



CHALLENGES AND SUPPORTS FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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ABSTRACT: *The study was a descriptive survey which examined teachers, parents and administrators' support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in inclusive schools within selected schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Views were sampled through a Likert-Type questionnaire from teachers, parents and administrators. The sample consisted of 132 respondents made up of 86 regular teachers, 40 parents and 6 administrators. The findings revealed that there are low levels of material or human support for pupils with special educational needs in inclusive classrooms. The study also showed that special educational support has a positive effect on pupils learning in inclusive schools. The study further revealed a number of challenges that confront classroom teachers in providing support to children with special educational needs. It is recommended that teachers should try as much as possible to provide more material or human support for pupils with special educational needs in inclusive classrooms to improve their academic work. The Ghana Education Service and administrators of schools must also make funds available to the schools for the purchase of teaching and learning materials and other resources so as to reduce the challenges teachers face in providing support for pupils with special educational needs in the classrooms.*

KEYWORDS: Special Education, Inclusive Education, Learning Needs, Teachers, Parents, Administrative Supports.

INTRODUCTION

In every classroom, there are differences in children's performance because human beings develop differently and for that matter, have different learning needs. Even though individual differences are of much concern in the education system, it has often not been given much attention over the years in the general education classroom. Children with different learning needs and poor academic performance are left to their fate while all attention turns towards those who are capable and without difficulty. It is important to note that provision of support for children, who perform poorly in the regular school by the stakeholders, will enable children with special educational needs (SEN) to cope with learning in regular classroom to reach their maximum potentials.

Parental supports involve the role that parents or family members play towards their ward's education. Parental role is crucial in the education of all children but in education of children with special educational needs, the role of the parent is even more, especially, in choosing of programmes for their wards. Hornby (2000) contends that children's academic achievement is likely to be enhanced if parents and teachers work closely together. It must be noted that home-school relationship is important to enable parents and school work together to provide appropriate support for the pupils in the school and home. According to Polloway and Patton



(1997), information that is shared between parents and teachers is extremely important to maintain a productive instructional and management program, as both parties need to be aware of the pupil's progress in each setting (school and home).

It is in this vein that, the researcher became interested in the variables and wants to carry out a research into the nature of support that are available in the inclusive schools for children with SEN. Ocloo, Hayford, Agbeke, Gadabgui, Avoke, Boison, (2002) noted that, many children with special educational needs (SEN) find themselves among their non-affected counterparts in regular school and go through education without any support, as such some drop out of school and those who manage to sail through end up with unacceptable grades. A focus on support provided by teachers, administrators and parents for learning will enable children with learning needs succeed. There is therefore, the need to provide support to children with SEN in inclusive classrooms to enable them cope with learning. In this study, the focus is on the nature of support provided for children with SEN in inclusive classroom, taking a critical look at teacher, administrative, and parental supports, with challenges that confront the provision of support for children with special needs in the schools.

Objectives of the Study

1. Examine the benefits of special educational support on pupils learning in inclusive schools.
2. Investigate the challenges that confront teachers in providing support for children with special educational needs.

Research Questions

1. What benefit does special educational support gives to pupils learning in inclusive schools?
2. What challenges do classroom teachers face in providing support to children with special educational needs?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Benefits of Special Educational Support on Pupils in Inclusive Schools

It is impossible for regular educators to meet the needs of every child in the regular education classroom, more especially those with SEN. However, with collaboration and teamwork with special educators, both teachers and pupil in regular education stands to enjoy some benefits. Firstly, teachers will be exposed to some of the most modern, appropriate, and suitable pedagogic methods used in the successful education of individual pupils with special needs (Oppong, 2003).

The author continued that regular teachers will be introduced and exposed to some of the learning/teaching materials and equipment used in the successful education of special needs students. Secondly, students with SEN will be provided support in the form of accommodation being made for them in the classroom. This will enable them benefit from instruction in the regular classroom. They will also be socially accepted by their peers and teachers and this will



help build their social competence. Lewis and Doorlag (2003) explained that, when pupils are actively involved in appropriate instruction, they are less likely to exhibit problem behaviours and more likely to feel good about their competence. What these authors mean is that, when teachers acquire the expertise to teach or handle pupils with SEN in regular classroom and do it effectively the pupil's exhibit fewer problem behaviours because their needs are met.

Challenges that Classroom Teachers face in Providing Supports for Pupils with SEN in Inclusive Classrooms

Teachers in regular education face a lot of challenges in the delivery of their services. Among these challenges are identification of children with SEN, acceptance of children with SEN, classroom management, instructional methodology, lack of skill among teachers, inadequate funding, rigid curricular and examination systems and inadequate educational infrastructure.

Identification of Children with SEN

Identification is the determination of special characteristics of a situation or condition so as to recognize and distinguish the deviants from the 'normal' by either observation or using test battery (Ocloo et al, 2002). Teachers in general education classrooms are not specifically trained with the skills to identify learners with problems. Nagel (2003) confirmed that, teachers who are not fully certificated in special education may have difficulties identifying children with disabilities. It is important for these teachers to understand why student characteristics should be considered in planning and implementing instruction by first identifying the SEN pupils in class. To identify a child as having any problem that affect the child's learning in the classroom demands the use of assessment as a means or process to measure the problem that the child may have (Choate, 2000). The teacher is expected through assessment to understand how a child's behaviour, communication, or physical differences affect the child's ability to learn and acquire academic skills. Make referrals to appropriate place for redress of children's problem, or seek assistance from SEN Co-ordinators for the child. In support of this, Dembo (1988) stressed that, classroom teachers must be involved in the assessment team because they play important role in the identification, and referral of exceptional students for further diagnosis. In Ghana most general education teachers are not involved in the assessment team for them to be able to deliver the goods as expected of them.

Acceptance of SEN Pupils

Children with disabilities have always been the last to be offered access to education regardless of what country one observes (Lindqvist, 1999). Education for persons with disabilities has been influenced by a number of factors mainly driven by societal cultural values and beliefs. Even though many policies formulated guarantee access to education by all children, this is not met for disabled children. For instance, the Educational Act of 1961 and the 1992 Constitution of Ghana stress on the provision of education as a basic right for all children. Yet teachers still find it difficult to deal with those children with disabilities in their classrooms due to certain attitudes, belief systems and prejudices. Teachers in inclusive classrooms are to support children with SEN by creating a positive environment that welcomes them. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to educate the members of the class about the condition of pupils with SEN for their social acceptance. The school should ensure that handicap persons have access to the privileges and services available to their peers and also gain the respect and acceptance of the community members as citizens. This challenge of teachers made Kisanji



(1999) citing Jenkinson (1997) to remark that, the exclusion of children with SEN from normal social life including getting access to formal education in regular schools and lack of recognition of their human civic rights is a violation of their rights.

Classroom Management

A controllable class size allows for effective class management. Many things happen when children are taught in sizes manageable by the teacher. Individual attention may be given as well as provision of prompt feedbacks. When learner's needs are in focus, there is the probability of high tasks performance and high expectation of success (Heveveld, 1994). One of the most important variables influencing the effectiveness of instruction is individual differences. The inclusive education teacher needs to be patient and flexible as he/she works with increasing diverse children. He/she must learn different ways to tailor instruction to the needs of children. The teacher's desk should face the classroom so that the teacher can see the whole classroom and all students. Teachers must not, however, impose a rigid system that requires all students to sit constantly in their seats. He/she must effectively manage movement and plan individual student duties and daily routines. Keogh (1990) noted that the key success for student with disability placed in the general classroom is how the general classroom teacher provides efficient support to the child. In Ghana, the drive for school enrolment for all children as already stated in the discussion, has led to the increase in children's population in classrooms. Teachers are overburdened with large class sizes and the problem of managing different categories of children in terms of behaviour and learning for effective teaching becomes affected.

Instructional Methodology

Although the scope and sequence of the general education curriculum are usually well specified, the teacher needs to adapt the contents to meet the various needs of children in class but then, this is usually not the case in general education classroom because teachers have huge task and limited time to complete assignments. Prior to presentation of skills and information, the teacher needs to decide how to group pupils considering the group size, and group types. Class size is an important factor in instruction. Glass and Smith (1978) noted that student achievement increases as the number of students in the class decreases.

The teacher is also expected to modify the instructional materials and activities, change teaching procedures whilst the learning tasks remain the same. He/she must also use visual prompts, provide additional guided practice, slow pace of instruction, use motivational skills and give positive feedback to benefit all categories of children. These strategies enable students to be actively involved in the lesson. Lewis and Doorlag (2003) explained further that, when pupils are actively involved in appropriate instruction, they are less likely to exhibit problem behaviours and more likely to feel good about their competence. It must be noted that, one of the most important variables influencing the effectiveness of instruction is individual differences. When learner's needs are focused, and individual differences considered, there is the probability of high task performance and high expectation of success (Heveveld, 1994).

Lack of Skills among Teachers

It is generally acknowledged that most regular education teachers lack the skills and competencies to adapt curricular demands and physical environment to help the child to adjust. Stainbach, Stainback, Stefanich, and Alper (1996) caution teachers not to assume that the



general class curriculum is non-functional for some students. Rose (2002) opines that there is urgent need to focus attention on teaching approaches which enable children with special educational needs and disabilities to perform effectively in mainstream classrooms. This will help pupils with special needs to take active part in the teaching and learning process which will result in academic excellence.

Inadequate Funding

Adequate funding has been identified as one of the salient issues to consider when educating children with special educational needs in regular schools. Providing accessible school environment such as construction of ramps requires finance. Training and re-training of teachers by way of in-service requires money. Provision of resources, equipment and other forms of support to meet unique needs of learners all depend on availability of funds. Such a re-emphasis is fully explored in Avoke (2005) who writing on Budgeting and Financing Inclusive Education remarks that while disability does not automatically equal extra expense, some individuals with disabilities and some schools require more or extra funding in order to meet the peculiar needs in inclusive education. Additionally, he said that schools that are involved in inclusive programmes must be financially supported. This clearly shows that regular schools with children with special educational needs require enough financial assistance to meet the differential learning needs of all children.

Rigid Curricular and Examination Systems

There are rigid curricular and examination systems that make it impossible for teachers to tolerate the child lagging behind. Weddell (2005: 9) categorically stated that 'inclusion is not practicable within the rigidities of the current school system'. In Ghana, for example, the Curriculum, Research and Development Division (CRDD) designs the same curriculum for schools without making any differentiation between the children with special needs and those without special needs or between the disabled and non-disabled. Also, the educational system is such that at certain stages of education, pupils have to sit for examinations and pass to do certain programmes. For example, in order to be enrolled at the Senior High School level, pupils in Junior High School have to write the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). If schools expect their students to do well on these examinations, the teachers will have less time for weaker students or those failing to demonstrate scholarship. These seem to suggest that those with special educational needs (SEN) could be present but their participation and achievement may be a matter of chance and probabilities.

Inadequate Educational Infrastructure

Bennetts and Flynn (2002) stated that, in order to provide inclusive education, the physical environment needs to be safe and accessible to all pupils, including those with physical and sensory disabilities. The school needs to be structured in such a way as to minimize the effects of individual learning differences in achievement. Bennetts and Flynn (2002) identified the following as the various ways' infrastructure can be modified in inclusive schools:

1. Accessible and safe Environment of inclusive schools
2. Adequate and appropriate lighting in inclusive schools
3. Provision of adequate and appropriate acoustic levels in inclusive schools



4. Predictable and structured environment of inclusive schools
5. Seating arrangements of inclusive schools
6. provision of differentiated learning centres in inclusive schools

Accessible and Safe Environment of Inclusive Schools

Bennetts and Flynn (2002) asserted that providing safe physical access to the school buildings, classrooms and facilities is essential and will enable all pupils to physically gain access to the educational environment and be included in all activities alongside their peers. Adequate access ramps, lifts, and adapted toilets must be provided to students with physical disabilities (Bennetts & Flynn, 2002). Doorways and classrooms must be constructed in such a way that they will accommodate wheelchairs. Bennetts and Flynn further advised that students with physical disabilities may also benefit from features such as adapted chairs, or tables that are at the correct height for a wheelchair. Bennetts and Flynn also cautioned about class size and overcrowding in inclusive classrooms. Studies have shown that students in overcrowded schools score significantly lower in both maths and reading comprehension than similar students in less crowded conditions (Rivera-Batiz & Marti, 1995). It is therefore essential to determine the optimal number of students for a given room size. This should take into account those who may require additional equipment to assist them in their learning or who make use of wheelchairs and the space for adequate access that may entail.

Adequate and Appropriate Lighting in Inclusive School

Mitchell (2008) found out that on a general level, the amount of lighting within the classroom should be considered, ensuring that all areas are well lit. It is recommended also that the use of natural light should be maximised and available daylight supplemented by electric lighting (Mitchell, 2008). Mitchell asserted that the amount of available light in a classroom is important as it enables students to see the information presented on the blackboard clearly and to attend to desk-based tasks. It is also worth noting that some students may prefer dimmer lights or brighter lights for learning. Some children with disorders such as ADHD, autism and those with photosensitive epilepsy may be disoriented by the flicker emitted by bright fluorescent lights (Epilepsy Action, 2007). Allowing a pupil to wear a baseball cap to provide shade is an example of a simple accommodation that can make all the difference (Epilepsy Action, 2007).

Provision of Adequate and Appropriate Acoustic Levels in Inclusive Schools

Bennetts and Flynn (2002) contended that a large amount of learning takes place through listening and speaking and it is critical that students can hear and understand their teacher's instructions and directions. The World Health Organisation (WHO, 1999) has recognised the need to provide optimal acoustical environments for students and have issued standards for the ideal levels of noise that should be present in a learning environment (WHO, 1999). Noisy equipment, for example, can be problematic and there should be an awareness of the effects of heating and ventilation systems as some students have difficulty tolerating even the gentle hum of classroom activity and are hypersensitive to noise. The use of background music helps to filter out distractions. Accommodating individual needs with headphones, ear muffs and others can prove useful too (WHO, 1999).



Bennetts and Flynn (2002) found out that many learners can also benefit from the installation of a sound-field system within the classroom. A sound-field system is a wireless voice amplification system with a microphone for the teacher and a network of speakers placed around the classroom. The authors explained that this system enables all students and not just those with hearing impairments, to hear the teacher clearly, and reduces the need for the teacher to raise their voice or experience hoarseness when talking for long periods. The use of soft furnishings, sound absorbing materials such as carpets, and the use of insulation materials in walls and ceilings in the classroom can also help to absorb background noise and improve overall acoustics (Bennetts & Flynn, 2002).

Predictable and Structured Environment of Inclusive Schools

Lang (1996) stated that providing a structured and predictable environment can prove useful for those pupils who experience difficulties with organisation, especially those with learning difficulties and developmental disabilities. Some students, in particular those with autism or Asperger syndrome, can be dependent on external environmental cues for structuring and organising their learning (Lang, 1996). Having regular routines for class work and designated places for classroom materials can help alleviate any anxiety they may feel around this issue. Practical strategies to accommodate the needs of these pupils can include the provision of visual cues such as picture prompts, colour codes, and written lists, or number prompts to help organisation. Class schedules and timetables can be provided in both pictorial and written form, with the class rules clearly displayed (Lang, 1996).

Seating Arrangements of Inclusive Schools

Rivera-Batiz and Marti (1995) opined that the seating arrangements in classrooms can be structured to enable not only greater physical access for all students, and access to the point of learning, but also as a means of controlling unwanted behaviour for those with behavioural difficulties. For example, furniture and equipment can be arranged in such a way as to reduce unwanted movement around the classroom and minimise opportunities for students to disrupt other students at their workspaces. Pupils with visual or hearing impairments can be seated close to the blackboard or teacher, or next to a window to avail extra natural light. Likewise, Pupils who may need more frequent monitoring or have difficulties staying on task should also be considered for preferential seating (either near the teacher, between well-focused pupils or away from distractions). Rivera-Batiz and Marti (1995) mentioned that children who cannot stay still, staying seated for hours on end or sometimes even five minutes can be torture.

Children who tend to move around a lot can be given two seats in the classroom, so that they have somewhere 'legal' to go when they need to move around (Rivera-Batiz & Marti, 1995). Using moveable dividers to create a quiet workspace in the classroom may benefit some pupils, allowing them to work independently for a time without distraction (Lang, 1996). A quiet study desk with screens around it can be used as a reward for completing tasks or can provide a needed break for children who are acting out or need to wind down. Lang, (1996) noted that the area should never be used as a 'time-out' spot or as a punishment, but rather to facilitate students who work well independently or who seem overwhelmed by the activity within the class.



Provision of Differentiated Learning Centres in Inclusive Schools

Wadsworth and Kinght (1999) contended that creating differentiated learning centres within the classroom allows pupils to take some time to focus on a particular task or theme in greater detail. Wadsworth and Kinght asserted that at the primary school level, the classroom can have designated spaces for certain activities; these can include a reading corner, music and listening centre, arts and crafts area and a writing corner. This helps to provide for the different learning styles of pupils and helps organise targeted learning activities. At the secondary school level, learning centres are usually designated places where all pupils can go during free or elective periods (Wadsworth & Kinght, 1999). These learning centres can contain a variety of equipment such as computers and a variety of materials and resources to encourage creativity and learning. Some schools staff these learning centres with both a general teacher and a special educator and students are encouraged to decide for themselves when they should avail of the learning centre's facilities. The learning centres present innovative ways of providing non-stigmatising support to students who may have trouble with certain types of task, such as reading. The study carried out by Ocloo and Subbey (2008) found that Ghanaian teachers were well aware of the concept of inclusive education, but inadequate infrastructure and teachers' lack of training impeded the implementation of inclusive education. The Ghana Education Service is concerned about the inaccessible and the unsafe environment in many learning centres; hence it is conceptualized as a barrier to learning and development that need to be removed (Ocloo & Subbey, 2008). The Classroom should be wheelchair friendly; doorway should be widened and stairs should be removed and be replaced with ramps to allow for easier movement for pupils with physical disability. Wadsworth and Kinght (1999) contended that even though there is a call for building accessibility for individual with disabilities, not all facilities are in compliance, therefore, a physical therapist or an occupational therapist needs to be included in an assessment of the schools to determine needs such as handrails, ramps, widening of sidewalks and doors and adjustment of equipment heights. Wadsworth and Kinght (1999) said that classrooms should be arranged in such a way that learners are able to move freely without disturbing the classroom layout.

METHODOLOGY

The study used basically a survey design which employed the quantitative approach. The sample size involved in the study was 86 teachers, 6 administrators (Head teachers) and 40 parents. In all, a total of 132 participants were involved in the study. This sample size was selected with the help of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size. This included all teachers in the selected schools from Basic 1 to Basic 9. The purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting teachers, and administrators (head teachers) for the study. This technique was chosen because the five schools were the only pilot inclusive schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The questionnaire was designed for teachers to collect data for the study. Questionnaire was designed in close-ended format for the teachers, administrators and parents. The basic structure of the instrument was based on four-point Likert-type scale ranging from "strongly agree" (SA), through "agree" (A), and "disagree" (D) to "strongly disagree" (SA). Thus, respondents were required to indicate the frequency with which type of behaviour was exhibited by them.



PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Research Question 1

What benefits do Special Education Support give to Pupils in their Learning in Inclusive Schools?

To answer this research question, teachers' responses to questionnaire items number 1 to 5 were used. Table 1 shows teachers' responses to the items.

Table 1: Benefits Derived from Supporting Pupils in Inclusive Schools

Benefits	SA	A	D	SD
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
1. Succeeding academically	0(0)	67(77.9)	11(12.7)	8(9.3)
2. Establish peer relationships	37(43.0)	36(41.8)	13(15.0)	0(0)
3. Social growth among pupils	40(46.5)	35(40.6)	6(6.9)	5(5.8)
4. Feelings of self-worth	35(40.6)	26(30.2)	9(10.4)	16(18.6)
5. Play active role in class	28(32.5)	42(48.8)	16(18.6)	0(0)

Source: Field data, (2019)

Table 1 shows teacher responses to items 1-5 which were used to answer research question 1. Research question 1 elicited responses on the benefits of inclusive education to pupils with special educational needs. Statements were given to the teachers to consider by indicating their agreement or disagreement.

Most participants 67 (77.9%) agreed that pupils with special needs benefit academically when they are given the needed support in inclusive classrooms, 11 (12.7%) disagreed, and 8 (9.3%) strongly disagreed. A deduction from the above is that majority of the respondents believed that when children with special educational needs are placed in inclusive settings, they are able to succeed academically. The finding supports the work of Muwana (2012), who concluded that pupils with special needs in inclusive classroom benefit because they encourage each other. This means inclusive class ensures holistic development of all children including those with special educational needs when given the needed support. This is inconsistent with Klinger, Vaughn, Hughes, Schumm (1998). They noted that pupils with disabilities do better academically in exclusive settings than inclusive setting. This inconsistency may be due to the sample used in the study which may be different from this sample. This therefore disagrees with Gary (1997) who observed that many regular teachers feel unprepared to work with learners with disabilities or special educational needs in regular classes because they believe it could lead to lower academic standards.

Participants who believed that pupils with special educational needs benefit from inclusive classroom with the required support commented on student's opportunities to participate in the same academic activities as their peers without special needs when they are placed in general education settings. Respondents noted that learning alongside their peers without special needs encourages them to work hard. Thirty-seven (43.0%) strongly agreed to the statement, 36 (41.8%) agreed with the statement, while 13 (15.1%) disagreed with the statement. This



indicates that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that peer relationship with pupils in inclusive classrooms benefits them. This conclusion also agrees with McLeskey and Waldron (2002) who concluded that participants believed that by competing with students with special needs, students would be “forced” to work hard and would end up getting the same grades or even better grades than the students without special needs. This revelation is being supported by Hendickson, Shokoohi-Yekta and Gable cited in D’Alonzo, Giordano and Vanleeuwen (1997). They reported that high school pupils report that their relationship with pupils with special needs resulted in more positive attitudes, increased response to the needs of others and increased appreciation for diversity.

Most participants 40 (46.5%) strongly agreed that pupils with special needs benefit socially when they are in inclusive classrooms, 35 (40.6%) also agreeing, 6 (6.9%) disagreed, and 5 (5.8%) strongly disagreed. A deduction from the above is that majority of the respondents believed that when children with special educational needs are placed in inclusive settings, they enjoy social growth with their colleagues.

Complementing the category of “social worth” was a group of responses that were categorized as “feelings of self-worth and a sense of belonging.” Thirty-five (40.6%) strongly agreed with the statement, 26 (30.2%) agreed, 9 (10.4%) disagreed and 16 (18.6%) strongly disagreed. A deduction from the above is that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that self-worth of pupils with special needs included in general education settings help them perform better when actively involved in class activities. This is supported by Giagreco, Dennis, Cloninger, Edelman & Schattman (1994). They noted that inclusion education gives every student opportunity to develop or enhance their communication, problem-solving and relationship building skills. This is also supported by D’Alonzo, Giordano & Vanleeuwen (1997). Finally, it can be found that the majority (72.6%) agreed that pupils with special needs lose the stigma of being different or failures when placed in the general classroom. The findings show that, teachers believe that inclusion of students with special needs in the general classroom with the needed support benefits student’s self-worth.

Reflecting on pupils’ sense of belonging to class, 28 (32.5%) strongly agreed with the statement, 42 (48.8%) agreed, 16 (18.6) disagreed and nobody strongly disagreed with the statement. A deduction from the above is that majority of the responded agreed that children with special needs in inclusive classrooms becomes active in class when given the needed support. The finding supports the work of Muwana (2012), who concluded that pupils with special needs are able to work hard when given the needed support by peers and teachers. He further stated that this motivated and encouraged them to develop extra interest in education. The findings support the work of Avoke and Hayford (2001), who also concluded that it is possible for pupils with special needs to become successful in educational field when the needed support is given. I strongly support this assertion because children with special educational needs have limitations and require little support from individuals to enable them to succeed.



Research Question 2

What Challenges do Classroom Teachers face in Providing Support to Children with Special Educational Needs?

There could be many barriers for educating children with special educational needs in inclusive classrooms. These barriers could emanate from scarcity of resources, negative attitudes of teachers, non-disabled peers and their parents. In order to address this, teachers were asked to express their opinion on the challenges or constraints that confront them in providing support to children with special educational needs. The details of their responses are provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Challenges Confronting Teachers in Providing Support to Pupils with Special Educational Needs

	SA	A	D	SD
Challenges	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)
6. Adapting instructional materials to suit the needs of pupils with SEN	15(17.4)	47(54.7)	20(23.3)	4(4.7)
7. Resource teachers do not cooperate with me	4(4.7)	26(30.2)	36(41.9)	20(23.3)
8. Support pupils with SEN				
9. Large class size does not encourage them to involve pupils with SEN in demonstrations	16(18.6)	31(36.0)	36(41.9)	3(3.5)
10. No support is received from special educators to support the teaching of pupils with SEN	13(15.1)	26(30.2)	27(31.4)	20(23.3)
11. Peer support system is difficult to utilize	18(20.9)	35(40.7)	27(31.4)	6(7.0)
12. Funds not there to procure material to support pupils with SEN	45(52.3)	37(43.0)	3(3.5)	1(1.2)
13. Competences and qualification to manage pupils with special needs	12(14.0)	48(55.8)	21(24.4)	5(5.8)
14. Teaching materials are not readily available to support pupils with SEN	24(27.9)	48(55.8)	14(16.3)	0(0)

Source: Field data, (2019).

Table 2 shows teacher responses to items 6 - 14 which were used to answer research question 2. The results on Table 2 clearly shows that 15 (17.4%) of the teachers strongly agreed that adapting instructional materials to the needs of pupils with special needs burdens the work of the regular teacher, 47 (54.7%) agreed to the statement, 20 (23.3%) disagreed with the statement and 4 (4.7%) strongly disagreed. An inference from the above is that majority of the teachers agreed that adapting instructional materials to the needs of pupils with special needs burdens the work of the regular teacher.

From the Table, out of the 86 respondents, 4 (4.7.0%) of them strongly agreed that resource teachers do not cooperate with them in delivering services to pupils with special needs, 26 (30.2%) agreed to the statement, 36 (41.9%) disagreed that resource teachers do not cooperate with them in delivering services to pupils with special educational needs and 20 (23.3%) also



strongly disagreed with the statement. A deduction from the above is that majority of the teachers disagreed that 'resource teachers do not cooperate with them in delivering services to pupils with special educational needs. This means that, there is cooperation between resource teachers and regular teachers in delivering services to pupils with special educational needs. This is encouraging, since this will improve teaching and learning of students with special needs. According to Okyere and Adam (2003), resource teachers provide in-service training for the other teachers on how to manage the SEN child in learning. The techniques and methods of teaching some subjects are demonstrated for regular classroom teacher to adopt. In the community, the resource teachers target the schools, the clinics as well as going to homes to educate students and parents on disability issues. The provision of these services in most cases help pupils with special educational needs to adjust in the general education and they benefit from their education (Okyere & Adam, 2003).

The results in Table 2 indicates that 16 (18.6%) of the teachers strongly agreed that large class size does not encourage them to involve pupils with special needs in demonstrations, 31 (36.0%) agreed to the statement, 36 (41.9%) disagreed with the statement and 3 (3.5%) strongly disagreed that large class size will not encourage them to involve pupils with special needs in demonstrations. A deduction from the above is that majority of the respondents agreed that large class size will not encourage them to involve pupils with special needs in demonstrations. A controllable class size allows for effective class management. Many things happen when children are taught in sizes manageable by the teacher. Individual attention may be given as well as provision of prompt feedbacks. When learner's needs are in focus, there is the probability of high tasks performance and high expectation of success (Heveveld, 1994).

With the responses of item 10 in Table 2, 13 (15.1%) of the teachers strongly agreed that teachers do not receive support from special educators to support the teaching of pupils with special educational needs, 26 (30.2%) agreed to the statement, 27 (31.4%) disagreed with the statement and 20 (23.3%) also strongly disagreed that teachers do not receive support from special educators in order to support the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The responses obtained clearly show that majority of the teachers disagreed that teachers do not receive support from special educators in order to support the teaching for pupils with special education needs.

Out of the 86 respondents sampled, 18 (20.9%) of them strongly agreed that peer support system in the school are difficult to utilize, 35 (40.7%) also agreed to the statement, 27 (31.4%) disagreed to the statement and 6 (7.0%) strongly disagreed that peer support system in the school are difficult to utilize. Thus, majority of the teachers agreed that peer support systems in the school are difficult to utilize

Table 2 depicts that 45 (52.3%) of the teachers strongly agreed that funds are not available to procure teaching and learning materials to support pupils with SEN, 37 (43.0%) agreed to the statement, 2 (3.5%) disagreed and 1 (1.2%) also strongly disagreed that funds are not available to procure teaching and learning materials to support pupils with SEN. It can be said that majority of the teachers strongly agreed that funds are not available to procure teaching and learning materials to support pupils with SEN.

As indicated on Table 2, 12 (14.0%) of the teachers strongly agreed that teachers have necessary competences and qualifications to manage pupils with special needs, 48 (55.8%) agreed to the statement, 21 (24.4%) disagreed to the statement and 5 (5.8%) strongly disagreed



that teachers have necessary competences and qualifications to manage pupils with special needs. From this, it can be seen that majority of the respondents agreed that teachers have necessary competences and qualifications to manage pupils with special educational needs. This has positive influence on teaching and learning in an inclusive classroom because teachers will be able to use appropriate teaching method to meet the unique needs of pupils with special educational needs. Rose (2002) opines that there is urgent need to focus attention on teaching approaches which enable children with special educational needs and disabilities to perform effectively in mainstream classrooms. This will help students with special needs to take active part in the teaching and learning process which will result in academic excellence.

Out of the 86 respondents, 24 (27.9%) of the teachers strongly agreed that teaching and learning materials are not readily available to support pupils with special needs, 48 (55.8%) also agreed to the statement, 14 (16.3%) disagreed to the statement and none of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. A deduction from the above is that majority of the teachers agreed that teaching and learning materials are not readily available to support pupils with special educational needs. This means majority of the teachers indicated that teaching and learning materials are not available in their schools to support the education of pupils with special needs. This will affect the teacher's ability to modify the teaching and learning activities to meet the diverse needs of all pupils in the classroom. Lack of administrative support for effective teaching of children with special needs in inclusive classrooms in the form of teaching aids and other teaching and learning resources makes it difficult for teachers to exercise their duties well.

This assertion is supported by Levitz (1996) who stated that the curriculum and educational system as a whole have failed to respond to the diverse needs of the learner population resulting in massive numbers of drop-outs, push-outs, failures and in learners being mainstreamed by default. This implies that there is no provision made for a child who is facing difficulties to access the general education curriculum in the regular classroom and therefore, tend to become a failure and consequently drop out of school. Yet, another explanation, which seems the most plausible, comes from the systemic nature of inclusive education, which requires concurrent intervention, response and interaction of all subsystems of the educational system. In order for education for the pupils with special educational needs in inclusive classrooms to be beneficial, it needs to encompass all pupils' ecological systems at all levels.

Key Findings

Research Question 1:

The study showed that special educational support has a positive effect on pupils learning in inclusive schools.

Research Question 2:

The study revealed a number of challenges that confront classroom teachers in providing support to children with special educational needs prominent among them was that funds are not available to procure teaching and learning materials.



CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that, teachers, parents and administrators' support for children with special educational needs are paramount for their success in inclusive education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that in-service training be organized for all teachers in inclusive schools on the need to provide support for pupils with special needs in their schools since it has positive effect on their academic work.

It is recommended that the Ghana Education Service and administrators of schools must make funds available to the schools for the purchase of teaching and learning materials and other resources so as to reduce the challenges teachers face in providing support for pupils with special educational needs in the classrooms.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study was focused on children with special educational needs in an Inclusive classroom. It is therefore suggested that future research be carried out on children in regular classrooms.

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