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Factors Associated with Negative Attitude of Teachers Towards Children with Special Educational Needs in Primary Schools in Obudu Local Government Area, Cross River State

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Abstract
This study was designed to investigate the factors associated with teachers' negative attitudes towards learners with special needs in primary schools in the Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State. To achieve this aim, three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated to test the study's assumptions. The study adopted a survey design, and 70 respondents were sampled. A questionnaire was designed as the instrument for data collection and administered to the 70 respondents. Three independent variables (teachers' knowledge of disability, severity/type of disability, and poor motivation of teachers) were tested against the dependent variable (teachers' negative attitudes towards learners with special needs) to determine their relationships. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at the 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between each of the three independent variables and teachers' negative attitudes towards learners with special needs. The outcome can serve as a reference point for policymakers and teachers in realising the goals of inclusive education.

Keywords: Attitude, Disability, Learners, Motivation, Inclusion, Special, Needs

Introduction

The World Conference, which brought together international organisations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank, launched the movement for education for all since the 1990s. The main agenda of this conference was education for everybody in the entire world (Udoba, 2014). Despite this agitation for inclusive education, it remains a topical issue widely discussed and debated in the field of education worldwide, with Nigeria not being an exception. This clamour for providing education for all is synonymous with inclusive education and has thus been invariably referred to as part of the global education for all agenda, a new education paradigm. It is an educational reform goal to provide education for all citizens (whether able or disabled). The same scenario applies to Nigeria in principle; however, the aspect of education for all is not effectively implemented despite the policies and legal framework that advocate it (NCSE, 2014). Learners have varying learning abilities, but this is particularly pronounced among people with learning disabilities. They are the most vulnerable when it comes to inclusive education. Special education (also known as special needs education, aided education, or exceptional education) is the practice of educating learners with special educational needs in a way that addresses their individual differences and needs (National Council on Disability, 1994). Learners with special needs include those with physical, mental, and behavioural disabilities. These disabilities may manifest as developmental disabilities, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, intellectual disability, neurological disorders, orthopaedic disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, speech impairments, and spinal cord conditions (Yung et al., 2021).

All things being equal, special education involves the individually planned and systematically monitored arrangement of teaching procedures, adapted equipment and materials, and accessible settings. These strategies

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help individuals with special needs achieve greater personal self-sufficiency and success in school and their communities, which may not be available if the learner learns only in a conventional classroom setting with other learners (New Zealand's Ministry of Education, 2009). Established stereotypes negatively affect individuals with disabilities. Educators are exposed to the same negative stereotypes about learners with special needs as other people in society. Socio-cultural theorists argue that once a label is assigned to a person, it is very difficult to remove (Nevid et al., 2000). The label assigned to a person also affects other people's responses. Labelled people (such as people with learning impairment) are stigmatised and socially degraded; opportunities may be denied, and the denied person may become increasingly alienated. What is generally considered as 'special needs' includes learning disabilities (such as hearing impairment, speech impairment, and dyslexia), communication disorders, emotional and behavioural disorders, physical disabilities (such as brittle bone disease, blindness, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida, etc.), and developmental disabilities (such as autism spectrum disorders and intellectual disability). Learners with these special needs are likely to require additional educational services, such as different teaching approaches, the use of technology, a specially adapted teaching area, or a resource room, before they can access the curriculum (New Zealand's Ministry of Education, 2009). Intellectual giftedness is also a learning difference and can benefit from specialised teaching techniques or different educational programmes, but the term "special education" generally refers to instruction for learners with disabilities. Special education should therefore enhance teachers who teach children with developmental disabilities and also create awareness in society to accept children with special educational needs. In addition, children with developmental disabilities need extra attention in curriculum adaptation, teaching methods, and the availability of teaching and learning materials, assistive technology, assessment systems, and resources and funds to help them cope with learning and adapt to the school environment. At the pivot of this are the teachers. Their attitudes and values toward learners with special needs can strongly influence learners' achievement (positively or negatively).

Implicit in this is that teachers should have a positive disposition toward learners with special needs, regardless of the difficulties they face in communicating with them and helping them understand and practice what they are taught. This accounts for why special education in both developed and developing countries is often regarded as a service rather than a place, but is practised in developed countries while developing countries adopt it only in principle (Swan & Morgan, 1993). If learners with special needs are properly integrated into regularised education settings, it will reduce social stigmatisation and greatly improve their academic achievement. Attitudes guide and influence people's behaviours in their daily lives (Parasuram, 2006). Since it is believed that teachers and their attitudes toward inclusion are very important variables in the implementation of successful inclusive practices (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Larrivee & Cook, 1979; Parasuram, 2006), a lot of research has been conducted on teachers' perceptions of and attitudes towards inclusive education and their beliefs about their ability to teach children with disabilities in regular education classrooms. Attitudes are important insofar as they predict behaviour. According to Berry (2010), a teacher who believes that inclusion is unfair to typically achieving students may act in subtle (or not so subtle) ways that negatively affect students with disabilities in that classroom. Positive attitudes and a commitment to inclusion principles can push teachers to make or avoid efforts to teach students with disabilities effectively. Teachers who have favorable attitudes toward inclusion generally believe that students with disabilities belong in general education classrooms, that they can learn there, and that the teachers have confidence in their abilities to teach students with disabilities (Berry, 2010; Dorsa, 2013). Because learners' needs vary greatly in all classes, students at different ability levels often learn in different ways and understand concepts at different times. It thus becomes a difficult task for teachers to provide differentiated instruction and individualised teaching for the various learners (each with a special need). This becomes even more difficult in a special education, multi-aged classroom (Kirk, Gallagher, Coleman, and Anastasiow, 2009). As a result, non-enduring teachers may become bored teaching such a group of learners and even develop negative attitudes toward them (Harvey, 2010). To enforce the inclusive education requirements, in the United States, for instance, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that requires that every school system in the nation must provide a free and appropriate public education for every child, ages 3 to 22, regardless of how or how seriously that child may be disabled, and to ensure strict compliance provides funds to only schools that provide this type of education to each learner in that range (Hallahan, 2012). Certain factors are responsible for the attitudes teachers exhibit towards learners, and these factors are interrelated. Such factors that influence the attitude of teachers towards learners with special needs could be classified as "child-related", "teacher-related" or "educational environment-related". This scenario points to one of the most significant setbacks to the successful inclusion of learners with special needs: teachers' negative attitudes toward them. As classroom diversity increases in terms of learners' abilities, it demands classroom management skills, knowledge, and competence in providing need-based education to learners with special needs, which is likely to incite negative attitudes from teachers (Muir, 2011; Lampe, 2007). This ultimately affects the educational achievements of learners with special needs.

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Lampe (2007) pointed out the following as being factors responsible for the negative attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with special needs:

i. Inadequate knowledge and competence of the teachers to provide the desired service in line with global standards for special education.
ii. The severity/type of disability. The attitudes of teachers change with varying degrees of severity of disability and the type of disability too. Most teachers may have more preference for certain types of disabilities than for others
iii. Lack of incentives for teachers who teach learners with special needs can also incite them to have negative attitudes toward the learners. Motivating the teachers makes them show greater commitment to teaching the learners with special needs; otherwise, they exhibit laxity.

The above background has necessitated the researcher to embark on this research to find out:

i. The relationship between teachers' knowledge/competence and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs;
ii. The relationship between teachers' incentives and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs; and
iii. The relationship between severity/type of disability and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs, in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State.

This study is premised on Daniel Katz's functional theory of attitude formation (1960). The theory holds that attitudes form based on how useful a person or thing is to our needs. At the psychological level, the reasons for holding or for changing attitudes are found in the functions they perform for the individual, specifically the functions of adjustment, ego defence, value expression, and knowledge. The conditions necessary to arouse or modify an attitude vary according to the motivational basis of the attitude. The functional attitude theory therefore suggests that beliefs and attitudes are influential to various psychological functions. Attitudes can influence many processes, such as being utilitarian (useful), social, value-related, or reducing cognitive dissonance. They can be beneficial and help people interact with the world and, on the other hand, disadvantageous to those whom changes in attitude affect (Kofi, 2002). Several studies have shown that teachers' attitudes toward learners affect their academic performance. In a study, Avramidis and Norwich (2002) found that greater experience in inclusive educational contexts favours a more positive attitude toward educating children with special needs. Previous experience as an inclusive teacher appears to predispose teachers to inclusive education. Research also suggests that teacher perceptions may be influenced by student characteristics such as disability label (Soodak, Podell, and Lehman, 1998) and severity of the disability (Cook, 2001). It therefore implies that teachers with much experience with disabled persons may have significantly more positive attitudes toward inclusion than those with little or no experience. In a related study, Mader (2017) and Busch (2017) in their separate studies, maintained that teachers with empirical experience are better at teaching a mixed class of normal learners and learners with special needs without problems. A study by Udoba (2014) concluded that most teachers teaching children with developmental disability did not receive any special needs education training from the university; they feel that they are not qualified to teach the children with developmental disability, and so exhibit negative attitudes towards them. When strong attitudes about inclusion exist within a school, teachers are more likely to adjust their beliefs to align with the prevailing attitudes of other teachers (Dupoux, Wolman and Estrada, 2005). In a study by Odongo and Davidson (2016), teachers identified several important issues and problems related to inclusive education. Several teachers pointed out that it is difficult to control classroom behaviours when several students with disabilities are included, especially those with multiple disabilities and behaviour problems. Studies by Glaubman and Lifshitz (2001) have found a strong relationship between teachers' attitudes and pupils' type of disability. They argued that teachers differentiated their attitudes by disability type. Most teachers are believed to be more disposed to accepting students with physical disabilities than those with cognitive, emotional, and behavioral problems (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996; Capella University, 2013; Dupoux, Wolman and Estrada, 2005). In separate studies, Currall, Towler, Judge, and Kohn (2005), Hadi, Elham, and Melor (2015) observed that there are empirically significant positive relationships between teachers' job satisfaction and their attitudes toward students' motivation and beliefs. Assessing levels of job satisfaction among teachers has increased because of the growing trend of qualified teachers leaving the teaching profession for reasons other than retirement (Ingersoll, 2003; Odongo & Davidson, 2016). If teachers can be supported in some ways to understand where they stand, and if they can stand there with dignity, security, and satisfaction, then all learners and communities can benefit and meet targets of policy planning (Papastamatis et al., 2009; Drake, 2002). In a study, Hong (2011) concluded that job satisfaction is also worth considering from a humanitarian perspective. In other words, it has a great impact on employees' health. Satisfied workers are likely to live longer and are healthier. An important finding for organizations to note is that job satisfaction has a rather tenuous correlation to productivity on the job. The major problem that motivated this research is the negative attitude that some teachers have towards learners with special needs. The study therefore seeks to investigate why teachers have negative attitudes towards children with special

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learning needs and to use the information as a guide to providing remedial measures to address such negative attitudes.

Based on the problem identified, the research was premised on the following assumptions:

1. Attitudes of teachers are central in the education of learners with special needs in an inclusive school system.
2. Teachers know why they exhibit negative attitudes towards learners with special needs.
3. The sampling technique used in the study is unbiased.
4. The research instrument of the study is valid and reliable.

The main purpose of this project is to investigate why some teachers in primary schools in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State have negative attitudes towards children with special learning needs and to use the information as a guide to providing remedial measures to address such negative attitudes. The specific purposes of the study are to determine the relationship between:

i. teachers' insufficient knowledge of the disabilities of learners and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs.
ii. severity/type of disability and the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs.
iii. teachers' poor motivation and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs.

Methodology

Research Design

A survey research design was adopted for this study. The method involves a sociological investigation that uses question-based or statistical surveys to collect information about how people think and act; in this context, how teachers in Obudu Local Government Area think and act towards the inclusion of learners with special needs in their classes. The survey design is also suitable for the study because it utilized a sample of the population under study to determine the attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs.

Area of the Study

The area where the study was conducted was Obudu Local Government Area (LGA) in Northern Cross River State. St. Joseph Centre, which offers rehabilitation services for the visually impaired and other people with physical disabilities, training them in education and also as artisans, is located in Obudu Urban. In addition, the Roman Catholic Mission set up St. Joseph's Primary School in St. Charles' Parish, Obudu Urban, to cater for the education of the visually impaired.

Population

All the teachers teaching learners with special needs in both the special school (St. Joseph's Primary School) and the general (inclusive) primary schools in Obudu LGA make up the population of the study. The population size for the study is 90 teachers.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Disproportional probability sampling technique was adopted for the study. The samples taken from each group was uneven (some were oversampled relative to others). A minimum of four (4) teachers teaching learners with special needs were sampled from schools in each of the 10 wards of the LGA.

Seventy (70) teachers who teach children with special needs in Obudu LGA made up the sample size for the study. Table 1 illustrates the demographic data for the sample

Table 1: Sample Demographic Data

S/N	Ward	Male Teachers	Female Teachers	Total No. of Teachers	Percentage
1	I	7	6	13	18.57
2	II	4	5	9	12.86
3	III	5	4	9	12.86
4	IV	3	4	7	10.00
5	V	3	3	6	8.57
6	VI	2	3	5	7.14
7	VII	3	2	5	7.14
8	VIII	2	3	5	7.14
9	IX	3	3	6	8.57
10	X	2	3	5	7.14
Total		34	36	70	99.99 =100

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Instrument

A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The researcher constructed the questionnaire to elicit opinions from respondents on the attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs in their schools, particularly in inclusive classes. The questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on Factors Associated with the Negative Attitudes of Teachers towards Learners with Special Needs" contained 20 items drawn to cover four major variables:

i. Teachers' insufficient knowledge on disability;
ii. Severity/type of disability;
iii. Teachers' poor motivation; and
iv. The negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs.

The questionnaire was made up of two sections (I and II). Section I contains the demographic information of the respondents such as sex, qualification, years of teaching experience, name of school, and ward. Section II contains the response items to measure the four variables of the study, using the 4-point Likert scale: "Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD), and Disagreed (D). The response items were both positively and negatively worded.

Three research questions and three null hypotheses were formulated to elicit opinions from respondents on the attitude of teachers towards learners with special education needs.

Research Questions

i. What is the relationship between teachers' insufficient knowledge of the disabilities of learners and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs?
ii. What is the relationship between the severity/type of disability and the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs?
iii. What is the relationship between teachers' poor motivation and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs?

Hypotheses

i. There is no significant relationship between teachers' insufficient knowledge of the disabilities of learners and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs
ii. There is no significant relationship between severity/type of disability and the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs.
iii. There is no significant relationship between teachers' poor motivation and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs.

Validity of the Instruments

Content and face validity of the instrument were established by the researcher. Three lecturers in the Special Education Department and an expert in educational test, measurement, and evaluation at the University of Calabar were given the instrument to ascertain the relevance of the items to the hypotheses proposed for the study.

Method of Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered to the targeted respondents. The 70 teachers sampled were given the questionnaire and allowed to study and respond to it within ten (10) days, after which the researcher retrieved them to collate and analyze the data. All 70 copies of the questionnaire distributed, representing 100%, were filled and returned to the researcher.

Method of Data Analysis

Microsoft Excel was used for the data preparation. The 4-point Likert scale was used in the scoring of the items as follows: Strongly Agreed (SA) = 4, Agreed (A) = 3, Disagreed (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagreed (SD) = 1.

The data collated and computed in MS-Excel were used to test each of the hypotheses formulated for the study using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient at the 0.05 level of significance. Each of the variables in the hypotheses was tested to determine its correlation with the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs. Any value less than 1 (negative values) indicates negative correlation, while any value greater than 0 (positive values) indicates positive correlation. Zero (0) indicates no correlation.

The data analysis and interpretation of results were t based on the following variables drawn directly from the hypotheses formulated to determine how they correlate with the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs.:

i. Teachers' insufficient knowledge on disability (X_1);
ii. Severity/type of disability (X_2);
iii. Teachers' poor motivation (X_3); and
iv. The negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs (Y).

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Each of the first three variables was measured against the last variable to determine how they correlate with each other. The first three variables (X_1, X_2, and X_3) are independent variables, while the fourth (the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners is the dependent variable.

Results

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of each of the first four variables.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Variables of the Study

S/No.	Variables	Sample size (N)	Mean ($\ddot{X}$)	Standard deviation (SD)
1	Teachers' insufficient knowledge of disability	70	157.6	4.51
2	Severity/type of disability	70	157.6	5.13
3	Teacher's poor motivation	70	156.6	4.04
4	The negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs	70	156.8	4.97

Hypothesis One

The null hypothesis states that "There is no significant relationship between teachers' insufficient knowledge of the disabilities of learners and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs". Teachers' insufficient knowledge of the disabilities of learners was tested against the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs to determine how the two variables are correlated with each other. Table 3 illustrates the summary of the statistical analysis of the data used to test the hypothesis using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient on a sample size of 70 at the 0.05 level of significance.

Table 3: Analysis of the relationship between teachers' insufficient knowledge of the disabilities of learners and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs (N=70). R = Correlation coefficient.

Variables	Mean ($\ddot{X}_1$)	SD	$\sum X_1^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum X_1 Y$	R
Teachers' insufficient knowledge of disabilities	157.6	4.51	124270	123609	0.56
The negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs	156.8	4.97	123030		

P (0.05, df = 68)

As illustrated in Table 3, responses on teachers' insufficient knowledge of the disabilities of learners had a mean of 157.6 and a standard deviation of 4.51, while responses on the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs had a mean of 156.8 and a standard deviation of 4.97. The correlation coefficient (R) of the two variables was 0.56. This is a positive correlation (56%), indicating that teachers' insufficient knowledge of the disabilities of learners has a significant relationship with their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs. The null hypothesis was thus rejected, implying that teachers' knowledge of the disabilities of learners with special needs determines their attitudes towards the learners.

Hypothesis Two

The null hypothesis states that "There is no significant relationship between the severity/type of disability of learners and the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs". The severity/type of disability of learners was tested against the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs to determine how the two variables are correlated with each other. Table 4 illustrates the summary of the statistical analysis of the data used to test the hypothesis using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient on a sample size of 70 at the 0.05 level of significance.

Table 4: Analysis of the relationship between the severity/type of disability and teachers' negative attitudes towards learners with special needs (N=70). R = Correlation coefficient.

Variables	Mean ($\ddot{X}_2$)	SD	$\sum X_2^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum X_2 Y$	R
Severity/type of disability of learners	157.6	5.13	124294	123654	0.94
The negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs	156.8	4.97	123030		

P (0.05, df = 68)

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As illustrated in Table 4 above, responses on the severity/type of disability of learners had a mean of 157.6 and a standard deviation of 5.13, while responses on the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs had a mean of 156.8 and a standard deviation of 4.97. The correlation coefficient (R) of the two variables was 0.94. This is a positive correlation (94%), indicating that the severity/type of disability of learners has a high and significant relationship with the negative attitudes of teachers towards the learners. The null hypothesis was thus rejected, implying that the severity/type of disability of learners determines the teachers' disposition to the inclusion of such learners in their classes.

Hypothesis Three

The null hypothesis states that "There is no significant relationship between teachers' poor motivation and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs". The poor motivation of teachers was tested against the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs to determine how the two variables are correlated with each other. Table 5 illustrates the summary of the statistical analysis of the data used to test the hypothesis using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient on a sample size of 70 at the 0.05 level of significance.

Table 5: Analysis of the relationship between teachers' poor motivation and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs (N=70). R = Correlation coefficient.

Variables	Mean ($\ddot{X}_3$)	SD	$\sum X_3^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum X_3 Y$	R
Poor motivation of teachers	156.6	4.04	122683	122842	0.84
The negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs	156.8	4.97	123030		

P (0.05, df = 68)

As illustrated in Table 5 above, responses on the poor motivation of teachers had a mean of 156.6 and a standard deviation of 4.04, while responses on the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs had a mean of 156.8 and a standard deviation of 4.97. The correlation coefficient (R) of the two variables was 0.84. This is a positive correlation (84%), indicating that the poor motivation of teachers has a high and significant relationship with their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs. The null hypothesis was thus rejected, implying that the poor motivation of teachers greatly determines their disposition to the inclusion of learners with special needs in their classes.

Summary of Findings

The following findings were made based on the analysis of the data used to test each of the hypotheses.

i. There is a significant relationship between teachers' insufficient knowledge on the disabilities of learners and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs
ii. There is a significant relationship between severity/type of disability and the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs.
iii. There is a significant relationship between teachers' poor motivation and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis One

"There is no significant relationship between teachers' insufficient knowledge on the disabilities of learners and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs". The results obtained from testing Hypothesis One of the study has proven that there is a significant relationship between teachers' insufficient knowledge of the disabilities of learners and the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs. The findings are in agreement with the views of Avramidis and Norwich (2002), Avramidis and Kalyva (2007), and Mader (2017), who in their respective studies, opined that possession of previous experience as an inclusive teacher appears to positively predispose teachers towards inclusive education. The findings also align with Busch (2017), who argued that the quality of her teacher-training program contributed to her preparedness and was supportive of her success in teaching learners with special needs. These findings agree with Odongo and Davidson (2016), who found that training in special needs was a major issue teachers cited as a requirement for successful inclusion.

Hypothesis Two

"There is no significant relationship between the severity/type of disability of learners and the negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with special needs". The results obtained from the analysis of data collected to test Hypothesis Two of the study proved that there is a significant relationship between the type/severity of disabilities

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that learners have and the negative attitudes of teachers towards them. The results are in support of the views of Odongo and Davidson (2016), who reported that most teachers find it difficult to control classroom behaviours when several students with disabilities are included, especially those with multiple disabilities and behaviour problems. This definitely affects teachers' disposition towards including such learners in their classes. The findings of the study also support the views of Glaubman and Lifshitz (2001), Forlin and Chambers (2011), Avramidis and Norwich (2002), Samantha (2002), as well as those of Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996), who found a strong relationship between teachers' attitudes and pupils' type of disability. They opined that teachers differentiated their attitudes according to type of disability and that the teachers showed greater willingness to include those students with physical disabilities or sensory impairments than those with cognitive, emotional and behavioural problems.

Hypothesis Three

"There is no significant relationship between teachers' poor motivation and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs". The results of the analysis of Hypothesis Three revealed that there is a positive correlation (significant relationship) between teachers' poor motivation and their negative attitudes towards learners with special needs. The results are in agreement with the views of Hadi, Elham and Melor (2015), Currall, Towler, Judge, and Kohn (2005), and those of Papastamatis et al. (2009), who observed that there are empirically positive significant relationships between teachers' job satisfaction and their attitudes toward students' motivation and beliefs. The results are also in line with the opinion of Ingersoll (2003), who said that assessing levels of job satisfaction among teachers has increased because of the growing trend of qualified teachers leaving the teaching profession for reasons other than retirement. The findings of this study support the report by MoEVT (2008) that lack of motivation among teachers due to low salary can be a result of lack of morale and commitment among teachers; and that this problem has caused several special needs education teachers to work in private companies where they are paid more compared to the government sector and schools. Teachers can also be motivated through their periodic training and retraining while in service. The findings of the study also conform with the report from Capella University (2013) that support from parents has also been identified as important in motivating teachers. Some parents of special needs children are disinterested in the welfare of their children and fail to provide them with adequate care. Alternatively, they may be overly protective. Both can be problematic for the child and for their teacher. Disinterested parents may have no involvement with their child's education or interaction with their teachers, whereas overprotective parents may have unrealistic expectations for the child and the child's teachers. Both attitudes can shape the teachers in negative ways. Parental disinterest may make the teachers less motivated, and parents who are overprotective often diminish their child's confidence and make it harder for them to learn.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations have been made:

i. Teachers should exhibit a positive attitude towards learners with special needs in line with the provisions for inclusive education.
ii. Teachers should be motivated through adequate remuneration, provision of adequate teaching/learning aids and periodic in-service training to positively predispose them towards learners with special needs.
iii. The scope of this study may be expanded to cover a larger population and sample size as well as the incorporation of more variables.

Conclusion

The study focused on factors that affect the inclusion of learners with special needs in general education settings. The findings indicate that teachers' understanding of learning disabilities and their adequate knowledge of subject matter are crucial to their attitudes towards learners with disabilities. The findings and opinions of many researchers affirm that teachers with adequate understanding of disabilities and knowledge of subject matter to teach learners with special needs are more positively disposed to such learners than those who lack understanding of disabilities and knowledge of subject matter. The findings also affirm the opinions of the majority of researchers that the severity of disability affects teachers' attitudes to learners with special needs. Most researchers opined that the majority of teachers are more supportive of the inclusion of learners with mild physical disabilities in their classes than those with severe learning impairments. The reason for this is that teachers are more stressed when teaching those with severe learning impairments than when teaching those with mild physical disabilities. With respect to teachers' motivation, the findings affirm that teachers who are adequately motivated are more positively disposed to the inclusion of learners with disabilities in their classes than those who are poorly motivated. Motivation could take the form of a sustainable salary, good working environments and conditions, inter alia.

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