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Exploring teachers perceived school attendance challenges of learners with intellectual disabilities at Adukrom Methodist Unit School in Ghana

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to explore teachers' perceived school attendance challenges of learners with intellectual disabilities at Adukrom Methodist Unit School. The study employed a qualitative research approach with a descriptive case study design. The census sampling was employed to sampled all the 6 teachers who teach learners with intellectual disabilities. The instrument used was semi structured interview guide. The study revealed that,health challenges, financial challenges on the side of parents, name-calling by peers, and long distance from home to school were how the teachers describe the challenges facing learners with intellectual disabilities and again revealed that establishing more unit schools, organizing regular PTA meetings, improved professional development for teachers and providing adequate TLRs were measures need to be put in place to address the attendance challenges of learners with intellectual disabilities. It was recommended that, various stakeholders of education of the school should effectively collaborate with each other to help address the attendance challenges of learners with intellectual disabilities.

Keywords: intellectual disabilities, school attendance, unit schools

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1. Introduction

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006) and Sustainable Development Goal 4 emphasized the need for inclusive education for all learners including learners with disabilities and this was also stressed by Ghana's Inclusive Education Policy (2015). Despite these convention and policy, learners with intellectual disabilities continue to be among the lowest when it comes to school attendance (UNESCO, 2020).

School attendance is a critical indicator of educational access and engagement. Regular attendance not only promotes academic achievement but also facilitates social interaction, life skill development and personal independence, which are importance indicators for learners with intellectual disabilities (Komakeck et al., 2023). Learners with intellectual disabilities in developing countries including Ghana face multiple barriers that affect their consistent school attendance. These include poverty, long distance to school, poor road networks stigmatization, lack of assistive devices and negative society attitude towards individuals with disabilities (UNESCO, 2020; Mantey, 2022)

In line with the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act, 715) and Inclusive Education Policy (2015), unit schools for learners with intellectual disabilities, including Adukrom Methodist Unit School, have been established to provide specific education for learners. Despite these efforts, anecdotal evidence suggests that learners with intellectual disabilities at exhibit irregular school attendance. While studies have been conducted on school attendance of learners with disabilities in Ghana (Mantey, 2022; Afoakwah, et al., 2021), most of studies focused on physical disabilities, visual impairments, and hearing impairment. Again, it focused on inclusive schools and largely used parents and headteachers as participants. These gaps motivated the researcher to explore teachers' perceived school attendance challenges of learners with intellectual disabilities at Adukrom Methodist Unit School.

Objectives of the Study - The specific objectives of the study were to:

- Determine how teachers describe the challenges facing the school attendance of learners with intellectual disabilities at Adukrom Methodist Unit school
- Find out from teachers how the school attendance challenges facing learners with intellectual disabilities can be addressed at Adukrom Methodist Unit school

Research Questions - The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

- How do teachers describe the challenges facing the school attendance of learners with intellectual disabilities at Adukrom Methodist Unit school?
- How can the school attendance challenges facing learners with intellectual disabilities be addressed at Adukrom Methodist Unit school?

Significant/benefits of the study - By uncovering teachers perceived challenges, the study will benefits learners, teachers, parents and policy makers in designing interventions to address social barriers that affect attendance of learners with intellectual disabilities at Adukrom and similar unit schools in Ghana

2. Review of Related Literature

Theoretical Review - The theoretical underpinning of this study draws from Oliver's (1990) Social Model of

Disability. Oliver argued that it is not individual limitations that cause disability, but society's failure to provide appropriate services and ensure that needs are taken into account in its social organization. Linking this to the study, learners with intellectual disabilities at Adukrom are not unable to attend school because of their limitations per se, but because society disables them through stigma, inaccessible school infrastructure, inadequate trained special educators, lack of assistive devices, and poverty (Gyimah et al., 2024).Therefore, the Social Model shifts focus from fixing the child to removing barriers. Measures such as community sensitization to change the belief that disability is a curse, teacher training in inclusive pedagogy, provision of transport and assistive devices, and appropriate infrastructure become key to improving regular attendance of learners with intellectual disabilities

2.1 Challenges Facing School Attendance of Learners with Disabilities

Ill Health - Students with chronic health conditions face numerous challenges, including more frequent truancy, which can affect their school performance (Wikel & Markelz, 2023). Poor health is a significant factor influencing learner retention and education quality, according to UNAIDS (2006), schools catering to learners with bodily or health impairments are more likely to encounter challenges related to serious and terminal illnesses, but all schools may experience these difficulties. Most learners occasionally suffer from temporary childhood ailments that keep them from school (UNAIDS, 2006). Additionally, a small minority of learners may contract severe illnesses due to their disability, leading to longer or more frequent periods of illness. Furthermore, various socio-economic factors affect learner attendance, including parents' inability to pay school fees, highlighting the complex interplay of factors influencing educational access and success. According to UNICEF (2023), kids from low-income families tend to experience difficulties in education due to poverty.

Domestic and Economic Activities - According to UNESCO (2015), many children participate in labour activities, such as working on family land, which can lead to increased absences and poor educational performance, ultimately resulting in school dropouts. Ankomah (2012) found that children involved in economic activities, especially crafts, recorded low school attendance. However, the study indicated that children living with single mothers were more likely to play truant, and boys outnumbered girls in absenteeism due to their involvement in male-dominated crafts. Poverty also emerged as a significant barrier to regular school attendance, as children used their earnings to supplement family income. Again, Nauges, and Strand (2015) researched water hauling and girls' school attendance, and data suggested a significant negative correlation between girls' school attendance and water hauling activities. Reducing water fetching times by half can increase girls' school appearance by about 7 percentage points on average, with more pronounced impacts in rural areas. In contrast, a study by Martey et al. (2022) explored the relationship between parental time constraints, child labour, and school attendance. The study ultimately reveals that household income has a crucial role in mediating the impact of parental poverty on child labour and school attendance. This is because when parents household income is insufficient, learners including children with disabilities are force into child labour which eventually affect their regular school attendance.

Lack of Transport Facilities - Most research on transportation access to schools and facilities for person with disabilities and disadvantaged populations in developing countries (Schwanen et al., 2015; Whitzman et al., 2013). In rural areas, children with disabilities face challenges reaching school because of a lack of transportation facilities (Baptiste et al., 2013). Furthermore, schools in developing countries often have physical environmental barriers, such as stairs, narrow doorways, and inaccessible furniture, making them difficult to navigate (Addo, 2014). Educational facilities like washrooms, canteens, and playgrounds are often disability unfriendly, leading to dependence on others and increased absenteeism among children with disabilities. Amalu and Abang (2015) identified financial constraints, lack of interest, illnesses, and school location as major causes of absenteeism among primary school learners. In Rwanda, Sagahutu's (2013) found that long distances to school and physical environmental barriers were significant obstacles to attendance, corroborating some earlier findings but also highlighting differences.

Attitudes of Peers Toward Learners with Disabilities - Inclusion alone doesn't necessarily lead to increased social interactions and relationships among learners of all abilities (Schwab et al., 2016). The social participation

in schools that include everyone (Purutcuoglu & Dogan, 2015). Previous studies have explored the impact of mainstreaming children with disabilities on their peers' attitudes, yielding varied results. Notably, Alzyoudi et al. (2021) found that learners had more favourable attitudes toward classmates with disabilities than those who were aware of these. Similarly, Anku et al. (2021) found that non-disabled learners showed no bias towards peers with disabilities, regardless of their own gender, age, or personal connections.

Hong et al. (2020) observed the behaviour of typically developing young children's attitudes toward classmates with disabilities in integrated settings that interactions were brief and more likely to occur in outdoor classrooms, during play activities, or with adult direction. However, adults rarely facilitated interactions between kids with and without disabilities, even when they were nearby. Alnahdi et al. (2021) confirmed that learners in inclusive classes have more favourable behaviours which hurts learners with disabilities in regular schools. Also, Rojo-Ramos et al. (2023) studied attitudes toward peers with disabilities among school children in Physical Education classes. The results showed significant differences in overall scores and individual items based on gender and school site, with high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.86). The EAADEF-EP Questionnaire proved to be an efficient, simple, and cost-effective tool for assessing attitudes. Notably, participants from rural schools demonstrated being more supportive of peers with disabilities.

Bullying - Bullying is a deliberate behaviour involving repeated physical, verbal, or non-verbal actions, including social exclusion, aimed at harming individuals who cannot defend themselves (Feldman et al., 2014). Research by Shahria et al. (2015) highlights bullying as a pervasive issue in academic settings globally, negatively impacting learners' attendance and academic performance. Bullying is a global issue, that impacts the affective, interpersonal and health of children in schools worldwide (Allison et al., 2016). According to Shafqat and Jan (2015), bullying can occur anywhere in the school environment, including classrooms, bathrooms, school buses, and while waiting for buses. This widespread issue affects learners in various aspects of their school lives. Also, Najam and Kashif (2018) revealed that learners who experience bullying in school withdraw from essential learning tasks that are crucial to enhancing academic achievement and struggle to comply with teacher directions. Similarly, the results align with Oliveira et al.'s (2018) findings that bullying, including physical abuse, has a detrimental impact on learners' social and emotional skills, ultimately negatively affecting their academic performance.

Simpson (2015) findings reveal varied viewpoints between students with and without disabilities regarding bullying experiences. Notably, learners with disabilities were at advanced peril of being victimised related to individuals without disabilities, except for verbal and relational bullying, which were reported equally. Conversely, learners without disabilities reported more instances of bullying by friends, whereas learners with disabilities expressed a desire for increased social connections and friendships. Since perceptions between learners with and without disabilities vary, more research is needed to clarify learners understanding and replicate these results. Mbah's (2020) study on learners' views on school bullying and its impact on academic success revealed that bullying remains a prevalent issue in most schools, negatively affecting learners' academic performance and attendance. The study found that many learners face bullying in their classrooms, with some reporting incidents to teachers. Despite efforts to address it, bullying persists and continues to hinder the academic progress of most learners across the world.

Location of the Unit Schools - Peteros et al. (2022) worked on the effects of school proximity on learners' performance in mathematics. The purpose of the study was to investigate the school nearness and the Grade 7 learners' academic performance in math at a mountain Barrio Public National High School in Pinamungajan, Cebu, Philippines. The findings found that a majority of learners lived far from the school, requiring them to walk to attend classes. Additionally, most of their homes were not accessible by road, making the journey even more challenging. Notably, a significant correlation was discovered between the distance learners lived from school and their academic progress in mathematics. Yet, no notable correlations were found between their means of transport and accessibility of homes, and math performance. To address this, school administrators and teachers should develop programmes to support learners' challenges related to distance, while the government should invest in

infrastructure to alleviate concerns about long-distance travel.

In summary, the studies revealed domestic and economic activities, lack of transport facilities, ill health, poverty, how peers without disabilities view learners with disabilities, and bullying as challenges of school attendance.

2.2 Measures to Address School Attendance Challenges of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities

Researchers emphasize that improving attendance requires a multi-dimensional approach involving teachers, peers, parents, community and policy makers (UNESCO, 2020; UNICEF, 2023).

Teacher Capacity Building - Studies indicate that negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with intellectual disabilities stem largely from inadequate knowledge and skills in handling learners with disabilities (Okyere et al., 2019). Agbenyega and Deku (2011) argue that when teachers are equipped with differentiated instruction, individualized education planning, and positive behaviour management, they become more accepting and supportive. The Ghana Education Service through the National Teaching Council has introduced Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and the National Teachers' Standards (NTS) which mandate inclusive practices. According to Nketsia et al. (2020), regular in-service training, workshops and mentoring improve teacher self-efficacy and create a welcoming classroom climate that motivates learners with intellectual disabilities to attend school regularly.

Peer Sensitization and Peer Support Systems - UNESCO (2020) emphasizes that creating a sense of belonging is a key predictor of attendance. Peer sensitization through school clubs, guidance and counselling sessions, and inclusive play activities helps non-disabled learners understand and accept their peers with disabilities. Gyimah et al. (2024) found that in schools where peer buddy systems and cooperative learning were practiced, learners with intellectual disabilities reported higher levels of social inclusion and improved attendance. Similarly, Okyere et al. (2019) recommended the use of child-to-child approach where non-disabled pupils serve as peer tutors and friends to learners with disabilities, thereby reducing isolation, mockery and bullying.

Parental and Community Engagement - Parental involvement has been identified as critical to improving attendance. Research shows that some parents of children with intellectual disabilities have low expectations and negative attitudes towards their education, often keeping them at home to assist with household chores (Mantey, 2022). To address this, literature proposes regular Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, home visits, and community sensitization durbars. Churton et al. (2023) noted that when parents are educated on the rights of children with disabilities and the benefits of education, they become advocates for regular attendance. Community-based sensitization involving chiefs, assembly members and religious leaders has also been effective in reducing stigmatization and superstitious beliefs associated with intellectual disability in Ghanaian communities (Opoku et al., 2022).

Improving Physical Accessibility and Addressing Distance - According to UNICE (2023) indicated that the), establishment of more inclusive schools closer to communities, provision of accessible school transport, and improvement of physical infrastructure help to reduce the barriers to school attendance. The provision of ramps, adapted toilets, and safe walkways within schools enhances access for learners with mobility challenges associated with intellectual disabilities. In cases where schools are far, community support for transportation, such as organized school buses or parent support groups that accompany children to school (Mantey, 2022). The Inclusive Education Policy of Ghana (2015) also advocates for removal of environmental barriers to promote access and retention.

Provision of Teaching and Learning Resources and Incentives - The lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials contributes to low motivation and absenteeism. Avoke and Avoke (2021) argue that provision of adapted, concrete, and activity-based learning resources makes learning meaningful and enjoyable for learners with intellectual disabilities. Furthermore, the use of incentives such as school feeding programmes, free uniforms

and learning materials has been found to improve attendance. The Ghana School Feeding Programme has been reported to increase enrolment and daily attendance, particularly for children from poor households and children with disabilities (UNICEF, 2023).Policy Enforcement and School Leadership Support. Effective school leadership and policy implementation are essential. Literature indicates that strong leadership by headteachers in enforcing the Inclusive Education Policy, monitoring attendance, and creating inclusive school culture improves retention (Nketsia et al., 2020). This includes keeping accurate attendance records, following up on absentees through home visits, and establishing attendance committees. UNESCO (2020) further recommends that governments strengthen monitoring systems and allocate adequate funding for inclusive education to ensure sustainability of interventions.

3. Methodology

Research Design - The study employed a qualitative research approach with a descriptive case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because the study sought to understand teachers' subjective perceptions, experiences, and meanings attached to attendance challenges of learners with intellectual disabilities, which cannot be quantified (Creswell &Poth, 2018). A case study design was also employed for the study, and it was appropriate because Adukrom Methodist Unit School is a single bounded case where the phenomenon of perceived attendance challenges can be explored in-depth. According to Yin (2018), a case study is suitable when the researcher wants to explore perceptions within a real-life context.

Population - The targeted population of this study was 20 participants drawn from Adukrom Methodist Unit school. The targeted population consisted of 8 males and 12 females teachers ranging from Kindergarten to Junior High while the accessible population were 6 consisted of 2 males and 4 females. The target population were all the teachers in the school and the accessible population were the 6 teachers who teach learners with intellectual disabilities at the unit department.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique - The school and the participants were sampled using purposive sampling and a census approach. The study adopted a census approach to select the 6 teachers who teach learners with intellectual disabilities at the unit department at Adukrom Methodist Unit school. A census approach is a method of data collection in which every member of a defined population in this context, the 6 accessible population is studied rather than a sample drawn from it, and it was considered appropriate here because a population of this size made a census both feasible and more accurate than sampling (Amoah, 2018).

Instruments for Data Collection - A semi structured interview guide was used to collect data. Patton (2015) explains that questions used in semi structured interviews tend to be open ended, so that participants are free to decide how they answer in terms of the words they use and the length of their responses. Because of this flexible nature, the semi structured interview method gives the interviewer the opportunity to ask initial questions followed by probes meant to clarify issues raised during the course of the interview, offering deeper insight into participants thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the phenomenon under study (Patton, 2015). A semi structured interview guide was accordingly used to solicit the views of the teachers who teach learners with intellectual disabilities.

Data Collection Procedure - Permission was sought from the district director as well as the head of the school in the district to collect data for the study. Consent was again sought from the teachers after the permission were sought from the district director of education as well as the head of the school. This was done one on one with each teacher in the school while the purpose of the study was explained to the them. After that a date was agreed on for the interview, which was on 5th August, 2026.

Ethical Consideration - Abrar (2019) ethical consideration procedure was followed: Permissions were sought from the district and the school head. Consents were sought from teachers before the interview was commenced. Confidentiality and anonymity: There were no place in the analysis where names of participants were used. Finally, Discomfort and harm. Participants were given an option to withdrawn when they are no more interested

Data Analysis - Data analysis was guided by the identification of key themes emerging from the data collected.

The process began with transcribing all interviews and identifying words, sentences, and thoughts that served as units for more detailed coding. Braun and Clarke's (2019) reflexive thematic approach was used to analyse the data. A thematic approach involving familiarisation with the data, coding, generation of initial themes, review of themes, and defining and naming of themes before the final write up was employed, consistent with recognised procedures for analysing qualitative data (Patton, 2015), and this approach was applied to address all two research questions.

4. Results

The results are presented according to the main themes that arose from the interviews with participants and are discussed alongside relevant literature. The findings are broadly representative of the sample as a whole and describe teachers perceived school attendance challenges of learners with intellectual disabilities at Adukrom Methodist Unit school. The first research question was intended to find out from teachers the challenges facing the school attendance of learners with intellectual disabilities at Adukrom Methodist Unit school. The themes discussed below include health challenges, financial challenges on the side of parents, name-calling by peers, and long distance from home to school.

Health Challenges - The teachers confirmed that learners with intellectual disabilities have other health challenge. Such as asthma, chronic headache and urinary tract infections which affect their regular school attendance. A teacher remarked that:

> *A challenge facing learners with IDs school attendance is heath challenge. They have weak immune system so they easily affected by a lot of sickness which affect their regular attendance creating a gap in their academic progress (Teacher 1)*

Another teacher had this to say:

> *sickness is a challenge to learners with intellectual disabilities school attendance. One of the boys like this is suffering from asthma which sometimes prevent him from coming to school regularly. (Teacher, 3).*

Financial challenges on the side of parents - The interview confirmed that financial challenges on the side of parents was one of the challenges facing school attendance of learners with intellectual disabilities in Adukrom Methodist unit schools. The teacher 5 remarked that:

> *Financial challenges on the side of the parents is the main factor. Most of the parents cannot afford basic resources posing irregular school attendance which affect academic progress of the learners.*

Another teacher made this comment:

> *Financial challenge is another issue affecting the learners school attendance. some parents complaint that because they board car to school every day, they find it difficult to afford it throughout the week making learners to absent themselves from school sometimes (Teacher, 6)*

Name-calling by peers - The teachers reported that some peers without disabilities sometimes call learners with intellectual disabilities all kinds of names in the school, which affects their attendance. A participant indicated that:

> *Some learners without disabilities sometimes call their colleagues with intellectual disabilities names, teasing, and bullying them making them uncomfortable in the school leading to their irregular attendance (Teacher, 3).*

Another teacher stated this:

Their peers too sometimes discriminate against them, call them names such as good for not nothing person which affect their attendance. (Teacher, 5).

Long distance from home to school - The participants indicated that, one of the challenges facing school attendance of learners with intellectual disabilities was long distance from home to school. They said that the schools are not many and where they are located too are not closer to the learners homes and as a result made it a challenge in commuting between the home and school. A participant said:

One of the challenges facing learning with intellectual disabilities school attendance is long distance from home to the school. The school is not near to school (Teacher, 4)

The Teacher 1 made this comment:

Hmmm my brother, one of the challenges facing learners with intellectual school attendance is the long distance of the home to the school. There are a lot of schools in this town, nevertheless, all these schools do not admit children with intellectual disabilities, except for our school here.

The second research question was intended to find out from teachers measures that can be put in place by stakeholders to address the challenges facing school attendance of learners with intellectual disabilities at Adukrom Methodist Unit school. The themes discussed below include establishing more unit schools, organizing regular PTA meetings, improved professional development for teachers and providing adequate TLRs.

Establishing more unit schools - The teachers confirm that one of the ways to address the challenges facing school attendance of learners with intellectual disabilities was to established more unit schools in the district specifically Adukrom. A participated said: participant said:

One of ways I think can help to reduce the challenge is the building of more unit schools in this community so that the long -distance walking of learners with intellectual disabilities from to and to school will be avoided (Teacher, 2)

Another teacher comment on this way:

Long distance was a challenge as I indicated earlier, and this can be address when stakeholders such as ministry of education and Ghana education services establish more unit schools in this town to help overcome the challenge (Teacher, 4)

Organizing regular PTA meetings - The teachers also confirmed that another way to address the challenges facing school attendance of learners with intellectual disabilities was to organize regular PTA meetings. A participant indicated that:

I think these challenges can be addressed though regular organization of parent teacher association meetings. The meetings can help teachers and parents share ideas on how to address the attendance challenge. (Teacher, 1)

Another teacher said this:

Parent teacher association is a platform I think should be created for all stakeholders to deliberate on how to address the challenges regarding the attendance (Teacher, 6)

Improved professional development for teachers - The teachers also confirmed that improving professional development sessions for teachers in the basic schools will help address some of the challenges. A participant said this:

Professional development sessions need to be strengthened in the school. This is very important because, it creates avenue for teachers to share ideas on how to handle learners with intellectual

disabilities so that the negative attitudes that some teachers show towards learners with intellectual disabilities can be reduced. (Teacher, 5)

A participant 2 indicated that:

Professional development sessions are very important for teachers to be informed about to handle learners with special needs to help reduce the negative attitudes towards them.

5. Discussion

Research question one revealed that, health challenges, financial challenges on the side of parents, name-calling by peers, and long distance from home to school were how the teachers describe the challenges facing learners with intellectual disabilities at Adukrom Methodist Unit school. On health challenges the current study corroborated with Wikel and Markelz, (2023) who revealed that students with chronic health conditions face numerous challenges, including more frequent truancy, which can affect their school performance and again on financial challenge it agrees with one finding of Amalu and Abang (2015) identified financial constraints, lack of interest, illnesses, and school location as major causes of absenteeism among primary school learners. On name calling by peers, the current study disagrees with Alzyoudi et al. (2021) who found that learners had more favourable attitudes toward classmates with disabilities than those who were aware of it. This maybe as a result of the type of the disability, while the Alzyoudi et al study was on general disabilities, the current study was on learners with intellectual disabilities.

Similarly, Anku et al. (2021) found that non-disabled learners showed no bias towards peers with disabilities, regardless of their own gender, age, or personal connections. This may possible because the previous studies were on learners with disabilities in general but current study was on learners with intellectual disabilities as well as the settings were different. Also on long distance from home to school, the current study corroborated with Sagahutu's (2013) study who found that, long distances to school and physical environmental barriers were significant obstacles to attendance to learners with disabilities again, Peteros et al. (2022) on the impact of school location on math performance found that many students lived far from school, requiring a long walk to attend classes. Furthermore, most students' homes lacked direct access to the road leading to school.

Research question two revealed that, establishing more unit schools, organizing regular PTA meetings, improved professional development for teachers and providing adequate TLRs were measures need to be put in place to address the attendance challenges of learners with intellectual disabilities. On the establishment of more unit schools, the current corroborated with UNICE (2023) that indicated that the establishment of more inclusive schools closer to communities, provision of accessible school transport, and improvement of physical infrastructure help to reduce the barriers to school attendance. On the Parent Teacher Association meetings, the study was in line with Lubuva (2013) whose study revealed that parents involvement in school activities through school meetings, enrollment campaign and financial contributions help a lot.

Additionally, parents involvement other activities such as planning, mobilisation of financial resources, building classrooms, buying teaching and learning materials, furniture and fundraising contribute to the school development and improve learners attendance. Also, on professional development, the current study was consistent with Nketsia et al. (2020), who revealed that regular in-service training, workshops and mentoring improve teacher self-efficacy and create a welcoming classroom climate that motivates learners with intellectual disabilities to attend school regularly. This is very important to this study because, the current study revealed that some learners call their peers with intellectual disabilities names and tease them. So, if teachers' skills in managing learners with special needs are improved, it will help to curb the issues of stigmatization to enhance learners attendance.

Finally, the findings validate the social model of disability. The perceived attendance challenges are not innate deficits of learners with intellectual disabilities but socially constructed through economic hardship, negative attitudes, inaccessible environment and lack of institutional support. Therefore, interventions to enhance

attendance at Adukrom Methodist Unit School should focus on barrier removal rather than fixing the learner

6. Conclusions

Based on the findings, it has been concluded that there are various challenges facing learners with intellectual disabilities ranging from health complications, attitudes and location of the school. Secondly, the challenges of learners with intellectual disabilities school attendance can be addressed in many ways including support from Ministry of Education/Ghana Education Services, parents and capacity building of teachers.

Recommendations - Based on the findings it is recommended that, the various stakeholders of education of the school should effectively collaborate with each other to help address the attendance challenges of learners with intellectual disabilities. Secondly, Ministry of Education as a matter of policy should establish a lot of Unit schools across the country specifically at Adukrom district.

Educational Implication - Firstly, teachers must implement daily anti- stigma and inclusive classroom management. Secondly, head teacher and school improvement support officer should link with GES capitation grant for special allocation for learners with intellectual disabilities. Thirdly, the school must collaborate with Adukrom Health Centre for quarterly health screening, and deworming for learners with intellectual disabilities

Limitation - The study was limited to only teachers at Adukrom Methodist Unit School and only few teachers were interviewed. This made the findings difficult to be generalized to all unit schools in Ghana.

For Future Researchers - Future studies should use mixed methods approach by combining interviews and questionnaires for parents and teachers to triangulate findings.

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