parents' contributions to children's school success. With particular reference to our focus here on parents, there are thus strong suggestions that school attention to parents' personal motivations for involvement, and family life-context variables persistent to involvement can support personal motivation and positive influence on student outcomes. Walker et al. (2005) revised the Hoover-Dempsey scale model into five categories.



The first three categories examine the psychological predictors such as parents' motivational beliefs, parent perceptions of invitations, and perceived life contexts. The fourth category examines the parents' involvement forms defined as school-based behaviors and home-based behaviors. Lastly, the researchers explored the reciprocal relationship between the theory and measurement constructs. This type of scale model provided the opportunity to measure parent involvement along many different types of psychological dimensions. For instance using this multidimensional framework, Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, and Sandler (2007) found that parents' relationship to teachers and children is a strong motivating factor for parent involvement.

In addition, intrapersonal and interpersonal psychological factors such as perception of invitation to involvement from teachers, motivational beliefs, and perceived life contexts were found to be strong predictors of home and school-based involvement as well as self-efficacy and time and energy for involvement. Research findings suggested that understanding the psychological underpinnings of parent involvement is critical in designing and implementing programs, policies, and practices (Washington, 2011).

2.4 Parental involvement in decision-making in the schools

In both the developed and developing worlds, government attempts to improve education have been mostly about providing more classrooms, more teachers, and more textbooks to schools (Ainscow, 2005). There is growing evidence, however, that more inputs are not enough to make schools work better. One important reason why education systems are failing to provide children with a solid education is the weak accountability relationships among policy makers, education providers, and the citizens and pupils whom they serve (Ghana Education Service, 2010; Ministry of Education, 2001).



It is not surprising then that the transfer of some decision-making power to schools has become a popular reform over the past decade (Ghana Education Service, 2010). School-based management (SBM) puts power in the hands of the frontline providers and parents to improve their schools (World Bank, 2009). Its basic premise is that people who have the most to gain or lose are pupils and their parents and those who know what actually goes on in the classroom and school teachers and school principals should have both greater authority and greater accountability than they do now with respect to school performance (Blok, Peetsma, & Roede, 2007; Michigan Department of Education, 2011). It is in this direction that Ghana passed education acts to enhance the role of SMC and PTAs in the management of school in Ghana. Specifically through a Regulation under the Ghana Education Service Act (Act 506) of 1995, the School Management Committee was introduced (Ghana Education Service, 2010).

During the past two decades, educational differences between richer and poorer countries, as measured by enrollment rates and average years of schooling, have narrowed, but the global gap in student achievement levels remains very wide. Where successful, SBM offers the potential to close that learning gap (World Bank, 2009). However, as a result of poor monitoring by actors including parents and government, the gap in terms of quality continues to widen.

Advocates of this strategy, SBM, maintain that decentralizing decision making encourages demand for a higher quality of education and ensures that schools reflect local priorities, values, needs and concerns. By giving a voice and decision-making power to local stakeholders who know more about the local education systems than do central policy makers, decentralization can improve educational outcomes and increase client satisfaction. One way to decentralize decision-making power in education is known popularly as school-based management (SBM).



There are other names for this concept, but they all refer to the decentralization of authority from the central government to the school level. SBM emphasizes the individual school (represented by any combination of principals, teachers, parents, pupils, and other members of the school community) as the main decision-making authority, and holds that this shift in the formulation of decisions would lead to improvement in the delivery of education. In Ghana reforms in laws have introduced several measures and structures to ensure school based management. At the level of the school, PTAs, SMCs and school-based SPAM are supposed to enhance governance at this level. However, these structures largely do not work. The capacities of PTAs are low. SMCs are not properly constituted and composed and in many cases are none existent (Ghana Education Service, 2010).

School-Based Management is the decentralization of authority from the central government to the school level (Caldwell 2005). In the words of Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz (1990), “School-based management can be viewed conceptually as a formal alteration of governance structures, as a form of decentralization that identifies the individual school as the primary unit of improvement and relies on the redistribution of decision-making authority as the primary means through which improvement might be stimulated and sustained” (p. 290).

Most SBM projects involve some sort of transfer of responsibility and decision making usually the responsibility for school operations to a combination of principals, teachers, parents, and other school community members. These projects try to empower principals and teachers and strengthen their professional motivation, thereby enhancing their sense of ownership of the school. They also seek to involve the local community in a meaningful way, making decisions about their local school. By these means, the projects aim to increase the speed and relevance of school level decision making.

Most SBM projects work through some sort of school committee (or School Council or School Management Committee). The school committee may among other things monitor the school's performance including test scores or teacher and student attendance. Secondly, it may also raise funds and create endowments funds for the school projects. Thirdly it may also appoint, suspend, dismiss, and remove teachers, and ensure that teachers' salaries are paid regularly too. Finally, notwithstanding but rarely, approve annual budgets, including the development budget, and examine monthly financial statements. Several of these projects among others seek to strengthen parents' involvement in the administration of the school by getting them involved in the school committee or council. Parents participate voluntarily and take on various responsibilities, ranging from the assessment of student learning to financial management. In some projects, parents are involved directly in the school's management by being custodians of the funds received and verifying the purchases and contracts made by the school. School councils also may be required to develop some sort of school improvement plan (Epstein, 1992; Ghana Education Service, 2010; World Bank, 2009).



SBM programs lie along a continuum in the degree to which decision-making is devolved to the school. The other key dimension of SBM is who is given responsibility for the devolved functions. There are four models that typify the various arrangements included in SBM reforms. First is the administrative-control SBM in which the authority is devolved to the school principal. Second is professional-control SBM in which teachers hold the main decision-making authority so as to use their knowledge of the school and its pupils. Third is a community-control SBM in which parents have the major decision-making authority. And finally a balanced-control SBM in which decision-making authority is shared by parents and teachers.



Based on psychological theory and on research into involvement of parents, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) mention three major constructs they believe to be central to parents' basic involvement in decisions. The first construct is the role and responsibilities that parents define for themselves in terms of their children's education. Only parents who believe their role to be active are inclined to become involved in education and school matters. The second construct is the parents' sense of efficacy for helping their children succeeds in school. Self-efficacious parents regard education as a shared responsibility (Bandura, 1997). They tend to believe that personal actions related to the child's schooling will be effective in improving school outcomes. Without such belief few parents are willing to invest extra time and effort in school involvement. The third construct relates to the perception of parents of being encouraged to become involved in the child's school education. For many parents, invitations and opportunities to become involved are important considerations.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) regard the first two constructs (role construction and sense of efficacy) as more crucial than the third construct (the perception of being invited to become involved). They therefore expect a high level of involvement if the first two conditions are fulfilled, even if the level of encouragement from the child and school is low. Conversely, if the child and school display a high invitational level, parents show at best a moderate level of involvement if the realization of one of the other conditions is low.

There is still little empirical research that might be interpreted as supporting the model of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997). One exception is a study by Peña (2001), a year long case study of an elementary school in Texas, serving predominantly Mexican American children. Peña concludes that, in order to improve parent involvement, perhaps the simplest yet most powerful recommendation is 'make the parent feel more welcome'.

Her suggestions include changes in teachers' attitudes, planning parent activities, and adjusting communication with parents in order to meet their needs.

The key argument in favor of decentralization is that it fosters demand at the local level and ensures that the kind of education that schools provide reflects local priorities and values. By giving voice and power to local stakeholders, decentralization can increase client satisfaction and improve educational outcomes. School autonomy and accountability may help solve some of the fundamental problems in education. If schools are given some autonomy over the use of their inputs, then they may be held accountable for using those inputs in an efficient manner. Decentralizing power to the school level also may improve service delivery to the poor by giving poor families a say in how local schools operate, and by giving schools an incentive to ensure that they deliver effective services to the poor and penalizing those who fail to do so (World Bank, 2009).

John Roundtree foundation (2001) in a publication highlighted seven key results from a study on; residential schools and disabled children: decision-making and experiences. First it established that most disabled children and young people had very mixed feelings about going away to residential school. Secondly, it also found out that some disabled children and young people said that having opportunities to make friends and have more independence was one of the best things about their school. Homesickness was common and all the children and young people that did so said it was great to go home at weekends or holidays.

Thirdly, they study concluded that for the overwhelming majority of parents residential school was not a preferred option and a very difficult decision to make. Fourth, parents and some disabled young people cited bad experiences in local special and mainstream schools as one of the main reasons for considering residential schools, along with



inadequate support to families in meeting their child's needs. Fifth, the local authorities were generally opposed to residential school placements.

Panel meetings usually had little opportunity to consider the needs of individual children: there were often disagreements between education and social services, inadequate information about children's needs and circumstances, and not enough time for a full discussion. Decisions could be delayed for many months. Sixth, the study also established that most placements solely funded by education authorities had little input from anyone in terms of monitoring care standards and children's welfare. Social services departments followed a variety of different practices, but very few children received the full protection of the Children Act. And finally, parents received little help in keeping in contact with their children or in attending reviews.

2.5 Parental contribution in the learning outcomes of children with disabilities

Some scholars claim that greater parental involvement could contribute to a higher academic achievement of the child (Eccles and Harold, 1993; Georgiou, 1999). In the Netherlands, important changes have recently been implemented with regard to the education of children with special needs. The changes are set out in the Pupil-Bound Funding (PBF) system. Parents now have the right to choose which type of school their child attends: inclusive education at a mainstream school or segregated education at a school for special education. One of the main aims of the new system is to increase parental involvement in education. Extensive research conducted over the past forty years indicates that when parents are engaged in their children's education, academic achievement increases (Michigan Department of Education, 2011).





Research over the last forty years provides educators and parents with a substantial body of evidence that parent involvement and engagement is associated with children's academic performance and social competence. Comprehensive surveys of this research document the following benefits for pupils, families and schools. First, pupils achieved more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background or the parents' education level. Second, pupils have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and complete homework more consistently.

Third, pupils have higher graduation rates and greater enrollment rates in post-secondary education. Forth, educators hold higher expectations of pupils whose parents collaborate with the teacher. Fifth, student achievement for disadvantaged children not only improves, but can also reach levels that are standard for middle-class children. In addition, the children who are farthest behind make the greatest gains. Sixth, children from diverse cultural backgrounds perform better when parents and professionals collaborate to bridge the gap between the culture at home and at the learning institution. Seventh, student behaviors such as alcohol use, violence, and antisocial behavior decrease as parent involvement increases.

Eighth, pupils will keep pace with academic performance if their parents participate in school events, develop a working relationship with educators, and keep up with what is happening with their child's school. Finally, ninth Junior and senior high school pupils whose parents remain involved make better transitions, maintain the quality of their work, and develop realistic plans for their future. Pupils whose parents are not involved, on the other hand, are more likely to drop out of school (Eccles & Harold, 1992; Ainscow, 2005; Georgiou, 1999).



According to research, the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to: (1) create a home environment that encourages learning; (2) communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; and (3) become involved in their children's education at school and in the community. This is consistent with procedures established by the Ghana Education Service to enhance the participation of parents in the education of their wards (2010).

It is, therefore, a key component of national educational policies and early childhood programs. Much of the research on parent involvement, as it relates to children's outcomes, has emphasized the relationship between specific parent involvement behaviors and children's achievement. Parental involvement at school (e.g., with school activities, direct communication with teachers and administrators) is associated with greater achievement in mathematics and reading (Griffith, 1996; Reynolds, 1992; Sui-Chu & Williams, 1996). Higher levels of parent involvement in their children's educational experiences at home (e.g., supervision and monitoring, daily conversations about school) have been associated with children's higher achievement scores in reading and writing, as well as higher report card grades (Epstein, 1991; Griffith, 1996; Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996; Keith et al., 1998).

Other research has shown that parental beliefs and expectations about their children's learning are strongly related to children's beliefs about their own competencies, as well as their achievement (Galper, Wigfield, & Seefeldt, 1997). Parents who evidenced high levels of school contact (volunteering in the classroom, participating in educational

workshops, attending Policy Council meetings) had children who demonstrated greater social competency than children of parents with lower levels of school contact (Parker et al., 1997). It was hypothesized that home-based involvement would be most strongly associated with positive classroom learning outcomes and that direct school-based involvement would predict lower levels of conduct problems. Home-Based Involvement activities, such as reading to a child at home, providing a place for educational activities, and asking a child about school, evidenced the strongest relationships to later pre-school classroom competencies. These activities were related to children's approaches to learning, especially motivation and attention/persistence, and were found to relate positively to receptive vocabulary.

2.6 Parental partnership with teachers in the education of their children

The Michigan State Board of Education has recognized the importance of parent and family engagement and passed the *Family Involvement Policy* on May 15, 1997. The Michigan House of Representatives also understands the value of parents and families and in 2001 urged schools to develop involvement contracts with parents of their pupils. The Michigan Senate acknowledged the role of parents and families in education in 2004 and called upon schools to develop parent involvement plans designed to support student achievement. In the 2005 when Ghana Education notice the importance of the role of parents in the education of children passed the act that brought into existence Parent Teacher Associations which have contributed significantly to school activities in Ghana.

Thwala, Ntinda, & Hlanze, (2015) in a study in Swaziland in their findings suggested the need for the development of training programs which will empower parents with knowledge to better partner with educators for the benefit of the child. To address these



challenges, government will need to put in place policies which will look at the needs of parents of the children with disabilities. Ziebart (2005) in a study on ‘supporting parents as active partners in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities’ concluded that communication between professionals and parents is the major barrier encountered by parents.

Canter A. (2004), one of the most effective means of ensuring academic success is to engage families in their children’s education. While family engagement confers benefits on all pupils, those with disabilities often require a greater degree of parental involvement and advocacy than their peers without disabilities in order to be assured of receiving the same level of instruction as the general student population. Children with disabilities often face multifaceted classroom challenges requiring special attention from instructors and active engagement from their families.

In the Michigan State Board of Education Family Involvement Policy (1997) and Canter (2004) recognized the critical role played by parents in the development of children particularly those with disabilities. Family of school pupils play a number of supporting roles, including as their advocates and as people who can provide valuable insight into their specific needs to instructors, who may at times feel pressed by trying to meet the needs of diverse groups of pupils. There are rarely any simple answers to balancing the needs of each individual child with disabilities with others’ needs, with competing structural, bureaucratic, pedagogical, and emotional factors often adding extra layers of effort and complexity for everyone involved. But when families and educators work together as partners, it enhances the likelihood that children with disabilities will have positive and successful learning experiences.





The U.S. Department of Education has categorized a wide range of special education needs, in part, for the purpose of determining the scope of classroom instruction and funding requirements necessary to ensure academic achievement for all children with disabilities. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), originally passed in 1975, all children are entitled to a “free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment required to meet their needs.” As written, the law requires that parents and families be involved in the creation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), which help to determine appropriate settings and services for their children. In Ghana, we have not been successful with the practice of inclusive education as teachers largely lack the basic skills to even identify disabilities of children with special education needs (Gadagbui, 2010).

Beyond this legal mandate, IDEA also acknowledges the unique importance of home–school partnerships for pupils with disabilities throughout their time in school. Families and home–school partnerships although vital to the learning experience of children with disabilities, home–school partnerships are nonetheless often hampered by multiple hurdles facing each person involved, frequently leaving families and instructors not knowing how to negotiate appropriate and effective means of ensuring an optimal learning experience for the children in their care.

The complex nature of the issues, laws and the intimidating process often makes parents feel left out. Educators also face challenges when considering how best to engage families in serving children with disabilities. Even though many educators are aware of the value of family engagement, they may lack training in how to go about it, particularly

when trying to involve families in the daily instructional or Individualized Education Program (IEP)(Department for International Development, 2003a).

Another factor that can hinder educators' efforts to build strong working relationships with families is not having adequate time to do so(Thwala, Ntinda, & Hlanze, 2015). Strong home–school partnerships based on ongoing dialogue and engagement can help alleviate many of the concerns of both families of children with disabilities and educators (Bakere, 1992). Ultimately, it is the children with disabilities themselves who benefit the most from feeling that there is continuity of communication, support, and caring between home and school.

Parents' leadership skills, providing input on school policy and programs relating to special education, and raising disability and special education awareness at schools and in the community. Although arising out of a US initiative, the recommendations may benefit similar parent groups in all areas (Michigan Department of Education, 2011). They recommended the use of psychological evaluations, which are often conducted as part of a comprehensive evaluation for special education services or used to create behavior modification plans.

Because the reports generated by these evaluations are often difficult to understand, however, it is important for parents to know the right questions to ask during follow-up meetings. The processes and tools help parents gain confidence as equal partners in their children's education through meaningful participation in IEP team meetings. The author noted that the degree to which these meetings represent significant opportunities for parents to exercise their right to participate in decision making largely depends on team culture, the attitudes and beliefs that a particular group of people values.





In any case parents can hold a significant position as far as the training and development of children with disabilities is concerned (Bakere, 1992). Among the processes in which parents can be involved are identification (diagnosis), assessment, educational programming, training, teaching, and evaluation (Blok, Peetsma, & Roede, 2007). Parents who are well oriented can easily identify disabilities at early stage. They can provide very essential tips in assessment of functional skills after otherwise inaccessible to professionals (Bakere, 1992; Blok, Peetsma, & Roede, 2007). According to these authors parents can also provide different information about the developmental characteristics of their children. They established that initial meeting with parents conducted to discuss the assessment result and findings also help to develop the management/teaching plan.

The child rights in Ghana also have this for parents to enforce. It is the responsibility of a parent to educate CWD as it is spelt out in article 16, sub-section (1) 'A parent, guardian or custodian of a child with disability of school going age shall enroll the child in a school'. And sub-section (2). A parent, guardian or custodian who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ten penalty units, or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding fourteen days.

Also the state has the responsibility to make facilities available in each region to ensure access. This is specified article (17), 'The Minister of Education shall by Legislative Instrument designate schools or institutions in each region which shall provide the necessary facilities and equipment that will enable persons with disability to fully benefit from the school or institution'. In addition the government has additional responsibilities in connection with pupils living with disabilities as specified in article 18 sub-section (1) and (2).



The Government shall provide free education for a person with disability, and establish special schools for persons with disability who by reason of their disability cannot be enrolled in formal schools. The ministry has also have additional responsibility of appropriate training to People Living With Disabilities (PWDs) as stated in article (19) ‘Where a person with disability has completed basic education but is unable to pursue further formal education, the Ministry shall provide the person with appropriate training’.

Educational acts, and international conventions and policies guarantee PWDs to inclusive education. Article 20 (1) A person responsible for admission into a school or other institution of learning shall not refuse to give admission to a person with disability on account of the disability unless the person with disability has been assessed by the Ministry responsible for Education in collaboration with the Ministries responsible for Health and Social Welfare to be a person who clearly requires to be in a special school for children or persons with disability. Sub-section (2) of this same article specifies punishment for offenders, ‘A person who contravenes Subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty penalty units or imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months or to both’.

Many reasons count for the involvement of parents in assessment and education of their children with disabilities. First, parents have the first-hand experience and information on many aspects of student’s background and existing present condition about which trainers and other professionals know very little (James,1986). Parents’ involvement in the education of their children with disabilities causes improvement in child’s outcome (Karnes and Taska, 1975). Parents are the key teachers, socializing agents, and

caregivers for their children during early years (Bruner, 1975). Second, the home is the ideal setting to gather information about family concerns and priorities. Parental involvement is an indispensable in diagnosis, education and rehabilitation of the children with disabilities.

Educators also face challenges when considering how best to engage families in serving children with disabilities. Even though many educators are aware of the value of family engagement, they may lack training in how to go about it, particularly when trying to involve families in the daily instructional or Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. Ocloo et al (2002) when discussing parents and facilitators relationships in Ghana, he cited Ferrell, (1986); Kroth, (1985), which states that “Parents and facilitators should not be viewed as either enemies or friends; they should be considered colleagues in the process of finding ways fulfill special needs of their children” (p.37).

Parents can provide different information about the developmental characteristics of their children. There are many processes in which parents can be involved, such as, identification, assessment, educational programming, training, teaching, and evaluation. The well informed parents can identify an early signs of a disability. Parents can provide different information about the developmental characteristics of their children. Parents can also provide useful information in assessment of functional skills often otherwise inaccessible to the professional (Mohsin, 2009).

Initial meetings with parents conducted to discuss the assessment results and findings also help to develop the management / teaching plan. To implement the management / teaching plan, parents’ cooperation and involvement are very helpful. In Pakistan, 2.49 percent population is with disabilities (National Census Report, 1998). It seems that this



estimate presented by national census report is not correct because the disability labels are not well defined. According to World Health Organization (WHO) as referred by Shahzadi (2001) about 10 per cent of the total population of developing countries is suffering from some sort of disabilities. Keeping in view, it seems necessary that there should be some program for development for this population and parents should be encouraged to participate in the education of their children.

In Ghana, because of low socio-economic status of some parents, couple with derogatory stigmatization that goes with disabilities, most parents shirks their responsibilities in the education of the affected children. Some parents who even send their children with mental retardation to school refuse to bring them home when school vacates. When these children finally get home, their parents do not supplement the teachers' efforts of continuous stimulation. Also some parents seem to be withdrawing from their role of partnership with teachers in their children's education, (Ocloo et al, (2002).

Gadagbui (1998), contend that parents lack comfort and some are ignorant about much pertinent information concerning the child. For example, some lack information on related services and are made to play passive roles. These things do not enhance parents' cooperation in the assessment, development, and training of the child with any disabilities. As a result, it is felt that one way of actively involving parents in any program about their children is first, to minimize their negative emotions through effective counseling, reassurance and parents' group participation to share experiences.

Besides, parents can draw collaborative goals with professionals since it is easier to work towards such goals and achieve them as the ideas are from their own decisions. Parents



can assist in facilitating many programs or any task the child is involved in. Again, professionals have to listen to parents respect their views and values. They should be honest parents depending on the condition that is objectively observed, assessed, and analyzed. Parents should be made active collaborators in observation and decision making. Professionals should encourage parents and get them informed every time they meet ask about child's progress. They should reassess the child's performance and discuss whatever issues with parents for them to be abreast with their children's strengths and weaknesses (Gadagbui, 1998).

Family involvement is the strongest predictor of child educational outcomes. This dimension associated significantly with children's motivation to learn, attention, task persistence, receptive vocabulary skills, and low conduct problems. Family involvement in education has been identified as a beneficial factor in young children's learning (National Research Council 2001; US Department of Education, 2000).

The attitude of the parents signifies that the supporting nature of family in their children's education. The parental attitude can be negative or positive. The negative attitude of the parents regarding education and schooling can prevent their children from getting education. With less parental support in school work, low level of motivation and poor self-esteem of children can result low school and personal achievement. Positive attitude of the parents can be beneficial to their children in many cases and can be reflected in improvement in class performance, creating interest among children to learn, and higher achievement scores in reading and writing.



Parental empowerment by legislation in educating children with disabilities is reviewed in this study in details. Parents play key roles in the education of their children with disabilities. Many areas involving the role of parents in educating children with disabilities are discussed and presented in this chapter.

2.7 Chapter Summary

The study reviewed literature on the topic of study; parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities. Specifically under this chapter, the researcher reviewed additional literature related to four sub-themes. First literature was reviewed on parental expectation of their wards with disabilities. Secondly, literature was reviewed on parental involvement in decision-making in the schools. Thirdly, the study reviewed literature on parental contribution to the learning outcomes of children with disabilities. And finally, literature on parent and teacher collaboration was assessed to understand what has been done in that field. The chapter was concluded with the chapter summary. This created a good grounding for the researcher to develop the research methodology for the study.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The main objective of this chapter is to outline the various scientific methods and techniques employed in order to arrive at empirical findings and the logic behind these choices. This chapter therefore discusses research methodology and designs employed to achieve the objective of the thesis. The central objective of the thesis was to delve into parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities in the Jaman North District of Ghana: (1) to explore the expectations of parents in the education of their CWD; (2) to investigate how parents of pupils with disabilities are involved in the decision making process in schools; (3) to assess the contributions parents' of CWD in enhancing in their learning outcome; and (4) to find out how partnership between parents and teachers could be enhanced to support CWD.

To achieve these objectives mixed method design approaches were used. This chapter therefore outlines key methodological approaches and design strategies used in the study but starting with introduction. Subsequent sections will deal with instrumentation, data collection methods, data analysis and presentation and chapter summary.

3.1 Profile of the Study Area

Jaman North District is located between latitude 7' 40" N and 8' 27", and longitude 2' 30" W and 2' 60"W (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The district is physically located to the North-Western part of the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. It shares boundary with Tain District to the North-East, Jaman South District to the South-West, and bordered on the East to the La Cote d'Ivoire. The district capital, Sampa is located about 119 km



from Sunyani the regional capital while it is 504 km from Accra, the national capital (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

The population of the District according to the 2010 population and housing census, the total population of the Jaman District is estimated to be 83,059. Males constitute 48.1 percent and females represent 51.9 percent. The population of the district is youthful (almost 40% of the population is below 15 years) depicting a broad base population pyramid which tapers off with a small number of elderly persons (60 years and older) representing 7.6 percent. The total age dependency ratio for the district is 83.6, the dependency ratio for rural localities is higher (92.5) than that of urban localities (76.2).

The district has many educational institutions for the different levels of educational ladder. The district has the following basic schools; 57 Kindergartens, 57 primary and 44 Junior High schools that serve both able and disable pupils (GSS, 2010).

About 70.3 percent of the population aged 15 years and older is economically active and 29.7 percent are economically inactive. Of the economically active population, 96.8 percent are employed while 3.2 percent are unemployed. For those who are economically inactive, a larger percentage of them are pupils (67.0%), 14.6% perform household duties and 8.0 percent are either too young or old to work. About seven out of ten (69.4%) of unemployed persons in the district are seeking for work for the first time. The map of the study area is indicated in the map below.



Map 1: Map of Brong Ahafo Region



3.2 Research Approach

There are three key approaches (qualitative, quantitative and mixed) to every research therefore influences whether mono or mixed research approach is employed. The approach (es) a researcher employs also is largely influenced by the ontological (world view) and epistemological (theory of knowledge) paradigms of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Mertens, 1998; Crotty, 1998 cited in Creswell, 2009) are the basic beliefs that guide the actions and inactions of researchers. That is, the ontological and epistemological paradigms also inform the type of approach, instrument, data collection method and the analytic strategy a researcher employs in a piece of research (Creswell, 2009).



On the basis of topic which renders itself for both quantitative and qualitative analysis, a mixed methods approach was adopted for the study. The bulk of the research questions start with ‘what’ and ‘how’ and therefore cast the light of this study in the area of descriptive research (Cooper & Schindler, 2000). However, since this same study requires detail explanations of the issues under study, the use of descriptive research alone was not adequate to generate significant data to answer the questions that were raised in the research questions in the first place. Consequently, the researcher had to look at alternative approach that could use descriptive research in combination with other specific research approach will generate some narratives. This gave rise to the choice and use of mixed method approach. In the subsequent sections, a discussion of how mixed method approach was applied in the thesis is presented.

3.3 Mixed Method Design

For any research process a systematic research design is appropriate in enabling the researcher arrives at a valid findings and logical conclusions. According to MacDaniel & Gates (1996:41) research design “is a systematic plan that has to be followed in order to reach the objectives of the study”. As a result the researcher was focusing on a design that spells grounds for collection and analysis of data in a way that aims to achieve relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. This follows that the researcher has to devise a plan that is in conformity with the overall objectives of the study.

According to Creswell (2009), there are three types of mixed approaches; sequential, concurrent and transformative mixed method approaches. For purposes of time and financial constraints, concurrent approach was further adopted. Consequently, both

qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously. Under the quantitative approach survey method was used while case study was used under the qualitative approach. The investigation is based on a qualitative as well as quantitative research approach, making use of descriptive survey and case study techniques.

3.3.1 Survey approach

With the quantitative studies the researcher used a cross-sectional survey. In cross-sectional studies, you decide what you want to find out, identify the study population, select a sample (if need to), and contact your respondents to find out the required information (Kumar, 1999). Cross-sectional survey is useful in painting an overall picture as it stands. In order to gain an understanding of parental involvement of education of children with disabilities, survey questionnaires were administered to teachers, parents and CWD in the district capital of Jaman-North District.

This Survey approach was also adopted because the study is conducted once and gives an overall view of the issues under study. Similarly like statistical study it emphasizes on the breadth of the study. It attempts to capture the characteristics of the population by making inferences from a sample characteristics thereby allowing some of the issues to be tested quantitatively (Cooper & Schindler, 2000). Invariably the generalizations about the findings are presented based on the representativeness of the sample and the validity of the design.

The researcher acquired the list of all teachers in the district capital. These names were written on pieces of paper and lottery method was used to select participants for the interview. This ensured that every teacher had an equal chance of being selected for the



study. This helped to check biases in the selection and also ensured representativeness of the respondents for the study.

Similarly data on numbers of children with disabilities were gotten from the District Education Office. These schools were contacted and names of parents with CWD were collated and using the same simple random method, lottery approach, parents were selected for the study. Following on the disposition of parents with CWD, they were assessed against the inclusion and exclusion criteria, for inclusion of their wards in the list of participants.

The survey questionnaire was administered to 110 participants, comprising of 50 teachers, 30 parents of CWD, and 30 pupils with disabilities in the Jaman North District of the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana.

3.3.2 Case Study

The qualitative research has been chosen because the investigation involves in-depth study of parents' involvement in the education of children with disabilities. With qualitative studies, only small samples of parents, teachers and children with disabilities were invariably chosen, in view of the in-depth nature of the study. In such studies, one cannot engage in intensive examination of all the factors, as it would entail huge costs and energy expenditure. For the above reason, qualitative studies use small samples (Welmen and Kruger, 2004). In the case of this study, the researcher made use of five persons per three mixed focus groups to unravel the narrative part of the study. There were challenges in getting all the participants to agree on appropriate time for the focus group discussions.





Although qualitative methods are dominant in this study, some quantitative methodology has been applied through the use of a structured questionnaire administered to key role players involved in the education of children with disabilities. MacDaniel & Gates (1996) asserts that an important technique to strengthen the reliability and validity of a research design is by combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies through triangulation, which is characterized by the use of multiple methods of sampling, research instruments, and statistical analyses. In this particular study, the qualitative aspect of the study helped in explaining the quantitative data as it provided cases to clearly explain the current situation of parental involvement in education of CWD.

The investigation involves the following qualitative techniques: Interviews, Case Studies, and Field Studies. Welmen and Kruger (2004:182-183) state that field studies are important because they aim at discovering the relations and interactions among variables in real social structures. This makes the investigation more realistic because it is on the spot under natural circumstances of the specific case. The study further provided the researcher the opportunity to understand and appreciate issues that encompassed the parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities.

A case study design is employed because this investigation focuses on analyzing a limited number of units' parents, teachers and the disabled children. Case studies place more emphasis on a full contextual analysis of fewer events or conditions and their interrelations (Cooper & Schindler, 2000: 137). Therefore, with a case study approach, the investigator directs all efforts to the uniqueness of the particular case in all its complexity in order to justify generalization. In this case, parents and teachers who are

involved in the education of disabled children as well as the disabled children themselves are few and so can empirically represent the rest without distorting the reliability of the findings (Kothari, 2005).

Case studies involve in-depth, contextual analysis of similar situations in other organizations, where the nature and definition of the problem happen to be the same as experienced in the current situation. Case studies usually provide qualitative rather than quantitative data for analysis and interpretation (Kothari, 2005). Respondents are more comfortable and express themselves better when they speak their own language. This was challenging as the researchers were not native speakers.

Young (1956), support the use of case study methodology by asserting that it is a method which is very popular in qualitative analysis because it involves a careful and complete observation of a social unit, be that unit a person, family, an institution, a cultural group, or even the entire community. It is a method of study that focuses on depth rather than breadth. The case study places more emphasis on the full analysis of a limited number of events or conditions. Therefore, the object of the case study method is to locate the factors that account for the behavior patterns of the given unit as an integral totality. As a result the issues under study emanates from the four objective areas of this study: to explore the expectations of parents in the education of their CWD; to investigate how parents of pupils with disabilities are involved in the decision making process in schools; to assess the contributions parents' of CWD in enhancing in their learning outcome; and lastly to find out how collaborations between parents and teachers could be enhanced to support CWD.



However with the qualitative phase, the researcher serving as a research instrument, conducted interviews for three mixed focus groups with each group comprising of five people. This allowed the researcher to specifically seek for clarifications on issues like expectations of parents in educating children with disabilities.

Following the interviews under the survey aspect of the study, parents who demonstrated good understanding of the issues under study were subsequently contacted to participate in the focus group discussions. Also these persons were assessed against the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Participants that met the inclusion criteria were selected for the study.

3.4 Population

Choosing a sample size depends on a number of factors. These include the kind of data analysis the researcher intends to do, the different variables to be examined and the degree of homogeneity or heterogeneity of the population (Kreuger & Neuman, 2006). Based on the analysis the researcher intends to do and the information gathered during the pilot study, the researcher selected a sample size of 110 for the study. This included thirty (30) parents, fifty (50) teachers, and thirty (30) pupils (with mental, visual, and hearing impairment or any other).

3.4.1 Sampling Design

The researcher adopted two sampling procedures, purposive and convenient sampling. Purposive sampling also called judgmental sampling is non-probability sampling techniques in which a researcher selects the sample based on his or her judgment about the characteristics required of the sample member and the specific purpose that the researcher has in mind base on his or her research (Proctor, 2000). Purposive sampling



was used to select the sample for the in-depth interviews, this was to enable the researcher include a desired and representative sample of parents with children with disabilities. Accordingly, the total respondent for this category included thirty (30) parents, thirty (30) children with disabilities, and fifty (50) teachers. The criteria for selecting parents, teachers and CWD are listed below.

1. Criteria for inclusion of parents with CWD

Based on this approach the criterion for selecting parents who had children with disabilities included the following.

- a. The parent's child must be mentally, visually or hearing impaired
- b. The parent must live with the child with disability
- c. The parent's child with disability must be attending school
- d. The parent must be willing to cooperate in this research work

2. Criteria for inclusion of teachers

In selecting teachers for this study, the researcher adopted the following criteria for inclusion or exclusion from the study.

- a. The teacher must be involved in teaching the child with any of those challenges.
- b. The teacher must be willing to cooperate in this research work.
- c. The teacher must have some experience in handling children with disabilities.

3. Criteria for inclusion of pupils

In selecting student for this study, the researcher adopted the following criteria for inclusion or exclusion of pupils.

- a. The student must be mentally, visually or hearing impaired
- b. The student must be a school going child and in school



- c. He or she must live in the community where this research took place.

This procedure actually helped the researcher with the specific kind of information the researcher needed because the sample was selected based on experts opinion and the researcher's own criterion indicated above.

Another procedure that was used alongside purposive sampling was convenient sampling (also called haphazard or accidental sampling). This refers to sampling by obtaining the people or units that are most conveniently available. A convenience sample is the one that the researcher uses any subjects that are available to participate in the study (Babbie, 2001).

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

This aspect of the study presents the methods and instruments that were employed for the data collection. The methods and instruments employed include: questionnaires and interviews.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire that was administered to teachers had five sections. The first section solicited the profile of the respondents. It composed of five questions. The issues include sex, academic qualification, years on the work, class and methodology used by the teacher. The second through to the four sections used Likert-type scales with 1 as strongly disagree while the remaining 2, 3, 4 and 5 represented disagree, uncertain, agree and strongly agree respectively. Each of the sections contained nine statements. The second was to assess the expectations of parents in the education of their CWD. The remaining sections, 2 (parents involvement in decision-making), 3 (Parental involvement



in education of CWD) and 5 (Parent-teacher collaboration) measured the other three objectives.

The second questionnaire was administered to parents of children with disabilities. It also had five sections. The first section solicited for personal information; age, sex, level of education, marital status and number of children. The second section was used to gather information on parental expectations with regards to academic outcomes in the education of their CWD. This section contained nine questions. The first question under this section is, 'Are you aware of your child's condition'? The third section assessed parental involvement in decision making and it was made up of four questions; 'Do you attend PTA meetings'? etc. the fourth section assessed parents contribution towards their children's education and learning outcomes. It was composed of 7 questions. Finally, the last section of this questionnaire was made up of 8 questions. The first question in this section was, 'Do you visit your ward when at school'?

The third and final questionnaire was administered to the CWD. It had four sections; personal information, pupils' expectations in school, parental involvement in education and finally, the last section was on improving teacher/student relationship. The first section had five questions; name, age, type of disability, number of year in school and class. The second section had seven questions. The first question was 'why are you in school'? The third section also had seven questions. One of the seven questions in section three is 'Do your parents attend PTA meetings regularly'? The final section assessed how to improve teacher and student relationship. The section had four questions. The first question of that section was, 'what your teachers' behavior towards you'?



3.5.2 Interview guide

An interview guide or semi-structure interview guide was developed to streamline the interview process for the focus group discussions. This was used to conduct in-depth interview on the issues under study. Unstructured interviews can be carried out in a one-to-one situation or collectively with a group (Kumar, 1999). In this particular study it was conducted in a group of five. The discussions were guided by the interview guide.

The interview guide similarly had five sections. The sections included; profile, expectations of parents in the education of children with disabilities, parental involvement in decision making, the role of parents in the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities and finally status of collaboration between parents and teachers in enhancing the learning outcomes of children with disabilities.

The first section sourced the biographical data of the respondents. They include age, sex and family background, educational level, marital status and number of children if applicable. Depending on who the participant is additional information was sought for or further probing was carried out. For instance if a respondent was a teacher, the details of academic qualifications were probed.

The second section composed of questions on expectations of parents in the education of their children with disabilities. Some sample questions include: (a) Have the teachers suggested any other options for your child's education and what are they; (b) What job opportunities do you expect for your ward in future and Please what are your expectations with regards to your child's academic performance; (c) What is your level of satisfaction in the manner in which your child is treated?; (d) What is your level of



satisfaction in the manner in which you treat a child with disability either as parent or as a teacher?; and (e) What skills are your children learning and what is your assessment of their level of absorption?

The third section investigated how parents of pupils with disabilities are involved in the decision making processes in schools within the study district. Some questions that were asked include; (a) what is the frequency and participation in PTA meetings and visits to the school?; (b) what contribution do you make to the decision making in the school?; (c) Which kind of decision making do you get involved?; (d) did you specifically discuss issues concerning children with disabilities?; and (e) is the PTA able to address the needs and concerns of you and your child?.

The fourth section assessed the contributions of parents to the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities. Questions asked included: (a) What kind of school is your child attending?; (b) what is the nature and value of school fees?; (c) what are your contributions towards the development of child's school?; (d) What are you expected to provide with respect to your ward' education?; (e) how do you provide information about your child to the teachers?; (f) Do you assist or seek for someone to help your ward with his/her homework?; and (g) How do you motivate your ward to enhance academic successes in the school and in the home?

Finally the fifth section, explored the collaboration between parents and teachers to support the education of children with disabilities in the Jaman North District of Ghana. In section the questions that were pursued included: (a) how do you collaborate with stakeholders in the education sector to educate the child with disability?; (b) which are



working and which are not working?; (c) what other things do you think parents and teachers could collaborate on to improve the learning situation of children with disabilities within the mainstream school?; (d) can you give me cases and situations where parent and teachers collaboration have yielded positive results; and (e) can you give me cases and situations where parents and teachers collaboration did not yield intended results.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

To ensure quality control of the data collected, the researcher ensured that the questionnaires were pretested in the field. This is a situation where some of the questionnaires are administered on a pilot basis just to ensure that responses did not deviate substantially from the actual responses that may be expected from the field. The researcher and his assistants pre-tested the questionnaire in three selected schools which were not part of the study. The feedback was inputted into the questionnaire. For instance words and sentences that were ambiguous and difficult for the understanding of the respondents were reworded.

Another quality control measure that the researcher adopted was that the researcher trained some research assistants before the actual field day; they were also guided through phone calls just to make sure that the data gathered was accurate. The training for the research assistants included; attitude and manners of researchers, processes involved in research and interviewing of children.

The researcher further ensured that the sample chosen was actually the targeted respondents. This was done through prior interaction with the parents before the actual



interview day. To ensure researchers did the appropriate procedures for conducting the interview, a brief guideline was developed for usage on the field.

Moreover, the researcher kept to the designed sampling procedure and ensured that the team was able to gather the needed data without major hindrances just to bring about accurate feedback for proper analysis.

Finally it took the researcher and his assistant one month to complete the entire process of data collection in November, 2015. Largely the researcher took 45 minutes to complete one questionnaire with a respondent.

3.6.1 Reconnaissance Survey

The study started with the reconnaissance survey. It involved initial visits to the study population to familiarize with some of the parents whose children have disabilities as well the children with disabilities. This afforded the researcher the opportunity to make necessary adjustments to the sampling procedure, interviews guide and questionnaires employed for collecting the data. This phase actually took one month. This then led the researcher to the main survey. In the main survey, the focus was about collecting data on parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Data were gathered from two major sources. These were the primary and secondary sources. It is however important to note that using any particular approach of data collection will depend on the problem of the study, the purpose of the study, the skills of



the researcher and resources available. Therefore, in this study the researcher actually made use of the two sources of data collection; secondary and primary sources of data.

3.7.1 Secondary source

In using the secondary sources of data the researcher reviewed existing works of others so as to gain an appropriate understanding of the area that was being researched in. Such literature came from published books, authentic publications in the area of study, peer reviewed journals, the reports of Jaman North District Assembly among others. Also annual census information of the district for the past three years, 2014 - 2016 was utilized for the collection of baseline information on the issues under study.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)/ No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act was utilized which succinctly gives definition of parent and guardian (Washington, 2011). Some publications of Fan & Chen (2001) were also reviewed for this study. Similarly the works of Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) & Sheldon (2002) were cited for this work. Also extensive work of Epstein (1991) and Greenwood & Hickman (1991) particularly on parents' participation in school activities and then parents' aspirations for their children by Spera, Wentzel & Matto (2009) were also reviewed for this study. Other publications that were reviewed for this study include Sheldon (2002), Gronlick and Slowiaczek's (1994), Chavkin and William (1993) and Feuerstein (2000). Despite the main challenge associated with relying on secondary data sources were high tendency of being misinterpreted due to environmental and circumstantial difference, such sources always exist and provided sign post to researchers in the conduct of their current study.



3.7.2 Primary source

Primary data was gathered through observation, personal interview and self-administered questionnaire (structured) including open and closed ended questions. Self-administered questionnaire was administered to the parents to obtain their views on how collaboration between parents and teachers could enhance the learning of children with disabilities. An in-depth interview was conducted with parents to assess the extent of their involvement in the education of their children with disabilities.

An observation method and an in-depth interview was further conducted on the children with disabilities to obtain their views on the parental involvement in their education; this was to enable the researcher triangulate their responses with the responses of the parents and teachers involved in the study. A sample of the questionnaires that were used to collect the data from the respondents is attached to the study (see appendix 1 - 3).

3.7.3 Training of Research Assistants

In order to research out to all the respondents (30 parents, 30 children with disabilities and 50 teachers) and to expedite the research activities, two research assistants were recruited and trained. As part of the training, the research assistants were trained on how to interview children and also persons with disabilities. In addition the training concentrated on the content of the research questionnaires, reading out questions for respondents who could not read and write and recording of responses, and the general conduct of a researcher during data collection.

After training the research assistants, they were given three questionnaires each to pre-test and issues that came up were finally discussed in plenary as feedback to both



research assistants. Field procedures were designed by the researcher to ensure the survey was effective. The field procedures included the recruitment, training, deployment and supervision of interviewers, administering and collection of completed questionnaires (AERA, 1998). The rationale was to ensure that the research assistants understood the issues under consideration in the study and provided appropriate guide for the conduct of the study. Moreover, the trained research assistants were coached to demonstrate a lot of qualities in behavior and action that was expected to enhance the quality of work.

The research assistants were trained in April 25, 2015 in preparation towards the data collection in May, 2015. Subsequently, they were made to pre-test three questionnaires each on April 26, 2015. On the same day the pre-tested questionnaires were vetted and subsequently discussed. The discussions also centered on how they conducted themselves when they were administering the questionnaires. For instance, one of the research assistants brought out bottled water and took some of the water while in the process of data collection. This was discussed extensively with related issues and it was agreed that it was not appropriate to introduce certain acts (over dressing, under dressing) as it created a gap between the interviewee and interviewer and this could weaken the rapport between the two. This has further implications on the quality of information generated from the field work.

3.7.4 Administration of Questionnaire

A questionnaire survey is a written list of questions, the answers to which are supplied by the respondents that are further analyzed using some statistical tools and techniques (Groove et al., 2004). Interviewer-administered questionnaires were conducted on the





respondents by the researcher and his team of research assistants. The purpose was to gather all the data needed from the respondents for the study. In this study, researcher used three survey questionnaires. One was used for teacher participants, while the second and third were used for parents and children with disabilities. The details of the questionnaires are explained so it could help to provide responses could be used to answer the research questions.

First, GES conducts annual census of the schools in the country. The district data for 2015/16 of the district was retrieved from the District Education Office. The schools that indicated that they have children with disabilities were selected for the study. Subsequently the teachers for the various classes which had children with disabilities from these school schools were selected for the study. The list of all teachers with pupils with a form of disability was listed and developed into a sampling frame. Subsequently, using a simple random sampling method the required number of fifty (50) teachers was sampled for the study.

Since the interview was administered by the researcher and the research assistants, exactly 50 questionnaires were administered to teachers and the researchers were able to get all the questionnaires fully completed. Furthermore the respondents that were selected were measured against inclusion and exclusion criteria. The questionnaires were administered on May 4 – 6, 2015.

A similar approach was used in sampling the children with disabilities as well as their parents for the study. Using the inclusion and exclusion criteria all the children with disabilities were listed and composed into a sampling frame. First thirty pupils were selected, who served as interviewees for the children with disabilities. In the same vein, a

second set of thirty pupils (30) pupils were selected from the list and then their parents were traced to be interviewed. This ensured that the research had a wide coverage. The pupils were interviewed from May 7 –12, 2015. This aspect of the research took a lot of time because they are children with disabilities and naturally it required one was patient.

Finally parents who demonstrated interest and experience in explaining the issues under study were invited for the focus group discussions. In all 25 parents comprising of 15 females and 10 males were invited for the focus group discussions. They were put into groups of five and interviewed using semi-structure interview guide.

3.7.5 Interview

The semi-structured interview guide was divided into five and composed of 25 questions with each five questions for each phase apiece. The sections included; personal profile, expectations of parents, parental involvement in education, parental role in learning outcomes of CWD and parent-teacher collaboration to better assist CWD in the district.

Respondents who demonstrated depth of knowledge during the survey and also accepted to request to participate in the FGD were invited to participate in the discussions. These participants were further matched against the inclusion and exclusion criteria for participants in the study.

To ensure that participants fully participated in the group discussions, meetings were scheduled to last for a period between 45 and 60 minutes. This was fully communicated to participants before the meeting started. In addition, all ethical issues were discussed



with participants before and after the start of the focus group discussions. The researcher was able to access these respondents during the survey interview.

3.7.6 Access to the field and data

The researcher was able to access the field with support from District Education Office. A copy of the letter from UDS was sent to the education office and they subsequently introduce me to the Circuit Supervisors and Head teachers which helped to facilitate the work. A letter was written for the researcher which served which was used to gain access to the schools and the headteachers. Access to the field will not have possible without the support from the District Education office.

These District Education Officers served as a vehicle to reach out to headteachers and teachers as well as subsequently to parents of children with disabilities and the children with disabilities. This paved the way for the researcher to carry out the study in those schools by having direct access to the teachers, parents of children with disabilities and children with disabilities. Though access to the schools and teachers provided several opportunities for easy entry into the community and subsequent data gathering, the researcher had to renegotiate access with the individual parents with children with disabilities and subsequently with children with disabilities prior to administering of questionnaire.

It was not difficult to meet these interviewees but some of the issues tended to be emotional and so the interviewee had to be technical in handling parents and their children. As a result the researcher used participatory approaches and appropriate sense of empathy to be able to dig into the issues of children with disability.



3.8 Data Analysis

According to Babbie (2001), data analysis has to do with translating data into a meaningful outcome that can enable the researcher draw conclusions about the problem he or she is investigating. The researcher collected the responses in a form of issuing data questionnaires. These questionnaires were then processed and analyzed.

Technically, data processing implies editing, coding, classification and tabulation of collected data so that they are amenable to analysis (Kothari, (2005: 122). Data editing requires that the researcher will edit the data by examining the collected raw data to detect errors and omissions. Therefore, the researcher undertook a careful scrutiny of the completed questionnaires and/or schedules. Editing were done to ensure that the data was accurate, consistent with other facts gathered, uniformly entered, and are well arranged to facilitate coding and tabulation. Editing was done both in the field and centrally.

Analysis of the data took take place after editing, coding and tabulation. Analyses were both descriptive and qualitative in nature. The quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS). The Statistical package then displayed the data in a form of tables, pie charts and bar charts which greatly enhanced the analysis process because they were effective illustrations that depicted relations and trends. Triangulation further helped qualitative and quantitative analysis to yield simultaneous interpretation of results.

Dissimilar to the quantitative data, qualitative data were managed by intense and detailed reading of the interview scripts to identify important categories, quotes and themes. The unrelated themes and issues were then excluded from the study report. The notes taken



from the focus group interviews were developed into group reports and subsequently all three reports were synthesized as one report as the qualitative study report. The report was used as interpretative and explanatory notes to the quantitative reports. The rationale for in-depth interviews and discussions were to ensure that returned circular migrants' stories and lived experiences were obtained and triangulated with the data obtained in the quantitative study. Again reports that were generated from observations during the time of the research were merged into this qualitative report. Finally some aspects of the research where the researcher had on the field experience as teacher were also merged into the study. These qualitative aspects of the study provided the context for the interpretation of the quantitative on issues of parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities.

3.9 Chapter summary

It is clear from the above that qualitative methods were employed to gather the data for the study. Non-probability sampling methods were adopted to select the respondents for the study. Specifically, purposive and convenient sampling techniques were used to sample respondents for questionnaire survey. The sample was arrived at through the judgment of the researcher without any mathematical calculation. The overall sample size for the study for was 110. The responses were then edited, coded and analyzed. The next chapter deals with results and findings.



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULT

4.0 Introduction

This concurrent mixed method study was conducted to achieve four specific objectives: to explore the expectations of parents in the education of their children with any form of disabilities; to investigate how parents of pupils with disabilities are involved in the decision making process in schools; to assess the contributions parents' of pupils with disabilities in enhancing in their learning outcome and finally to find out how collaborations between parents and teachers could be enhanced to support children with disabilities.

The first section covers socio-demographic background of respondents. In the second section covers the four objectives of the study while the last section covers the summary for the chapter.

4.1 Demographic/ background data

Table 1: Gender of the respondent

Sex of Respondent	Teachers	Parents	Children with Disabilities	Total
Male	58% (29)	26.7% (08)	53.3% (16)	48.2% (53)
Female	42% (21)	73.3% (22)	46.7% (14)	51.8% (57)
Total	100% (50)	100% (30)	100% (30)	100% (110)

Source: field survey, 2015

Table 1 presents the gender status of respondents. A slight majority of teacher-respondents were males with 58% (29) while females were 42% (21). On the contrary the majority of parent-respondents are females with 73.3% (22) while the remaining 26.7% (08) were males. Additionally, 60% (18) of the children with disabilities





respondents were males and 40% (12) were females. Overall, it can be inferred that the majority of respondents were females with 51.8% (57) while males were 48.2% (53), which is reflective of our national population which shows females are more than males with a slim margins (2000, PHC). Besides, this could attributed to the fact that by the Ghanaian socialization process, females are largely involved in the provision of home based care for vulnerable persons like the aged, persons with disabilities and generally the sick. Furthermore, male parents have the prerogative to abandon their children at birth when they notice these children are born with disabilities. On the other hand females do not have that option of abandoning their children when they have disabilities and they tend to bonded with these children till death do them apart. At best their male counterparts provide them with some financial support to help with the up of these children with disabilities.

Table 2: Academic qualification of teachers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Professional	40	80.0	80.0	80.0
Non-Professional	10	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2015

Table 2 shows that, the majority of teachers are professional with 80% (40) while the remaining teachers are non-professional, 10% (10). It can be inferred that the majority of teachers in the district and the country as a whole are trained on the basic requirements of the profession. The biggest challenge is the inability of the system to embark on regular refresher courses for these teachers, intensify monitoring and supervision as well as work on a good compensation system to maintain the morale of teachers. It also came strongly in the focus group discussions teachers and headteachers are scarcely given

refresher training. Although they agreed there are some arrangements for capacity building for teachers like school-based or cluster-based training and refresher training they simply do not happen for several reasons. First the capitation grants are released very late and also as an only source of funding it woefully inadequate to support both administrative and for capacity building.

Table 3: Experience of teachers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1-5	20	40.0	40.0	40.0
6-10	16	32.0	32.0	72.0
11-15	10	20.0	20.0	93.0
16+	4	8.0	8.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2015

The majority of teachers, 60% (30) as indicated in Table 4 shows that they have 6+ years of experience on the job. Whereas 32% (16) have experience between 6-10 years, 20% (10) have experience between 11-15 years. However, 40% of the teachers have experience between 1- 5 years while a minority of the respondents, 8% (8), has experience 16+ years. Teachers within the study have good experience on the job and potentially can handle task assign them, more so if they are given refresher training. As explained above, as a result of the low capacity development programs for teachers, there is no positive correlation between number of years on the job and accumulated knowledge and experiences on the job. What this means you could meet a teacher with several years on the job as teacher and/or as educational administrator and yet the person is immature in the laws and conventions of the service in which the person works. This could have been examined deeper with knowledge test as the instrument. However this study is has limited resources to allow the researcher delve in that area of study. In



addition it is key area of interest of this study and therefore the limited information on it in this particular study.

Table 4: Methods of teaching by teachers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Teacher centered	37	74.0	74.0	74.0
Child centered	13	26.0	26.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2015

The majority of teachers, 74% (37), in Jaman North District in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana used teacher-centered approach in teaching. However, a minority of teachers, 26% (13) use the child-centered approach. The method of teaching used by the majority of teachers, 73% (37), is not appropriate for CWD in the normal school system. This means that, the methodology adopted by 8 out of ten teachers and manner in which they carried out their tasks as teachers is not friendly to pupils in general let alone children with disabilities.

During the study, the researchers came to a conclusion that teacher centered approach was the dominant approach for tuition in the majority of schools across the district. This is also confirmed by the fact the researcher's over one decade of experience as teacher. This was also confirmed by parents that teachers did not use innovative means for teaching more so when these same schools also contain some children with disabilities. This feeds in the earlier fact that teachers stay on the job for several years without in-service training. In addition, it was also observed that many of the teachers taught without the use of teaching and learning materials (TLMs). For instance it was observed



that about eight out of ten teachers did not use TLMs for instruction and common excuse given was that there were not available in the schools.

4.2 Parental Expectation in the Education of Children with Disabilities

This variable (parental expectation of CWD) was investigated using Likert-type scale where “1” represented “Strongly Disagree”, 2, 3,4 and 5 represented Disagree, Uncertain, Agree; Strongly Agree respectively. The result from the study on the expectations of parents in sending their children to school is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Parental Expectations of their children with disabilities

Descriptive Statistics						
Item		N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
	Parents:					
1	know that their children need special treatment	30	1	5	3.53	1.02
2	are satisfied with the treatment given their wards with disabilities in the school	30	1	5	3.12	0.81
3	are not satisfied with the teaching provided for their children in school	30	1	5	2.89	0.89
4	Think their children should pass	30	1	5	3.74	0.82
5	regard their children as having the same potential as any child without disabilities	30	1	5	3.49	0.95
6	Think that their children should be able to live independent lives in future	30	1	5	3.99	0.87
7	Think that their children should also contribute to national development	30	1	5	3.89	0.85
8	Regard their children performance as satisfactory	30	1	5	3.01	0.75
9	Expect that their children should be able to acquire basic employable skills	30	1	5	4.05	0.88
	Valid N (listwise)	30				

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The result from table 5 shows that items 9 (Expect that their children should be able to acquire basic employable skills), 6 (Think that their children should be able to live independent lives in future), and 7 (Think that their children should also contribute to



national development) are the key expectations of sending their wards with disabilities to school. Items 9, 6 and 7 had mean scores of 4.05 (SD=0.88), 3.99 (SD=0.87) and 3.89 (SD=0.85). Based on its score on the 5-point Likert Scale, parents indicated they send their wards with disabilities to school to acquire basic employable skills, so their children can live independent lives and also, contribute to national development.

This was further collaborated by parents of CWD and their children with disabilities themselves. For instance, 66.7% (20 parents) indicated they send their children to school 'to be able to acquire employable skills' while 33.3% (10) gave 'self-help skills' as the rationale for sending their CWD to school. Also 60.0% (18) of CWD indicated they go to school 'to acquire knowledge and skills'. Parents expect their wards to take appointments as teachers, musicians, mechanics and farmers. Whereas CWD also expect to be medical doctors, security officers (police), drivers, teachers and artists.

Results from the same table also indicate parents of children with disabilities send their wards to school because they think their wards should pass (item 4) and know their children need special treatment (item 1). These items 4 and 1 had means scores of 3.74 (SD=0.82) and 3.53 (SD=1.02) respectively. The score of these items on the Likert scale is closer to 'Agree', which has a score of 4; than 'Uncertain' which has a score of 3.

Parents also indicated that, they send their children with disabilities to school to acquire knowledge as well as certify it and also acquire and internalize functional relationship skills to fit into the society particularly the rationale for sending them to schools where inclusive education is practiced. Parents of CWD collaborated results gotten from teachers. The majority of parents, 96.2% (29) indicated they are aware of their children's condition. Primarily parents send children to normal school because it is the only option



they know and also because special school is far away making it expensive. According to parents, they send their CWD to normal schools because their children prefer to be in those schools. In a discussion with a parent who was not seeing his expectations in his ward made the following comments.

“Frankly speaking I must admit that my ward needs more than I am doing now, but she does not impress me at all in her academic performance and that makes me think she may not improve no matter what, because the teachers have made me to believe that her situation is permanent so I have decided to rather focus on her other siblings who I think can be of help to her in future. The teachers keep saying she can be helped to acquire some skills, but still I don’t see any skills she is learning, she is always been assisted by the others so why don’t I support them rather so that they can use their skills acquired to continue to help her when they grow and I am no more?”

Results from the study showed that parents are ‘Uncertain’ about items 2 (are satisfied with the treatment given their wards with disabilities in the school), 3 (are not satisfied with the teaching provided for their children in school), 5 (expect their children to develop their potential like any other child without disability) and 8 (Regard their children performance as satisfactory). This means parents are not clear about these statements; are satisfied with level of treatment given their children with disabilities in schools, teaching provided to their children, capacity of their children to develop their potentials like any other child and ‘regard their children performance as satisfactory’. To some extent parents are confused about how to handle the condition of their children. At the focus group discussions a expressed her frustrations by making the followings comments.

“I have been thinking a lot about my son’s education but one thing I can’t get right is they learn a lot of things in the school but my ward seems not to be grasping anything apart from the songs they are been taught. The teachers always complain about my child’s progress and this make them repeat him in one class for many years. I know I am to make enquiries



about a possible way or ways to make him improve but how? Now that the teachers are equally worried, who do I need to seek advice from? Will they even listen to me?”

Worse still it occurs some of the teachers are not well prepared to handle some of these issues appropriately. Consequently some teachers rather worsen the frustration of parents rather coaching them on best approaches to handling their wards difficulties. For instance in the interview with parents, one 49 year old father said this.

“I love my child so much, he is my last born child and I am not happy that this condition has befallen him, in fact I will do everything to help revive him but the teachers seem to only focus on the other children whom they claim have no problem. The more I get closer to them to find out any possible way of handling my ward the more they discourage me. One of the teachers once told me to forget of my ward’s improvement since the condition is very permanent and rather redirect my resources to my other children without disabilities. This makes me hate the teacher and I am thinking of changing a school for him, but will I get a teacher who is caring enough to handle my son?”

Parents indicated, their CWD condition will be better with normal system of education with 66.7% (20) while 33.3% (11) think otherwise. Consequently about 73.3% (22) of parents have ever tried any cure for their child’s condition while the 26.7% (8) have never tried any form of cure for their CWD. The majority of CWD, with 64.0% (16) indicated they did not have problems with their teachers while 36.0% (14) however, indicated they have problems with their teachers.

According to the pupils; first they do not understand their teachers well enough 20.0% (6); they like canning them 33.3% (10); the teacher won’t let them speak in class with 20.0% (6); the teacher complains a lot about CWD performance with 16.7% (5) and finally, no response 10.0% (3). In addition, a slight majority of parents, 55.8% (16) also confirmed that their CWD cannot cope with normal teaching strategies while a minority



of the parents, 44.2% (14) indicated their wards with disabilities can cope with normal teaching strategies.

Another issue that came up during the focus group discussions is lack of skill on the part of parents on building their expectations for their children based on the interest of the children particularly for the children with disabilities. Many parents have plans for their children without considering the interest and capabilities of their children. This creates a lot of inconvenience between parents and school going children. These situations have often lead to dissatisfaction among parents and children. In these cases either children are forced to do what parents want and eventually not perform well or children stick to what they have passion for and in those cases lose the support these pupils were getting from their parents. Many parents have expressed their frustration in their inability to address these mismatch interest between what parents want as career for their children and what these children are also passionate about. This is where professional advice of the teachers are needed to effectively guide pupils and their parents or guardian.

Overall, parents expect their children to acquire basic employable skills with mean score of 4.05 (SD=0.88); which is supposed to help these children live independent lives in future with mean score of 3.99 (SD=0.87) and ultimately contribute to personal and national development also with a mean score of 3.89 (SD=0.85). Furthermore 70.0% (21) indicated they send their children to school ‘to be able to acquire employable skills’ while 16.7% (5) gave ‘self-help skills’ as the rationale for sending their CWD to school. Also 56.3% (18) of CWD indicated they go to school ‘to acquire knowledge and skills’. Consequently, parents expect their wards to take appointments as teachers, musicians,



mechanics and farmers. Whereas CWD also expect to be medical doctors, security officers (police), drivers, teachers and artist.

4.3 Parental involvement in decision-making in the schools

Similarly this variable (parental involvement in decision-making in the schools) was investigated using Likert-type scale where “1” represented “Strongly Disagree”, 2, 3,4 and 5 represented Disagree, Uncertain, Agree; Strongly Agree respectively. The results on parental involvement in decision-making in the schools of their children are presented in the **Table 6**. The measurement of the level of decision-making was done on nine-point descriptive statements. Result from the study is indicated in the table below.

Table 6: Parents involvement in decision-making at the school

Item		N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
	Parents:					
1	attend PTA meetings regularly	100	1	5	3.06	1.32
2	actively take part in discussing issues with the welfare of their children	100	1	5	2.90	1.21
3	are ready to contribute material things to the welfare of the school	100	1	5	2.76	1.10
4	regularly visit the schools to check on their children progress	100	1	5	2.58	1.13
5	report any complaint to the school with regards their children unusual behavior	100	1	5	2.73	1.05
6	take part in speech and price giving days in the school	100	1	5	2.28	1.16
7	help in the planning of school teaching activities for their children	100	1	5	2.12	1.09
8	take up some executive role to lead some development issues	100	1	5	2.59	1.07
9	engage with some NGOs to help the school with some educational facilities to facilitate the effective teaching of their children	100	1	5	1.87	1.07
	Valid N (listwise)	100				

Source: Field Survey, 2015



The result shows that with the exception of item 1 (parents attend PTA meetings regularly) with a mean of 3.06 (SD=1.32), the result clearly point to the fact that parents are not involved in decision-making in the schools in which the wards attend. The respondents agreed that they are not involved in decision-making in the schools. This was collaborated with findings from CWD who indicated 76.7% (23) attend PTA meetings while 23.3% (7) indicated they do not attend PTA meetings. They further indicated their mothers usually attend PTA meetings with 73.3% (22) relative their fathers with 26.7% (8).

In one of the focus group meetings, a teacher who of CWD and who also doubles as a headteacher explained that parents do not attend meetings. He indicated that in their school they a total pupil of 561 pupils but when they call for PTA meetings less than 100 parents attends school meetings. He further explained that many of these parents do not also come early, they largely come late. The study concluded that parents of Children with Disabilities (8 out of 10) particularly for female parents attend PTA meetings.

The remaining items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 were rejected by the participants with mean scores below 3.00. For instance items 2 (actively take part in discussing issues with the welfare of their children), 3 (are ready to contribute material things to the welfare of the school), 4 (regularly visit the schools to check on their children progress) and 5 (report any complaint to the school with regards their children unusual behavior) were rejected with mean scores of 2.90 (SD=1.21), 2.76 (SD=1.10), 2.58 (SD=1.13) and 2.73(SD=1.05) respectively. It was revealed the majority of parents see the school system as an escape from responsibilities for sometimes in the course of the day. At the focus group meeting with teachers; one participant said;

“Some parents always come with their wards here just to dump them on us and go their way, they rather want to the child to be taken care of by the school so as to get time for their business without expecting any change, because they many of them do not complain or report anything. Even when invited to the school to help take decision on their ward, they do so reluctantly and sometimes behave as if they are content with the child’s performance.”

This statement was corroborated by parents at the focus group meeting. They explained that they feel hopeless in the face of the disability of their wards. They don’t know what to do and they are not support institutions to provide them with help. Worse sometimes they do not have required financial morsel to travel far and near to source for the appropriate technologies to support their children with disabilities. Consequently they see the school system as the appropriate dumping ground for their ward. A female single parent with child with disability indicated that if not for her parents she will be given up on her child. She could cope with financial burdens. In addition because of the disability of the child (Down’s syndrome), the child could not do anything even at age four and so she had so much to do for the child and that was also affecting her job.

The researcher in an interview with a parent said, ‘we are not involved in development in School Performance Improvement Plans (SPIP) and also School Performance Appraisal Meetings (SPAM) are not held. Even School Report Cards which is supposed to serve as basis for assessing schools are not made available to parents or boldly displayed in the schools’. The study observed that because of low involvement of parents in taking decisions about the school, parents are not willing to contribute material things for management of the school. It also came to light that the majority of parents do not know their wards teachers, did not have their contact numbers and some cases did not even know the location of the class. This means that parents are not actively involved in discussing the welfare of their wards, do not contribute materials things to the welfare of



the school and sparingly visit to check on progress (learning outcomes) of children. Finally parents also failed to volunteer information about their wards to help in supporting their children with disabilities.

Similarly items 6 (take part in speech and prize giving days in the school), 7(help in the planning of school teaching activities for their children), 8 (take up some executive role to lead some development issues) and 9 (engage with some NGOs to help the school with some educational facilities to facilitate the effective teaching of their children) were also rejected with mean scores ranging between 1.87 (SD=1.07) and 2.59 (SD=1.07). This additionally suggests that, parents do not take part in school programs particularly speech and prize giving days in school, help in planning school teaching activities for their children, take up some executive role to lead some development issues and finally engage with some NGOs to help with some educational facilities to facilitate effective teaching of their children. These issues were confirmed by parents and CWD. In conversation with a parent, he said,

“we don’t know a lot of things going on in the school. The only thing we do we bring our children to school and pick them. It’s like we are busy and so are not able to take part in many of the things that happen in the schools. The last time I sent my eldest son to attend to the PTA meeting. Hmm you cannot put all the blame on teachers. Some of the problems also come from we parents.”

This was confirmed in another interview with a female parent of a CWD. She further added they hope they will be involved in activities happening in the schools since there are many things they do not understand about these schools. She explained that it is difficult to go on your own to make enquiry about school management and governance but if the school authorities make conscious efforts to involve them then, she is sure they will gladly participate.



Parents send their wards to both private with 73.3% (22) and public schools with 26.7% (8) schools. Similarly, according to the majority of parents, 73.3% (22) they pay school fees while 26.7% (8) indicated they do not pay because they cannot afford and also because of the FCUBE. On the contrary parents considered the payment of school fees as their contributions to the development of the school with 83.3% (25) while 16.7% (5) indicated they do not contribute to the development of the school. Also parents indicated they have a basic responsibility of contributing to their wards education; stationery and school uniforms.

Also the majority of parents indicated they, parents, do not provide information about their wards to their teachers with 78.2% (23). Some indicated the teachers do not demand for it and so they do not also see it necessary to provide it. According to them sometimes it is disgraceful to talk about those issues. Finally, 53.8% (18) of parents assist their wards with disabilities to do their homework while 46.2% (12) indicated they do not assist their wards to do their homework.

The study revealed that, there is low participation of parents with children with disabilities in decision-making in their wards' schools in the Jaman South District of the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. Although, parents with CWD attend PTA meetings, they are not actively involved in many other decision making issues in the schools. For instance, parents and teachers do not discuss the welfare of CWD, infrequent parental donations to schools, poor visits by parents, poor communication between parents and teachers, no speech and prize giving days, non-involvement in schools activities and leadership structures and parents do not engage other stakeholders to support the school.

4.4 Parental contribution to learning outcomes of CWD

Parental contribution in influencing the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities was also measured using 5-point Likert-type scale. Subsequently, the variable (parents contribution to the learning outcomes of children) was investigated using Likert-type scale where “1” represented “Strongly Disagree”, 2, 3, 4 and 5 represented Disagree, Uncertain, Agree; Strongly Agree respectively. The results of the nine-point descriptive statistics are presented in the table below.

Table 7: Parents contribution to the learning outcomes of children

Descriptive Statistics

Item		N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
1	Parents: provide the educational needs of their wards as required	30	1	5	2.69	1.16
2	are always ready to buy exercise books and pens for their children	30	2	5	3.19	1.10
3	are ready to pay extra classes fees for their children	30	1	5	2.33	1.12
4	provide teachers more information on how their children should be taken care of	30	1	5	2.42	1.08
5	Provide reading books for their children	30	1	5	2.49	1.09
6	pay PTA levies promptly	30	1	5	2.23	1.35
7	are always ready to undertake self-project for the development of the school	30	1	5	2.21	0.99
8	provide First Aid drugs for the their children with disability	30	1	5	2.06	1.17
9	motivate teachers with incentives to better teach their children with disabilities	30	1	5	1.91	1.11
	Valid N (listwise)	30				

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Parents do not contribute in influencing the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities. All the statements were disagreed by the respondents with exception of item 2 (parents are always ready to buy exercise books and pens for their children) which had



mean score of 3.19 (SD=1.10) meaning respondents were uncertain about that statement. This clearly explains that parents minimally contribute to the learning outcomes of the children with disabilities. The provision of exercise books and pens is not adequate to positively influence the learning outcomes of pupils. It can also be inferred that parents rarely provide uniforms and footwear's for their wards. This can be explained by the tattered nature of the clothing of many of the children with disabilities in our schools.

The respondents strongly disagreed with item 9 (motivate teachers with incentives to better teach their children with disabilities). This was further collaborated by parents and CWD. Similarly the majority of parents contributes to learning outcomes by providing stationery with 50.0% (15) and school uniforms with 20.0% (6) as well both with 30.0% (9) to their children. In a focus group discussions a male participant in the in mid-fifties said,

“it is worrying that as a parent I myself think I am not doing much for my ward with disability. It is partly because sometimes I am not clear and confident about how to handle some of the issues. Truly I am supposed to engage with my wards teacher but I don't do it. I scarcely visit him at school. Even I can't recollect I went back to the headteachers office. Its true that our children need more than the usual but I do not personally do much in the form of by simply even saying thank you to my wards teacher. I and we will have change towards the way we engage with the teachers”.

In one instance a parent indicated he used to pay some money to the headteacher so they could provide additional tuition to his child with disability. According to the parent despite he was honoring his side of the bargain for about a year the service was not quite forth coming and so he had to stop along the line. He said the following during the interview.



“All what the teachers request is “money”, “pay this or pay that”, yet still I don’t see any improvement. I quite remember the headteacher told me to make some payment for him to assign one particular teacher to assist my ward to somehow overcome the situation which I did, but I have stopped paying, because after paying for almost a year there was no any sign of improvement. The teacher said he will be coming to the house to for a follow-up but that has not happened and every complaint I personally made was not attended to. I can their frustrations about child’s performance but what can do?”

Teachers disagreed with items 1 (parents Provide the educational needs of their wards as required), 3 (are ready to pay extra classes fees for their children), 4 (provide teachers more information on how their children should be taken care of), 5 (Provide reading books for their children), 6 (pay PTA levies promptly), 7 (are always ready to undertake self-project for the development of the school) and 8 (provide First Aid drugs for the their CWD). With the exception of item 1 which had a mean score of 2.69 (SD=1.16), the remaining items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 had mean score below 2.5 as they had mean score of 2.33 (SD=1.12), 2.42 (SD=1.08), 2.49(SD=1.09), 2.23 (SD=1.35), 2.21 (SD=0.99) and 2.06 (SD=1.17) respectively. This suggests that parents do not contribute to the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities as respondents disagreed with all the statements that make up the objective three, which is parents contribute in achieving the learning outcomes of their children.

Some supporting issues from the focus group discussions include the following. First parents confirmed that although they provide some needs but there are many other needs of CWD that are left unattended to. According to them they provide food and books. However sometimes they find it difficult to provide the children with the prescribed school uniforms and other basic learning materials (with the exception of pens, pencils and exercise books) that will facilitate learning of children in the homes and also keep



them busy. Many of the participants explained they usually find it difficult to pay bills awarded to parents. In a discussion with the headteacher he explained that usually subventions and support from stakeholders come late and so sometimes they require some support from the PTA, which sometimes even take longer before they get that help. The headteacher and the parents both acknowledge parents minimally contribute to teaching and learning of children with disabilities and therefore to the learning outcomes of their children.

Similarly many of the parents indicated that because of the weak relationship between them and the teachers they are not able to provide more information of their children to teachers. They quickly added that teachers equally do not provide them with information about their children. Additionally they do not provide reading books for the wards. A reasonable number however added they pay PTA levies but however added sometimes they pay it late. As a result of their payment of PTA levies they concluded they take part in the development of project for their respective schools. The findings from the focus groups discussions confirm the data generated with the Likert-type scale.

The finding generated from the qualitative study aspect of the study on objective three affirms that parents do not contribute to the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities as the majority of parents largely limit themselves to the provision of exercise books and pens while they leave out equally important responsibilities like the provision of reading and playing materials, descent uniforms, prompt payment of PTA levies and provision of additional information on their wards to teachers.



Parents confirmed that they do not provide information to teachers. According to 78.2% (23) of parents, do not provide the information on their wards to teachers because according to them, it is not necessary and besides teachers do not demand for it. While 21.8% (7) indicated although they provide the information to teachers, these teachers do not show interest in it.

Further, parents confirmed item 3 (parents are ready to pay extra classes fees for their children) with a slight majority of parents with 56.7% (17) indicating they pay for extra classes to support their ward's academic performance while 43.3% (13) indicated they do not pay for extra classes. Parents indicated that regular payment of school fees, provision of information about their wards, implementation of suggestions from both parents and teachers, parents' provision of educational needs of their wards will help to enhance the relationship between parents and teachers.

Information generated further indicates that there is deterioration in learning outcomes particularly in the face of free education. Many parents are now getting brain washed that they are not supposed to make any contribution particularly financially towards the education of their wards. Se said,

“In fact is pathetic as parents want to shirk all responsibilities and to shift their responsibilities to the government and other stakeholders. For instance if you wait here some time, you seem what I mean. School pupils wear very tattered uniforms, pupils that will slippers and some cases no foot wear at all. In some other situations the pupils or pupils do not have proper uniforms. There are other times when parents provide their wards with money to buy needs like water, food and in the case of those who stay very away from the school to transport themselves to and back from school. They don't even check on their children whether they come to school or not. In many cases parents do not know the teachers of their children let alone know the class in which their children are located”.



The result from the field indicates that parents poorly contribute to the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities. Parents only rarely provide exercise books and pens for their children. Largely, however, parents do not provide required educational needs of their CWD, fees for extra tuition, additional information on their children, delays in payment of PTA dues resulting in low support for the school, first aid for CWD and incentives for teachers.

4.5 Parent-teacher collaboration in the education of CWD

The objective four of this study was explored qualitatively. The results from the study are presented below. The fourth research question, ‘how do schools and parents of children with disabilities collaborate to support the education of children with disabilities in Jaman North District of Ghana?’ was explored qualitatively. The rationale was to understand the areas where parents and teachers could collaborate to assist children with disabilities. The results from the study are presented in the subsequent paragraphs.

The first issue that came up strongly was poor communication between parents and teachers. Whereas teachers were of the view that parents do not provide them with adequate information about their wards, parents also accused teachers of not been attentive to them. Consequently teachers did not have adequate information about pupils. Also parents did not get feedback about the progress of their wards from teachers. This was collaborated by data from teachers, parents, CWD and the focus group discussions.

In the FGD for instance a teacher said,

“when parents bring their wards and they are admitted. That is the end of it. They will never appear in the school again. Sometimes I don’t understand whether parents don’t want people to know that it is their ward. They don’t know who the child’s teachers are and don’t also know the class in which the child has been placed. In fact children with



disabilities require a lot of maintenance. And maintenance has cost implication. Parents don't support schools and teachers with the basic logistics to facilitate the training of their wards. It is just difficult. Government already has so much on its hands and so it does not commit resources to vulnerable. So it gets to a point where we longer have much time for these children with disabilities. There is a particular girl in this school with mental disability. Currently she simply roams around the whole school and beg for money from teachers. It's like nobody has time for her including her own parents".

In the same focus groups discussions parents also raise some concerns about poor communication of teachers between parents of children with disabilities. One of the parents said,

"Most of the time the teachers seem busy. Many of them don't know our children. There are many instances I have to introduce myself to these teachers. I got bored and so I stopped visiting the teachers. I simply bring my child to school and when it is time for closing I go and pick my child again. The teachers are not able to communicate with us because they don't build good record about our children. They made us to buy files, so they can keep all related information about the progress our children in it but they seem not be able to maintain good information base about our children. So that is the very reason why we keep introducing ourselves and our wards to them".

Another participant added that although he is in good terms with the teachers and also we have one another's' phone lines and so we talk but I don't see progress in my ward. Most of the things we talk about are not professional issues that help in the development of my child. This was taken up by another participant who said,

"We agree that as parents we are not doing much but we can't anything that the teachers ask us to do because they are the professionals and they know about handling of children particularly those with disabilities. In fact anytime I talk with my wards teachers I expect himself to tell me progress about my ward (specific child is mentally retarded) but it is always about money or how complains about how my child misbehaves towards other children. As a result this time I don't feel like talking him but I don't



get any promising information from them (school and the teachers)”).

Similarly data from teachers and parents confirmed that PTAs and SMCs were not effective and so the formal channels for addressing stakeholders concerns are ruined. The study established that there is poor communication between stakeholders particularly parents and teachers. One of the parents said,

“There is poor communication between teachers and pupils with disabilities. Unlike in the past where we used to receive terminal reports from schools about the performance of our wards, it does not exist any longer. We don’t get terminal reports for our children without disabilities let alone to talk about our children with disabilities. PTA meetings are scarcely organized and if it happens, the organization is so poor it does not even allow parents to express their concerns. In fact PTA meetings have barely been reduced to levying of parents and nothing more. You are levied to construct walls, build structures and vehicle for the schools but not basic things like dedicated phones lines to link up with parents, efficient reporting and even use of social media to communicate with parents. The last time I went for a PTA meeting all the talking was done by the teachers rather than parents. It even takes so long for PTA meetings to be organized”.

The study also assessed the parent-teacher collaboration in the area of learning outcomes of the CWD. The teachers indicated that although parents have interest in educating their wards, their actions were contrary. According to the teachers many parents do not provide the basic needs of their wards at home to enable to these children with disabilities to learn. They further added that the majority of parents do not support their wards to do their homework or inspect the homework that are given to their children. Parents and CWD also indicated their parents do not facilitate learning at home. In a focus group discussion a mother of CWD said,



“What can we do? If the place to sleep soundly is a problem to my family and so how can I have time to check on the studies of this mine with disability. Even where the situation is a bit better, I am not educated and so I am not able to do much. It is true that we don’t check on what our children learn let alone the task they have brought from school to the house. We have not even guided by the teachers on how to handle these children with disabilities. But you they are the professionals and so they are supposed to guide”.

Data and statements from the study also confirmed the statement that, parents are not able to provide appropriate guide and support to their children with disability to enhance their knowledge and skills at home. For instance a female explained that their family stays in the family house and they have access to only two rooms in the house. Consequently, they do not have much control over what their children can or cannot do. Besides they rooms in which they are stay not adequate for them and so how possible for them to look for appropriate place of their CWD. Furthermore they explained that in the family house where siblings and other extended members stay it is difficult to separate and do certain for them. Such behavior not encouraged and it is tagged as divisive attitude and so parents try to avoid such actions that attract negative reactions from family members. In conclusion the study established parents are not able provide the encouraging atmosphere at home to enhance the learning outcomes of CWD. As a result the majority of parents are not able to assist their wards to do homework.

From the results it is obvious teachers are not able to engage parents on how to enhance the support that is given to the children. A female parent indicated in an interview that,

“the teachers always look like they are quarrelling with someone. This makes it difficult to talk to them, more so, when the majority of us are not educated in the formal educational system. If you are not careful you will be tagged as ‘too known’ and this might further worsen your position and the care that your ward receives. It’s a bit



difficult for us as parents. You don't know exactly what to do or not do. Frankly sometimes I am confused as what is best thing I can do my ward. In most times I feel I am not doing much for her”

A teacher in one of the focus group discussion confirmed that teachers do not engage parents of pupils so they can support with the upbringing of the children with disabilities. The teacher attributed this state to two conditions. First is poor management in most basic schools and secondly, poor capacity of teachers on handling of children with disability and more in the practice of inclusive education. This was supported by other participants in the focus group. This issue of poor management in basic schools and lack of refresher for teachers came up in four out of five focus group discussions held for this study. With poor management of schools, it was explained that basic resources required to manage the schools are not available. In addition, the teachers explained that basic sanitary resources like soap and other petty that are required for effective care of the children are lacking most of the time. Consequently there are many instances where basic things like trying to clean a mess caused by one of CWD takes so long to fix. Similarly they also explained the teachers are not given regular refresher training on how to practice inclusive education. Poor handling of the program do not only draw the children with disability back but also children without disability. The poor knowledge and skills of the teachers result in ineffective and efficient handling of both children with and without disabilities.

The respondents explained many of the headteachers at the basic have not received professional training on effective management and so they are not able to deploy their human resources to meet the needs and concerns of children with disabilities as well as their parents. Just like the weak capacity of headteachers cum administration at the basic





level so are the skills of many of the teachers at that level poorly sharpen to handle emerging trends in the educational issues including handling of children with disabilities. For instance data retrieved from the background information confirms this as many teachers have not received any form of professional training since they completed training colleges. Besides the training the inadequate skills are various facets of the work of these school headteachers. Some of the facets include human resource management, financial management, poor school tone or culture thereby watering down effective teaching and learning in the school, poor networking for funding and other forms of support for the effective and efficient administration of the school.

It also emerged from the focus group discussions that, PTA meetings have virtually been reduced to state for taxing of parents and nothing more. This observation and practice by the school authorities and the leadership of PTAs have also weakened the interest in parents in attending meetings that will create space to bring about collaboration among these stakeholders. However, there were slight differences in the opinions of these respondents. Other respondents indicated in some cases they simply tell them what they want parents to pay for them to provide some services to the children without putting out for discussion. Some verbatim statements captured on these issues are indicated below.

First a male participant said the following.

“This time anytime they call you for a PTA meeting then you are sure to go for bills to pay. Some of these bills are not even put for discussion, they simply ask us to pay for them to provide some services to our children. Although most of the time the bills are fair as the amounts that are requested by school authorities for parents to pay are not so much. I am saying this because we hear of the amount of money paid by parents of their children in other private schools. Sometimes we pay so much for our other children in private schools. As a result of these monetary responsibilities that are on us, some parents sometimes deliberately avoid or dodge some of these meetings. I am sure that is part of the reason contribute to poor PTA meetings organized by these schools.”

Similarly some other parents explained they do not think parents have much problem with amount required of them to pay. However they explained that they do not get the sense that their children are actually getting required mentoring, tuition and services from the teachers and the school authorities. The parent explained that they want their children to grow in the best of adults. He explained besides it is their responsibility take good care of their children. He further made this statement;

“I do not have much problem with the amount that we are supposed to pay as fees. But we should be seeing value of the services in our children. When you the value of the services in your children in terms of their academic performance and their attitude, you are even motivated to do more for the school. But where you can see your child is not regular to school because of the way the child is always dressed, his or her attitude and the child don't even full complement of exercise books for notes and class exercises, no papers are presented to showing his or her performance in end of terms exams and worse still there is no form of terminal report that gives progress report on these children. These things do not motivate parents to participate effectively in PTA meetings”

Overall, results from the field indicate a weak teacher-parent collaboration to support children with disabilities in the Jaman North District. Teachers and parents do not collaborate to create innovative ideas to enhance the learning space for CWD. Teachers do not engage parents and so parents have also quietly maintained their distance to the detriment of the children with disabilities. Parents do not also guide their CWD to do their homework and learn their books. In addition, teachers do not make recommendations to parents on best practices of managing the conditions of their wards and in cases there are suggestions recommended by teachers, parents find it difficult to implement. Finally, teachers do not work with parents to identify special needs of their CWD. However parents support to prepare their children early for school and as well as provide affordable means of transport for their wards.



4.6 Chapter Summary

The study presented results from the study in this section, chapter four. The study started with introduction to the chapter and also presented information on the demographic/background data of the respondents. This was followed by presentation of information on the four main sections on the study; parental expectation, parental involvement in decision making, parental contribution to the learning outcomes and finally parental collaboration with teachers in providing education to children with disabilities. It was subsequently concluded with the chapter summary.



CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULT

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, results/findings of this concurrent mixed method are discussed employing the reviewed literature in chapter two of this study. The discussions are structured according to the objectives of the study. First, it starts with the demographic data of the respondents. Section two discusses data on research objective one (parental expectation of children with disabilities), whereas sections three, four and five talk about research objectives two (parental involvement in decision-making in schools); objective three (parental contribution to the learning outcomes of their wards); objective four (Parent-Teacher Collaboration). The chapter ends with a summary of the discussion.

5.1. Demographic/background data

In all, the majority of respondents were females with 51.8% (57) while males were 48.2% (53), which is reflective of our national population which shows females are more than males with a slim margins (2000, PHC).

The majority of teachers are professional with 80% (40) while the remaining teachers are non -professional, 20% (10). Similarly the majority of these teachers, 60% (30) show that they have 6+ years of experience on the job. Contrary to the facts identified that the majority are trained and have an average of 6+ years on the job, they do not adopt appropriate approaches, child-centered or problem-solving approach, for teaching. From the researchers experience as a teacher, this is consistent with current practice. This can be explained by the fact that many teachers are not given refresher training on the job. Also it can be explained by poor monitoring and supervision regime within the Ghana



Education Service. Finally weak understanding of stakeholders (parents, old pupils and leaders within the vicinity of the school) their role in the provision of quality education to their wards is actually the major hindrance to the delivery of quality education to CWD. The schools with good academic records in the country are having strong Parent/Teacher Associations (PTA), Old Pupils and strong governing bodies (i.e. in case of basic schools SMCs).

The study concluded that, the method of teaching used by the majority of teachers, 73% (73), is not appropriate for CWD in the normal school system. The study recommends administrative capacity training for head-teachers since they have the immediate and direct supervision over the work of teachers. Also, the administrative structures of the Ghana Education Service should be streamlined to ensure classroom teachers are provided with needed refresher courses on regular basis to enhance the teachers' skills and productivity levels on the job.

5.2 Parental expectation in the education of children with disabilities

Overall, parents expect their children to acquire basic employable skills with mean score of 4.05 (SD=0.88); which is supposed to help these children live independent lives in future with mean score of 3.99 (SD=0.87) and ultimately contribute to personal and national development also with a mean score of 3.89 (SD=0.85). This finding is consistent with findings of West, David, Noden, Edge & Davies, 1996; Crozier, 1999; Foot, However, Cheyne, Terras & Rattrey, 2000; Tartar & Horenczyk, 2000; who explored parents' expectations of teachers and of the school indicated that, parents expect quality of teaching, their child's academic progress and happiness, homework, fair discipline and information.





Results from the study showed that expectations of parents are largely unmet. The study confirmed parents are not clearly satisfied with treatment given by their wards with disabilities, teaching strategies used and performance of their children with disabilities. This is consistent with findings of Russell (2003) who indicated expectations of parents are unmet because of mixed factors; ignorance, weak systems, teachers with inadequate training and cultural beliefs. This also confirms findings from the research which indicate parents are ‘Uncertain’ about items 2 (parents are satisfied with the treatment given their wards with disabilities in the school), 3 (parents are not satisfied with the teaching provided for their children in school), 5 (parents expect their children to develop their potential like any other child without disability) and 8 (parents regard their children’s performance as satisfactory).

This means parents are uncertain about these statements; parents are not sure about the quality of treatment given their children with disabilities in schools, tuition provided to their children, capacity of their CWD to develop their potentials like any other child and ‘regard their children performance as satisfactory’. The study observed despite many of the teachers are trained and have reasonable number of years on the job but their output is not satisfactory. Besides parents do get a clear picture of what targets of learning outcomes are teachers working on particularly for children with disabilities. Studies that have explored parents’ expectations of teachers and of the school indicate that parents expect quality of teaching, their child’s academic progress and happiness, homework, fair discipline and information (West, David, Noden, Edge & Davies, 1996; Crozier, 1999; Foot, Hower, Cheyne, Terras & Rattrey, 2000; Tartar & Horenczyk, 2000). Parents of children with Special Educational Needs may develop similar expectations but additional legislation associated with pupils with SEN has set out what they have the

right to expect in relation to the initial assessment and ongoing review of their child's educational needs (DES, 2001). They will also develop expectations related to their child's individual needs and development and of the services and support they receive but the only studies found concerning expectations of parents of disabled children (Bennet, Lee & Lueke, 1998; Woolman, Garwick, Kohrman & Blum, 2001) have not provided any conclusive information.

However, with the passage of the disability act in Ghana, it provides the framework of what parents and CWD can expect from the immediate family, the community, service providers including schools and the nation as a whole. However, stakeholders tend to be ignorant about many issues related to expectations of parents, teachers and others in provision of services to parents and CWD. For the study it was emerging that authorities and institutions with knowledge and skills in the management of issues of inclusive education should target parents with CWD and pupils with disabilities themselves to guide and assist them to ensure they have fair expectation of stakeholders as well optimize opportunities available to them within the confines of the law.

Overall, parents expect their children to acquire a basic employable skill which is supposed to help these children live independent lives in future and ultimately contribute to personal and national developments. In conclusion, the study established that expectations of parents are unmet. This is so because of poor monitoring and supervision by teachers coupled with no/or inadequate refresher courses for teachers. Secondly, it was also noted that many basic things that are duties of the school authorities are not carried out. For instance it came up that many public schools do not issue cumulative



report cards to parents and pupils which give progressive report on the performance of pupils.

5.3 Parental involvement in decision making in schools

The result shows that with the exception of item 1 (parents attend PTA meetings regularly) with a mean of 3.06 (SD=1.32), the result clearly point to the fact that parents are not involved in decision-making in the schools in which their wards attend. Three principal reasons are responsible for the low participation, according to Thwala, Ntinda, & Hlanze (2015). First parents encounter challenges at work, at home, school and in the community such as emotional stress, failure to cope with the children's disability and financial challenges.

Second, parents were not sure of what was expected of them in making educational decisions on behalf of their children. And third parents of children with disabilities were not trained on how to cope with their children's disability and how to work with educators. The researcher also observed weak institutional structures, inadequate skills on the part of both teachers and parents and high demand on the time of parents and teachers is partly responsible for low participation of parents in the education of their children with disabilities. The study also observed that stigma hugely demotivates parents from participating in the education of their children with disabilities.

The study revealed that, there is low participation of parents with children with disabilities in decision-making in their wards' schools in the Jaman North District of the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. Although, parents with CWD attend PTA meetings, they are not involved in many other decision making issues in the schools. For instance,



parents and teachers do not discuss the welfare of CWD, infrequent donations to schools, poor visits by parents, poor communication between parents and teachers, no speech and prize giving days, non-involvement in schools activities and in leadership structures and do not engage other stakeholders to support the school.

The educational act and other conventions provide adequate institutional structures for parents to effectively participate in the community-based management of schools. For instance at the basic level, School Management Committees (SMCs) is highest decision making body and therefore no major decision can be taken at the basic level without the SMC. However, the practice is that many of the governing structures at the basic level; SMC, PTA and staff meetings are not upheld.

Also related activities like development of School Performance Improvement Plan and School Performance Appraisal Plan are not fully operational. Poor operationalization of School based management processes is responsible for low participation of parents in decision-making processes of schools.

In conclusion on objective two, the study recognized that there is minimal level of participation of parents in decision making in schools. They only means in which parents minimally participates in decision making emerged in the form participation of PTA meetings by some parents. The study among some other factors identified some of the key reasons for the poor participation of parents in decision making. First parents encounter challenges at work, at home, school and in the community such as emotional stress, failure to cope with the children's disability and financial challenges. Second, parents were not sure of what was expected of them in making educational decisions on



behalf of their children. And third parents of children with disabilities were not trained on how to cope with their children's disability and how to work with educators. The researcher also observed weak institutional structures, inadequate skills on the part of both teachers and parents and high demand on the time of parents and teachers is partly responsible for low participation of parents in the education of their children with disabilities. Finally, the study also witnessed that stigma hugely demotivates parents from participating in the education of their children with disabilities.

5.4 Parental contribution in the learning outcomes of CWD

The result from the field indicates that parents poorly contribute to the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities. Parents only provide exercise books and pens for their children. Largely, however, parents do not provide required educational needs of their CWD, fees for extra tuition, additional information on their children, delays in payment of PTA dues resulting in low support for the school, first aid for CWD and incentives for teachers. This could partly be explained by the demographic characteristics of the respondents which show that the majority of them do not regular sources of income.

In addition, the demographic characteristics of the parents show they do not have good background in formal education and so this could provide explanations for the poor parental support to the learning outcome of pupils. This is also explained by some portions of literature which indicates that greater parental involvement could contribute to a higher academic achievement of the child (Eccles and Harold, 1993; Georgiou, 1999). So conversely when there is poor parental involvement it results in poor academic outcomes. This is also confirmed by studies conducted by Michigan Department of Education (2011) in an extensive research conducted over the past forty years indicates



that when parents are engaged in their children's education, academic achievement increases.

There slight variations in reasons for the poor contribution of parents to the learning outcomes of children with disabilities in the focus groups discussions. Although they agreed that high illiteracy and ignorance among parents often associated with weak livelihood sources do pose a challenge to the capacity of parents to properly take care of their children but gave irresponsible parenting to be a major cause of poor parental contribution to the learning outcomes of pupils. Many scenarios were presented to prove the irresponsible parenting within the district. They explained many parents did not show interest in what their children and in some cases what they eat even though they have the capacity to adequately take care of the children. They juxtaposed it against many cases where some children excelled in their academic work and yet they come from homes with very poor financial backgrounds. The study concluded when parents or guardians of pupils show interest in their wards education it reflects in the academic performance of the children. Parental involvement at school (e.g., with school activities, direct communication with teachers and administrators) is associated with greater achievement in mathematics and reading (Griffith, 1996; Reynolds, 1992; Sui-Chu & Williams, 1996). Higher levels of parent involvement in their children's educational experiences at home (e.g., supervision and monitoring, daily conversations about school) have been associated with children's higher achievement scores in reading and writing, as well as higher report card grades (Epstein, 1991; Griffith, 1996; Sui-Chu & Willms, 1996; Keith et al., 1998). Much of the research on parent involvement, as it relates to children's outcomes, has emphasized the relationship between specific parent involvement behaviors and children's achievement.





In a focus group discussion with teachers they also explained that there are instances where parents are not able to help much because their children have joined bad groups, peer group that have negative influence on these pupils. The teachers explained that there are many instances where parents provide all the needs of the children as well as provide other needs of the children but these children simply do not study to improve on their academic performance. This was however explained by a one of the headteachers who indicated that there are instances where the parent performs all of his responsibilities except monitoring child school attendance and visiting the school. In those instances the child may join a bad peer group and then abstain himself from school for a long period and it is only when the parents suspects and bring the child to school when the real issues come up. He further explained that in many instances teachers have limited relationship with parents and besides the pupils are many on their hands and so they virtually don't communicate with their school pupils' parents. This is further explained that Michigan State Department of Education (2011) in their study in which they concluded that, the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to: (1) create a home environment that encourages learning; (2) communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; and (3) become involved in their children's education at school and in the community.

They observed poor parental visits to schools and poor support to academic work of CWD at home is largely for the poor contribution of parents to learning outcomes of their children with disabilities. For instance the study observed that only 53.8% of parents support their CWD to do homework while 46.2% do not support CWD to do

their homework. This is consistent with the findings of Eccles and Harold (1993) and Georgiou (1999) who concluded in the study that greater parental involvement could contribute to a higher academic achievement of the child.

This study finds out that there is poor parental contribution to learning outcomes of pupils in the study area. Parents only provide some books, pens and pencils to assist with learning of pupils. However they are not able to assist them to do homework, provide with school pupils with appropriate study space at home and as assist them these children to undertake their homework. Additionally many parents are not able to monitor their children to ensure that their children move with a good peer group and finally poor communication between parents and teachers hampers parents' capacity to effectively assist their children especially those with disability.

5.5 Parental collaboration with teachers in the education of their children

Overall, results from the field indicate a weak teacher-parent collaboration to support children with disabilities in the Jaman North District. Parents do not collaborate to create innovative ideas to enhance the learning space for CWD. Parents do not also respond to the call of parents. Parents do not also guide their CWD to do their homework and learn their books. In addition, teachers do not work with suggestions recommended by parents. Finally, parents do not work with parents to identify special needs of their CWD.

These issues were confirmed by parents and children with disabilities. The poor teacher and parent relationship is as a result of weak engagement among the various stakeholders (Michigan State Department of Education, 2011). This is also explained by Thwala, Ntinda, & Hlanze, (2015) who indicated poorly empowered parents with no or low levels





of knowledge is also contributory factor for the poor relationship. To address these challenges, government will need to put in place policies which will look at the needs of parents of the children with disabilities. As much 92.3% (48) had issues to discuss to teachers but were not able to do so, which usually resulted into poor communication between parents and teachers. This finding is consistent with Ziebart (2005) in a study on ‘supporting parents as active partners in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities’ in which he concluded that communication between professionals and parents is the major barrier encountered by parents.

Poor attendance of parents or guardians to PTA meetings could be caused by both teachers and parents alike. For instance as indicated from the background many parents are ignorant about the relevance of their role in the upbringing of their wards. As a result it is responsibility of teachers and educational workers like the District Education Offices, the District Education Oversight Committee to support in educating parents are various platforms. This will make parents appreciate that their role in maintaining and monitoring the activities of their children are equally critical in the successful in training the school child. Unfortunately most parents think their only responsibility is to provide some money to meet the financial needs of their children. Conversely school authorities do not organize themselves properly to attract parents to PTA meetings. In many instances school authorities do not first, organize the required number of PTA meetings and in cases where they organize such meetings they do not follow the prescribed procedures coupled with innovations. For instance, according to the Headteachers handbook and SMC handbook for headteachers there is guidelines as the composition of these structures. Unfortunately many schools do not have appropriate representation in these bodies. Secondly, inability on the part of school authorities to appropriately invite

parents to PTA meetings also contributes to the poor participation. Parents are invited to these meetings through verbal message through pupils. There is adequate evidence that pupils do not communicate these messages to parents. Instances where parents formally invited with letters, phone messages or phone calls have resulted in high participation by parents.

Inappropriate routes for invitation of parents to PTA meetings largely responsible for poor participation of parents in PTA meetings. Besides as a result of the poor composition of PTA meetings it does yield the require engagement that is required from all actors. In addition, as a result of the poor composition of these PTA meetings, many of these meetings have been reduced to machines for taxing money from parents even in the face of attempts by government to provide free education in basic and secondary levels of education in the country. This further feed into poor interest of parents to attend meetings organized by PTA.

It was also a key finding that parents are not able to help their wards to do homework and also check on what their wards' academic progress. Similarly they were not able to provide conducive sleeping rooms let alone places to serve as reading rooms for many of the pupils. Consequently pupils overtime do not cultivate the habit of reading and learning on their own. In addition since these children have not focused on seeking for knowledge and skills overtime they give new attitudes that retard their growth. It strongly emerged that pupils spend so much of their time watching television at the expense of their academic learning outcomes. Ultimately, as a result of a number of years of neglect of guide from parents and teachers results a new of learning culture of absenteeism to school and lack of interest in school.





As revealed earlier in the research there is weak relationship between parents and teachers. Consequently teachers do not work with suggestions recommended by parents. Similarly parents do not work with teachers to identify special needs of their CWD. Pupils absent themselves several days from school without seeking permission from teachers. In some other cases, pupils absent themselves from school without teachers' knowledge. This could be explained by the fact parents are ignorant about many scientific ways of handling children with disabilities. In other words parents lack required knowledge and skills in dealing with teachers to meet the required needs of their children. This finding is consistent with findings by Ziebart (2005). In his study on 'supporting parents as active partners in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities' concluded that communication between professionals and parents is the major barrier encountered by parents. In addition, some of the parents have several stress and pressures on them that sometimes they forget or are simply unable to do basic issues that can be described as 'common sense'. Consequently it is appropriate that parents are given regular coaching on how to effectively handle their children particularly children with disabilities. Thwala, Ntinda, & Hlanze, (2015) in a study in Swaziland in their findings suggested the need for the development of training programs which will empower parents with knowledge to better partner with educators for the benefit of the child. To this end it will be appropriate for government to put in place policies which will look at the needs of parents of the children with disabilities.

However parents support to prepare their children early for school and as well as provide affordable means of transport for their wards in the Jaman North District in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana because they are forced to work within the transport time arrangements. In the Michigan State Board of Education Family Involvement Policy



(1997) and Canter (2004) recognized the critical role played by parents in the development of children particularly those with disabilities. They observed that the family of school pupils play a number of supporting roles, including as their advocates and as people who can provide valuable insight into their specific needs to instructors, who may at times feel pressed by trying to meet the needs of diverse groups of pupils. There are rarely any simple answers to balancing the needs of each individual child with disabilities with others' needs, with competing structural, bureaucratic, pedagogical, and emotional factors often adding extra layers of effort and complexity for everyone involved. But when families and educators work together as partners, it enhances the likelihood that children with disabilities will have positive and successful learning experiences.

Another issue that came up in the discussions was inadequate training provided to teachers resulting in their weak capacity to effectively engaged parents. For instance as a result of their weak capacity they some teachers are not able to fully understand the conditions of their pupils with disabilities. This finding is consistent with findings by Gadagbui (2010) in Ghana on his study on inclusive education in which indicated that we have not been successful with the practice of inclusive education as teachers largely lack the basic skills to even identify disabilities of children with special education needs. This creates a situation where they are not able to convincingly engage parents. Ultimately, teachers do not have effective plans to address the needs of individual child in the situation of inclusive education and this often leave the children with disabilities at a disadvantaged. This confirms what was established under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1975), which states that all children are entitled to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment required to

meet their needs. As written, the law requires that parents and families be involved in the creation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), which help to determine appropriate settings and services for their children.

The results from the study indicate a weak teacher-parent collaboration to support children with disabilities in the Jaman North District. Some factors responsible for the weak parent-teacher collaboration include weak engagement among the various educational stakeholders, poor communication between parents and teachers, and poor attendance of parents or guardians to PTA meetings. Conversely school authorities do not organize themselves properly to attract parents to PTA meetings; poor composition of these structures (PTA and SMC) results in poor and weak resolutions from meetings; failure of school authorities to formally communicate progressive reports (termly reports) about pupils performance do not provide an opportunity for teachers and parents to interact. Consequently parents do not collaborate to create innovative ideas to enhance the learning space for CWD. As result parents do not also respond to the call of teachers to identify and address the special needs of their CWD.

5.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter started with introduction for this section. Secondly, the study discussed the demographic characteristics in the light of the literature review. Subsequently, the study discussed the four main subsections of the study: parental expectation in the education of children with disabilities; parental involvement in decision-making in schools; parental contributions to learning outcomes of children with disabilities and finally, parental collaboration with teachers in the education of children with disabilities. The chapter was



concluded with the chapter summary. Finally, move the study to the final level, thus summary, conclusion and recommendations.



CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This concluding chapter is divided into four main sections. The first part will serve as an introductory section to this chapter. The second part provides summaries of the various chapters, essentially from chapter one through to chapter five. While the third section looks at the conclusions and recommendations for all four objectives of the study; (1) expectations of parents in the education of their CWD; (2) role parents of CWD are involved in the decision making process in schools; (3) the contributions parents' of CWD in enhancing in learning outcomes of CWD; and (4) partnership between parents and teachers to support CWD. The chapter ends with summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations.

6.1 Summary

This section summarizes all chapters discussed in the study. It starts with chapter one through to five. The introductory chapter serves as the opening chapter for the study. It looked at the research problem, the research questions and objectives. Also it explored the rationale for research into parental involvement in the provision of education to children with disabilities in the Jaman North District of the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. Specifically, the researcher sought to explore the expectations of parents in the education of children with disabilities; parental role in the learning outcomes of CWD, decision-making in schools and what sort of collaboration can be forged between parents and teachers to support children with disabilities.





In chapter two, literature was reviewed on the topic of study; parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities. The emphasis of the study was with emphasis on the four specific objectives: (1) expectations of parents in the education of their CWD; (2) role parents of CWD are involved in the decision making process in schools, (3) the contributions parents' of CWD in enhancing in learning outcomes of CWD and (4) collaborations between parents and teachers to support CWD. Literature was reviewed on parental involvement, parental expectation and children with disabilities. Subsequently, literature was reviewed on the four key objective areas; parental expectation in the education of children with disabilities, parental contribution in the learning outcomes of CWD and parental collaboration with teachers in the education of children with disabilities.

In chapter three, the researcher outlined the methodology for the study. Mixed-methods were employed to gather the data for the study and concurrent mixed method was used employed for time and financial constraints. Non-probability sampling methods were adopted to select the respondents for the study. Specifically, purposive and convenient sampling techniques were used to sample respondents for questionnaire survey. The sample was arrived at through the judgment of the researcher without any mathematical calculation. The overall sample size for the study for was one hundred and ten (110) respondents. The responses were then edited, coded and analyzed.

In Chapter four, research result was presented. The findings from study indicated that parents expected their CWD to acquire basic employable skills, live independent lives and contribute to the development of the nation. Overall there is low parental involvement in decision-making in the schools where their CWD attend. However

parents attend PTA meetings with mothers particularly attend PTA meetings. Also the study concluded there poor collaboration between parents and teachers in supporting CWD. The chapter ended with a chapter summary.

In chapter five, there was discussion of the research results. It was observed that parental expectation of their CWD was largely unmet. Secondly, the study concluded that although parents attend PTA meetings, they are poorly involved in decision-making in the schools of their wards. Thirdly, there are poor contributions of parents in influencing the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities because of ignorance, weak institutional structures including weak or no legislations on parental involvement in education of children with disabilities.

Finally, it was also observed that there is poor collaboration between teachers and parents in providing services to CWD. Overall, gaps in legislations, ignorant parents or un-empowered parents, inadequate skills of teachers were responsible for low involvement of parents in decision making, poor influence on the learning outcomes of the CWD and poor collaboration between parents and teachers to enhance services provided to CWD.

6.2 Conclusion and Recommendation

This section of the chapter projects the conclusion made per each objective and a recommendation proffered for it. It is presented in logical order starting with objective one through to objective five.





The objective one sought to explore the expectations of parents in the education of their children with any form of disabilities. Overall, parents expect their children to acquire basic employable skills which are supposed to help these children live independent lives in future and ultimately contribute to personal and national development. The study further observed that with the passage of the disability act in Ghana, it provides some framework of what parents of CWD can expect from the immediate family, the community, service providers including schools and the nation as a whole. However, stakeholders tend to be ignorant about many issues related to expectations of parents, teachers and others in provision of services to parents and CWD. The study therefore recommended the targeting of parents with CWD and CWD to guide and assist them to ensure they have fair expectation of CWD.

The objective two investigated how parents of pupils with disabilities are involved in the decision making process in schools. The study revealed that, there is low participation of parents with children with disabilities in decision-making in their wards' schools in the Jaman North District of the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. Although, parents with CWD attend PTA meetings, they are not getting involved in many other decision making issues in the schools. For instance, parents and teachers do not discuss the welfare of CWD, infrequent donations to schools, poor visits by parents, poor communication between parents and teachers, no speech and prize giving days, non-involvement in schools activities and in leadership structures and do not engage other stakeholders to support the school. The study among some other factors identified some of the key reasons for the poor participation of parents in decision making. First parents encounter challenges at work, at home, school and in the community such as emotional stress, failure to cope with the children's disability and financial challenges. Second, parents



were not sure of what was expected of them in making educational decisions on behalf of their children. And third parents of children with disabilities were not trained on how to cope with their children's disability and how to work with educators. The researcher also observed weak institutional structures, inadequate skills on the part of both teachers and parents and high demand on the time of parents and teachers is partly responsible for low participation of parents in the education of their children with disabilities. The study also observed that stigma hugely demotivates parents from participating in the education of their children with disabilities.

The third objective assessed the contributions of parents' of pupils with disabilities in enhancing the learning outcome of children with disabilities. The result from the field indicates that parents poorly contribute to the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities. Parents only provide exercise books and pens for their children. Largely, however, parents do not provide required educational needs of their CWD, fees for extra tuition, additional information on their children, delays in payment of PTA dues resulting in low support for the school, first aid for CWD and incentives for teachers. The study observed poor parental visits to schools and poor support to academic work of CWD at home is largely responsible for poor contribution of parents to learning outcomes of their children with disabilities.

Last but not the least, the study assessed how collaborations between parents and teachers could be enhanced to support children with disabilities. Overall, results from the field indicate a weak teacher-parent collaboration to support children with disabilities in the Jaman North District. These issues were confirmed by parents and children with disabilities. The poor teacher and parent relationship is as a result of weak engagement

among the various stakeholders. Poorly empowered parents with low levels of knowledge on issues of disabilities are also contributory factor for the poor relationship is also responsible for this state of poor teacher-parent collaboration. To address these challenges, government will need to put in place policies which will look at the needs of parents of the children with disabilities as well as provide mechanisms for addressing these issues. This will make these parents become active partners in the education of their children with intellectual disabilities' and children in general.

6.4 Chapter Summary

The findings of the study are presented and conclusions on each research questions/objective were also presented. Also, recommendations were also made for each of the key findings of the study.



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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

TOPIC: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.

This questionnaire is intended to solicit your view about teacher's involvement in the education of children with disabilities in Jaman North District.

I would appreciate it very much if you answer these questions frankly. The purpose of this study is purely academic. I assure you that your responses will be treated as confidential and completely anonymous (you will not be identified in any way). Whatever information you provide will only be used for the purposes of this study and thus will not be used for any other purpose.

Thank you.

INTRODUCTION: Please read the following questions and answer them appropriately by either a tick or a brief answer.

SECTION A: Personal Information.

1. Gender 1) Male 2) Female
2. Qualification 1) Professional 2) Non professional
3. No of years teaching experience.....
4. Class.....
5. What kind of methodology do you employ in teaching children with any of the disabilities?



SECTION B

Expectations of parents in the education of their children with any form of disabilities with regards to the children’s academic outcomes.

PARENTAL EXPECTATION IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

1	2	3	4	5			
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree			
No.	Statement		Scale				
	Parents:						
1	know that their children need special treatment		1	2	3	4	5
3	are satisfied with the treatment given their wards with disabilities in the school		1	2	3	4	5
4	are not satisfied with the teaching provided for their children in school		1	2	3	4	5
5	Think their children should pass		1	2	3	4	5
6	Regard their children as having the same potentials as any child without a disability		1	2	3	4	5
7	Think that their children should be able to live independent lives in future		1	2	3	4	5
8	Think that their children should also contribute to national development		1	2	3	4	5
9	Regard their children performance as satisfactory		1	2	3	4	5
10	Expect that their children should be able to acquire basic employable skills		1	2	3	4	5



SECTION C

Involvement of parents in the education of their children with any form of disabilities with regards to the children's academic outcomes.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	uncertain	agree	Strongly agree

No.	Statement	Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
	Parents:					
1	Attend PTA meetings regularly	1	2	3	4	5
3	Actively take part in discussing issues with the welfare of their children	1	2	3	4	5
4	Are ready to contribute material things to the welfare of the school	1	2	3	4	5
5	Regularly visit the schools to check on their children progress	1	2	3	4	5
6	Report any complaint to the school with regards their children unusual behavior	1	2	3	4	5
7	Take part in speech and price giving days in the school	1	2	3	4	5
8	Help in the planning of school teaching activities for their children	1	2	3	4	5
9	Take up some executive role to lead some development issues	1	2	3	4	5
10	Engage with some NGOs to help the school with some educational facilities to facilitate the effective teaching of their children	1	2	3	4	5



SECTION D

Contribution of parents in the education of their children with any form of disabilities with regards to the children's academic outcomes.

PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

1	2	3	4	5			
Strongly disagree	Disagree	uncertain	agree	Strongly agree			
No.	Statement		Scale				
	Parents:						
1	Provide the educational needs of their wards as required		1	2	3	4	5
3	are always ready to buy exercise books and pens for their children		1	2	3	4	5
4	are ready to pay extra classes fees for their children		1	2	3	4	5
5	provide teachers more information on how their children should be taken cared of		1	2	3	4	5
6	Provide reading books for their children		1	2	3	4	5
7	Pay PTA levies promptly		1	2	3	4	5
8	Are always ready to undertake self-project for the development of the school		1	2	3	4	5
9	Provide First Aid drugs for the their children with disability		1	2	3	4	5
10	Motivate teachers with incentives to better teach their children with disabilities		1	2	3	4	5



SECTION E

Enhancing collaboration between teachers and parents.

PARENTAL COLLABORATION WITH TEACHERS IN THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN

1	2	3	4	5		
Strongly disagree	Disagree	uncertain	agree	Strongly agree		
No.	Statement	Scale				
	Parents:					
1	Collaborate with teachers in the education of their children	1	2	3	4	5
3	Collaborate in the form ideas to the education of their children	1	2	3	4	5
4	Always respond to the call of the teachers	1	2	3	4	5
5	Guide their children in doing their exercise	1	2	3	4	5
6	Implement suggestions from teachers	1	2	3	4	5
7	Ensure that their children read their books before they sleep	1	2	3	4	5
8	Prepare their children early for school	1	2	3	4	5
9	Provide affordable means of transport for their children	1	2	3	4	5
10	Work with school authorities to identify children's special needs so as to address them	1	2	3	4	5



APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS

TOPIC: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.

This questionnaire is intended to solicit your view about parental involvement in the education of children with disabilities in Jaman North District.

I would appreciate it very much if you answer these questions frankly. The purpose of this study is purely academic. I assure you that your responses will be treated as confidential and completely anonymous (you will not be identified in any way). Whatever information you provide will only be used for the purposes of this study and thus will not be used for any other purpose.

Thank you.

SECTION A

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Age of respondent
2. Gender of respondent 1) Male [] 2) Female []
3. Educational level of respondent: 1) Non-formal [] 2) Primary [] 3) Middle/JHS []
4) S.H.S [] 5) Tertiary [] 6) None []
4. Marital status of respondent: 1) Single [] 2) Married [] 3) Separated []
4) Widowed []
5. Number of children with disabilities 1) one [] 2) two [] 3) three and above []



SECTION B

PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS WITH REGARDS TO ACADEMIC OUTCOMES IN THE EDUCATION OF THEIRCHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.

- 6. Are you aware of your child’s condition?1) Yes[] 2) No []
- 7. What kind of disability/challenge is your ward having? (Mental) (Visual) (Hearing) other.....
- 8. Have you ever tried any cure for the child’s condition?.....1) Yes [] 2) No[]
- 9. Do you think your child’s condition will get better with the normal system of education? 1. (Yes) 2, (No)
- 10. Why did you send your child to the normal school?.....
- 11. Do you think your child will pass his or her examination in view of his condition?
1. Yes [] 2 No []
- 12. Have the teachers suggested any other options for your child’s education? 1. Yes 2. No.
- 13. What job opportunities do you expect for your ward in future?.....
- 14. Please what are your expectations with regards to your child’s academic performance?.....
.....
.....

SECTION C

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING IN THE SCHOOL

- 12 Do you attend PTA meetings regularly? ... 1)Yes 2)No
- 13 How often do you attend PTA meetings?
- 14 What contribution do you make to the decision making in the school?



.....
.....
15 Which kind of decision making do you get involved?
.....
.....

SECTION D

**PARENTS' CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THEIR CHILDRENS' EDUCATION AND
LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- 16 What kind of school is your child attending? 1) Private [] 2) Public []
- 17 Do you pay school fees for your CWD?1) Yes [] 2) No []
- 18 Do you contribute towards the development of child's school? 1) yes [] 2) No []
- 19 What are you expected to provide with respect to your ward' education?
.....
- 20 Do you provide information about your child to the teachers? 1) Yes 2)No
- 21 Do you assist or seek for someone to help your ward with his/her homework? 1,
Yes 2, No
- 22 How do you motivate your ward to enhance academic successes in the school and
in the home?

SECTION E

COLLABORATION BETWEEN TEACHERS ND PARENTS

- 23 Do you visit your ward when at school? 1) Yes 2) No.
- 24 Do you suggest to the teachers how you would wish your child to be handled?
1), Yes 2), No



- 25 Do you think your child can cope with the normal teaching strategies?
1), Yes 2), No.
- 26 What kind of issue about your child do you wish to discuss with the teachers?
.....
- 27 Is there some form of collaboration between you and the teachers to bring about a
positive learning outcome in your child? 1) Yes[] 2) No [] 2, No
- 28 Does your ward demonstrate or put into practice what is taught at the school?
1, Yes 2, No
- 29 Do you pay extra classes' fee for your ward's educational performance?
1, Yes 2, No
- 30 What do you think can be done to improve the existing relationship between you
and the school authorities?



APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PUPILS WITH DISABILITY

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PUPILS WITH DISABILITY

SECTION A: Personal information.

1. What is your name?.....
2. How old are you?.....
3. What is your disability?
4. How long have you been in this school?.....
5. In which class are you?.....

SECTION B: Pupils expectations in school.

6. Why are you in this school?
7. Do you always do the same exercise with your peers? 1)Yes () 2)No ()
8. Do you have friends in the school? Yes () No ()
9. Have you been having problems with your teacher? 1)Yes () 2)No ()
10. What about your teacher that you don't like?
11. What do you want to become in future?.....
12. How do you think you can achieve that?.....

SECTION C: Parental involvement in student's education.

12. Do your parents attend PTA meetings regularly? 1)Yes () 2)No ()
13. Which of them have been attending? 1) Mother [] 2) Father[]
14. Do your parents complain about your performance in school? 1)Yes () 2) No ()
15. What do your parents say about your performance?



16. How often do you impress your parents on your education?

.....

17. In what way(s) do you normally impress your

parents?.....

18. What do you normally get for that from your parents?.....

SECTION D: Improving teacher/student relationship.

19. What is your teacher's behavior towards you? 1) Good. 2) Bad.

20. How do you please your teacher in class?

21. What do you think can be done to improve the relationship between you and your teacher?

22. Gender of respondent. 1.) Male 2.) Female.



APPENDIX 3: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FROM UDS
UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION
TAMALE CAMPUS

Memorandum

From: Graduate School Coordinator (FOE)

To: Whom it concerns

Date: 1 January 2015

Subject: Letter of introduction

The bearer of this letter.....is a student embarking on a research exercise as part of his/her in fulfillment of the requirements for his/her degree in the University for Development Studies (UDS).

She/he is doing thesis on the topic.....

Information gathered is for this purpose although findings may be used for future research.

Please, I would be grateful for your support and cooperation.

Thank you

Sincerely

.....

Rev. Fr. Dr. Thomas Asante

(Graduate Coordinator, FOE)



APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Profile

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Educational level
4. Marital status
5. Number of children if applicable.

Expectations of parents in the education of children with disabilities

6. Have the teachers suggested any other options for your child's education and what are they?
7. What job opportunities do you expect for your ward in future and Please what are your expectations with regards to your child's academic performance
8. What is your level of satisfaction in the manner in which your child is treated?
9. What is your level of satisfaction in the manner in which you treat a child with disability either as parent or as a teacher?
10. What skills are your children learning and what is your assessment of their level of absorption?

Parental involvement in decision making

11. What is the frequency and participation in PTA meetings and visits to the school?
12. What contribution do you make to the decision making in the school?
13. Which kind of decision making do you get involved?
14. Did you specifically discuss issues concerning children with disabilities?
15. Is the PTA able to address the needs and concerns of you and your child?.



The role of parents in the learning outcomes of their children with disabilities

16. What kind of school is your child attending?
17. What is the nature and value of school fees?
18. What are your contributions towards the development of child's school?
19. What are you expected to provide with respect to your ward' education?
20. How do you provide information about your child to the teachers?
21. Do you assist or seek for someone to help your ward with his/her homework?
22. How do you motivate your ward to enhance academic successes in the school and in the home?

Status of collaboration between parents and teachers in enhancing the learning outcomes of children with disabilities

23. How do you collaborate with stakeholders in the education sector to educate the child with disability?
24. Which are working and which are not working?
25. What other things do you think parents and teachers could collaborate on to improve the learning situation of children with disabilities within the mainstream school?
26. Can you give me cases and situations where parent and teachers collaboration have yielded positive results?
27. Can you give me cases and situations where parents and teachers collaboration did not yield intended results?

