

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF THE IMPACT OF INSTRUCTIONAL
STRATEGIES ON CHILDREN WITH READING DIFFICULTY IN SOME
SELECTED DISTRICTS IN CENTRAL REGION

FELICITY ADUSEI-BONSU

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BY

FELICITY ADUSEI-BONSU

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Faculty of Educational Foundations, College of Education Studies, University
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Master of Philosophy degree in Special Education

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: Date:

Name:

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature: Date:

Name:

Co-Supervisor's Signature:..... Date:

Name:

ABSTRACT

The study investigated teachers' perception of the impact of instructional strategies on pupils with reading difficulties in selected districts in the Central Region of Ghana. A concurrent embedded mixed method design was used for this study. Proportionate stratified sampling procedure was used to select ninety-five (95) upper primary teachers. The response rate was 100% representing 95 teachers. Data were collected using a questionnaire and interview schedules. Statistical tools used in data analysis were mainly frequency distribution and percentages, means and standard deviations, independent samples t-test and One-Way Analysis of Variance. For all tests, the level of significance was calculated at 0.05. Thematic analysis was used in the analysis of the qualitative data. The study revealed that Teachers had negative perceptions about pupils with reading difficulties. Also, role play, read aloud, direct instruction and group activities were the frequently used strategies teachers used in teaching pupils with reading difficulties. Furthermore, inadequate teaching and learning materials and low parental involvement were the two major problems teachers faced when teaching pupils with reading difficulties. It is recommended that Ghana Education Service in collaboration with all the head teachers must organise a workshop on reading difficulty for teachers in the three districts and the Ghana Education Service find means of providing resources to support teaching of reading in the schools in all the districts.

KEY WORDS

Strategies

Read-aloud

Reading fluency

Comprehension

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DEDICATION

To my father, Mr. George Adusei-Bonsu, stepmother, Mrs Naana Frempong
Adusei-Bonsu and grandmother, Mrs. Magdalene Baffour Ussher.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focused on the background of the study, problem statement and specific purposes of the study. The research questions and hypotheses are stated clearly in this chapter. The chapter would also outline the significance of the study, the scope of the study, limitations and organisation of the rest of the study.

Background to the Study

The interplay between heredity and environment has created this beautiful world which abounds in human diversity. Individuals differ from each other in their physical, intellectual, emotional and behavioural traits (Sadaket, 2009). Issues concerning individual differences in the classroom prove to be the greatest challenge for the teacher (Sadaket, 2009). Teachers play an important role in any educational system. Teachers are artists who mould and shape the physical, intellectual and moral power of children (Sadaket, 2009). In a regular school and in every classroom, you can identify one or two children with learning difficulties. Often, the children with severe learning problems enter the special schools meant for them (Mehta, 2003). However, many students with learning difficulty are admitted in normal schools and they fail to succeed in their education and eventually quit school early (Gandhimathi, 2010). If these difficulties are not recognised, or ignored the needs of the children may not be met hence make it difficult to fulfil the

aim of universalisation of elementary education and equalisation of educational opportunity (Karande, 2008). Additionally, these children would be at risk of some disorders like depression, anxiety and delinquency (Chatterjee, 2009).

Students with specific learning disability like reading difficulty comprise the fastest and largest growing segment of students receiving special education services (Cortiella, 2009). Since the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) in 1975, the percentage of students with reading difficulty has increased substantially (Mehta, 2003). For example, in the USA, over 6.5 million students (ages 3-21years) receive special education services with nearly 2.5 million of these students (roughly 40% of all students in special education) identified as having reading difficulty (Data Accountability Center, 2012). Reading difficulties are related to short-term consequences, such as a more negative self-concept (Zelege, 2004), lower academic achievement (Judge & Watson, 2011), and delinquent behaviour (Gandhimathi, 2010), and long-term consequences such as difficulty obtaining and retaining a job as an adult (Cortiella, 2009). Therefore, proper evaluation of how children read is paramount in order to inform prevention and intervention initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for children. Integrating children with reading difficulty means that the student will be placed into regular class rooms and taught by regular teachers. With the changing global educational system and the awareness gathered through different communication media, it has become inevitable to develop our educational system to accommodate and integrate students with reading difficulty.

The significance of reading in any society cannot be overemphasized as it is the key to academic, social and economic progression of children (Hamilton, 2012). For this to happen, the teaching of reading must be effective. A reading society is likely to succeed in sustainable development as its citizenry will participate in decision making and economic development with an informed mind. The role of the teacher is to be responsive to the vast and varied needs of each child, and to promote an educational climate that facilitates motivation and the desire to read (Hamilton, 2012). The reading programme must reflect the identity of the children and in this case the teacher should employ various behavioural and teaching strategies to promote pupil motivation (Hamilton, 2012). If children are motivated to learn to read, they will try to learn to read, and continue to do so, even when faced with obstacles. The teacher is responsible for creating an environment that motivates children to read. Pedagogical strategies require specific measures to ensure the effectiveness of teaching and learning (Karande, 2008).

Indeed, pedagogical strategies are found to be unique in inclusive education. Teaching children with special needs like those with reading difficulty pose a challenge to teaching profession due to the uniqueness of every single child in a classroom (Connor & Petscher, 2009). Because of this situation, teaching them requires specific training that integrates various pedagogical-skills, pedagogical-knowledge, positive characteristic of teachers, good attitudes and helping skills, as well as subject-content knowledge (Hamilton, 2012). Therefore, various pedagogical strategies such as phonic method, rhyme and songs, direct instruction just but to mention a few have been introduced in the past in order to teach, support and guide children to

improve their reading skills (Hamilton, 2012). At this point, one might be interested to know the pedagogical methods that best serve the needs of children with reading difficulty. Another issue of concern would be to see if teachers differ with respect to their demographical variables (thus gender and years of experience) when it comes to the methods, they employ in teaching children with reading difficulty. In some developed countries like South Africa and Canada, studies have shown that teachers differ in their choice of teaching methods based on the demographical variables mentioned above (Rice, 2010; Connor & Petscher, 2009).

In the context of Ghana, Special Education has been practiced for many decades. There are schools for children with visual impairment, hearing impairment and intellectual impairment, managed by the Special Education Division (Sp.Ed.) of the Ghana Education Service (GES) (Special Attention Project, 2011). More recently, 'Inclusive Education' has been adopted by GES, meaning that children with special educational needs should not be separated from other children, but that they should learn together whenever possible. Special Education Division, has now posted 'Resource Teachers' to districts and clusters of schools in five regions; their mandate is to assist children with special educational needs in the mainstream schools. 'Special Education' in Ghana was and still is strongly focused at the 'traditional disabilities' (sight, hearing, intellectual and physical) (Special Attention Project, 2011). Special Education Teachers are trained to teach pupils with any of these disabilities (Special Attention Project, 2011). Children with normal intelligence but have a learning difficulty in a specific area (for example reading) are not formally recognised as children with special educational

needs hence there appears to be no provisions made for them in terms of assessment and support (Special Attention Project, 2011). In Ghana, there is not much information on children with Specific Learning Difficulties like reading difficulties in Ghana (Special Attention Project, 2011). Statistics from other countries such as United State of America and United Kingdom, however, suggest that up to 10% of children in any population have a specific learning disability (Obeng, 2010). Also, in Ghana, statistics show that about 98% of children in the lower primary struggle to read and that in general, 2% or less were able to read with fluency and comprehension in a survey conducted across the country (Early Grade Reading Report, Ghana, 2015). This presupposes that there is the possibility that there exist quite substantial number of children with reading problems in basic schools in Ghana. This issue makes empirical investigation of pedagogical approaches of upper primary teachers and its role in remediating the reading problem very crucial and timely. This is because empirical information on instructional strategies that teachers utilise in the country appear to be scanty. This study therefore sought to investigate teachers' perception of the impact of instructional strategies on pupils they use in Central region of Ghana.

Statement of the Problem

Inclusive education is not about placing students in mainstream classes to save money, but rather about optimising learning environments by providing opportunities for all learners to be successful (Akinkugbe, 2013). Studies have reported that children with reading difficulty need instruction in strategies that relate to the academic areas affected by their disability (Weinfeld, Barnes - Robinson, Jeweler, & Shevitz, 2002; Bisland, 2004).

Furthermore, it has also been documented that teachers' adequate knowledge and experience on how to give appropriate and adequate support matters in the provision of quality education for individuals with specific learning disability like reading difficulty (Oluranti, 2014; Fosnot & Perry, 2005; Kozulin, 2003).

The foregoing seems to suggest that regular teachers' instructional strategies are important in the overall molding of children with reading difficulty toward the attainment of quality education in advanced jurisdictions. However, what is not known is the influence that instructional procedures have on children with reading difficulty in the Ghanaian context. Again, there appears to be limited information if not completely non-existent in the Ghanaian context on the state of affairs regarding instructional procedures within mainstream schools that accommodate children with reading difficulty. This knowledge gap exists because most scholars or researchers have paid much attention to issues of challenges of inclusive education in Ghana (Adera & Asimeng-Boahene, 2011; Vanderpuye, Gyimah, & Deku, 2009; Vanderpuye & Deku, 2007; Vanderpuye, Deku, & Kwarteng, 2006). Others also investigated parent perception of inclusive education (Vanderpuye, 2013; Abosi, 2007; Obeng, 2004; Okyere, 2003; Avoke, 2002). Anwar (2010) investigated the discriminatory issues for children with special needs. Unattended to are issues relating to teachers' perception of the instructional strategies' teachers use on children with reading difficulty. This study therefore intends to fill that gap.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate perceived impact of instructional strategies on children with reading difficulty. Specifically, the study sought to find out the following:

1. The perception of regular teachers about reading difficulties.
2. The instructional strategies that teachers use in supporting children with reading difficulties in an inclusive classroom.
3. The perceived impact of instructional procedures teachers use in supporting children with learning disabilities in an inclusive classroom.
4. The challenges that teachers face in the teaching of pupils with reading difficulty.
5. The differences in the instructional strategies used by male and female teachers.
6. The difference in the instructional strategies that teachers use based on their experience.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What is the perception of regular school teachers in the Central Region about reading difficulties?
2. What instructional strategies do teachers in the Central Region use to support pupils with reading difficulties in an inclusive classroom?
3. What is the perceived impact of the instructional strategies that teachers in the Central Region use to support pupils with reading difficulties?

4. What challenges do teachers in the Central Region face when teaching pupils with reading difficulties?

Research Hypotheses

1. Ho: There is no statistically significant difference between male and female teachers in the Central Region with respect to instructional strategies used in the inclusive classrooms.
H₁: There is a statistically significant difference between male and female teachers in the Central Region regarding instructional strategies used in the inclusive classrooms.
2. H₀: There is no statistically significant difference among teachers in the Central Region on the kind of instructional procedures they adopt based on their experience.
H₁: There is no statistically significant difference among teachers in the Central Region on the kind of instructional procedures they adopt based on their experience.

Significance of the Study

The results of the study would help in finding out teachers' perceptions of the impact of instructional strategies on pupils with reading difficulties in selected districts in the Central Region of Ghana. This would enable the districts to know more on how teachers' perceptions of their instructional strategies influence reading for those with reading difficulties. In addition, the study results would also help in finding out what instructional strategies teachers use in supporting children with reading difficulties. This would enable the districts to organize in-service training for teachers on instructional strategies that support pupils to read.

Furthermore, results of the study would also help in revealing challenges teachers face in teaching reading to pupils with reading difficulties. This would also enable the districts to find means of addressing any inherent problems. Finally, the study results would add to existing literature for other researchers interested in similar studies.

Delimitations

Issues surrounding the condition of learning disability are numerous to permit a single study to investigate. In the light of this, the study only looked at instructional strategies that teachers use to help children with reading difficulty in the regular schools. The choice for the use of upper primary teachers is due to the fact that at the time that this study was being conducted, there was a reading programme already spearheaded by the Ghana government for lower primary children on reading which was reported to be very effective (GEGRP, 2017). In this case, the researcher did not see the need to include the lower primary. Geographically, the study made use of some selected public basic schools within Assin South, Gomoa West and Komenda Edina Eguafu Abrem (KEEA) districts.

Limitations

In investigating the instructional strategies used by regular teachers when teaching children with reading difficulty in the regular school, only three districts, thus Gomoa West, Assin South and KEEA were used out of the 13 districts in the region. The inability of the researcher to include all the schools in the region is more likely to challenge the generalisability of the study.

Definition of Terms

The following terms have been operationally defined in the study:

Learning: The acquisition of knowledge and skills by a variety of means, including educational instruction and experience.

Reading difficulty: This is a learning problem that involves an impairment of reading accuracy, speed, or comprehension and is significant enough to interfere with academic achievement and/or activities of daily life.

Learning disability: A disorder in one or more of basic psychological processes involved in using spoken or written language, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, and spell or to do mathematical calculations. The term “Learning Difficulty” as used in this work however, does not include learning problems, which are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor handicaps, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or environment, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

Differentiated Instruction: Differentiated instruction, also referred to as differentiated education, is a response by the teacher to individual student's needs by focusing on the essentials in learning and adjusting academic content, the learning process, and the end product to student's readiness, interests, and learning profile. The goal is to maximise student growth and individual success.

Organisation of the Study

The study has been organised into five chapters. The Chapter One discusses the Introduction, which highlights the background to the study, the research problem, and the purpose for the study. The research questions have been stated, with the significance and delimitation of the study. Chapter Two

reviews the literature related to the study. Here the focus was on empirical conceptual and theoretical literature. Chapter Three describes the methodology used for the study. This involves the research design, population and sampling procedure, the research instrument, the pre-testing procedure, the procedure for data collection and the data analysis. In Chapter Four, the results are discussed while the Chapter Five summarises the study and provides conclusions. Recommendations are given in the last section of the chapter based upon the findings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter reviews the earlier studies related to the focus of the study. Among the issues discussed are the conceptual, theoretical and empirical evidences surrounding the study topic. The areas reviewed include the following:

Conceptual Review

1. The concept of learning disability.
2. The concept of reading.
3. Reading difficulties.
4. Causes of reading difficulties.

Theoretical Review

Social Constructivism Cognitive Development Theory of Learning: The zone of proximal developmet (Lev Semeonovich Vygostsky 1978).

Empirical Framework

1. Teachers' perception about children with reading difficulties.
2. Common supporting strategies for learners with learning difficulties in inclusive classroom.
3. Instructional strategies for teaching children with reading difficulties.

The concept of learning disability

The definition of learning disability has varied over time, across jurisdictions and among disciplines. For example, British Columbia guide for

teachers defines learning disabilities, consistent with the definition adopted by the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada as;

Learning Disabilities refer to a number of conditions that might affect the acquisition, organisation, retention, understanding or use of verbal or nonverbal information. These disorders affect learning in individuals who otherwise demonstrate at least average abilities essential for thinking and/or reasoning. As such, learning disabilities are distinct from global intellectual disabilities. Learning disabilities result from impairments in one or more processes related to perceiving, thinking, remembering or learning. These include, but are not limited to language processing, phonological processing, visual spatial processing, processing speed, memory, attention and executive functions (e.g. planning and decision making) (British Columbia Report, 2010).

According to Gargiulo (2004), learning disabilities can interfere with a child's ability to fulfill his or her intellectual and life potential. Learning disabilities result in unexpected academic underachievement. Learning disabilities may impact the acquisition, organisation, understanding, retention and/or use of information (Gargiulo, 2004). Children with learning disabilities are a heterogeneous group (Gargiulo, 2004). These children are a diverse group of individuals, exhibiting potential difficulties in many different areas. For example, one child with a learning disability may experience significant reading problems, while another may experience no reading problems whatsoever, but has significant difficulties with written expression (Gargiulo,

2004). Learning disabilities may also be mild, moderate, or severe. Students differ too, in their coping skills. According to Bowe (2005), “some learn to adjust to learning disability so well that they ‘pass’ as not having a disability, while others struggle throughout their lives to even do ‘simple’ things. Despite these differences, learning disability always begins in childhood and always is a life-long condition” (p. 71).

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a specific learning disability is:

A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. Such term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. Such term does not include a learning problem that is primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of intellectual disability, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage (p. 23).

In this case a learning disability is a disorder in a basic psychological process that causes implications in academic performance. Reid, Lienemann, and Hagaman (2013) pointed out the subtypes of a learning disability to include reading, writing, and math: word level reading, reading comprehension, reading fluency, math, reading and math, and written expression. These are the different areas where students with a learning

disability may struggle with. Students who struggle with word level reading have problems with decoding the text accurately and fluently. Those who struggle with reading comprehension have trouble understanding language and may have problems with their working memory. Students who have trouble with reading fluently have a slow rate of reading and have problems processing information in a quick manner. Pupils' who are challenged by math have trouble using problem solving strategies and have difficulty in understanding math facts. Those who are challenged by reading and math are faced with memory issues and can lack the connection between working memory and long-term memory. Students challenged by written expression generally have issues with spelling, handwriting, and creating text (Reid, et al., 2013).

Cortiella and Horowitz (2014), explained that reading is the most common difficulty that a pupil with learning disability faces. However, the most common types of learning disabilities occur in the areas of reading, math, and writing. The most common specific learning disability in reading is dyslexia (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014). This is a disability where the learner generally has difficulty with phonemic awareness, phonological processing, and word decoding. Individuals with dyslexia often struggle with noticing sounds in words, reading fluently, and often have trouble with spelling and vocabulary (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014). This current study, however, sees reading difficulty among children in the selected districts as a major problem that could affect the pupils' future academic pursuit.

Causes of Learning Disabilities

According to Cortiella and Horowitz (2014), it is known that there is a neurological difference to a structure of an area of the brain. This variance in brain structure affects an individual's ability to process information and as such affects one's ability to receive, store, process, retrieve, or communicate information (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014). One possible explanation for a learning disability is damage to the brain either before, during, or after birth in critical times of development. These could include maternal illnesses, injuries, or drug or alcohol use. It could also be a result of malnutrition, low birth weight, oxygen deprivation, traumatic experiences, or exposure to toxins, such as lead or tobacco (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014).

Reid, et al. (2013), claimed that learning disability is such a broad category with a lot of variance, which makes it hard to determine a specific cause. There are different perspectives that explain possibilities of a cause for learning disabilities. One of this is from a medical perspective, which corresponds with Cortiella and Horowitz (2014). They argue that it is a brain-based disorder that is a result of a neurological disorder. The other perspective is that it is more of a cognitive issue. It is argued that a learning disability is not a result of neurological damage, it is a result of a lack of psychological processes (Reid, et al., 2013). Mercer (1997), explained that parents didn't want to accept that their children were brain damaged. They made the claim that it was a cognitive problem, not a neurological problem. These individuals struggle with assessments, using strategies, or have issues with short- or long-term memory.

Since learning disability has been pointed out as brain-based disorder, the assumption that this study holds has to do with the fact that, reading difficulty may not necessarily be a learning disability, hence, the possibility that reading difficulty may be caused by inefficient strategies used by teachers in the basic school classroom.

Characteristics of Students with a Learning Disability

According to Reid, et al. (2013), students with learning disabilities make up 44.6% of the special education population worldwide. Cortiella and Horowitz (2014) explain that this is the largest category of disability and further explain that from 1976 to 2000, the category of learning disabilities was the fastest growing category in special education, with over three hundred percent increase in twenty-four years. This is possibly so because of the genetic nature of the condition. However, since 2002, the number of students with learning disabilities has been on the decline, by almost two percent per year. This decline could be a result of many factors. One possibility is that we now have a better understanding of early childhood education. We are now taking more action and working to ensure that our pupils are more prepared for school. It is also possible that there are improvements in reading instruction. Since this is the most common difficulty among students with a learning disability, improved reading instruction helps lower the number of students identified with a learning disability. There has also been a shift in the approach to identifying students with learning disabilities (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014). Reid, et al. (2013) point out that, prior to 2004 when Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) was revamped, students were classified with a learning disability based on formulas. Pupils were

classified with a learning disability if the gap between their scores on their intelligence tests and their standardised tests was large enough. So, they would figure out the presumed ability of a child and compare it to their current ability and determine whether or not they had a learning disability (Reid, et al., 2013).

Cortiella and Horowitz (2014) explain the Response to Intervention (RTI) method that is currently used to identify learning disabilities. RTI is a tiered system of support that provides assistance for pupils prior to determining whether or not they have a learning disability. This is a three-tiered system that adjusts to the needs of the pupil. The teacher begins with whole class instruction. If that is not working for the pupil, then the teacher works with the pupils in small groups. If that is not working, then the pupil will receive smaller group instruction, or even one-on-one instruction. The pupil is constantly being monitored based on their performance levels and progress. When all these approaches are not what is best for the pupil, then special education services are looked at. This new approach helps minimise the number of pupils being classified with a learning disability. This approach can also be used in the general education classroom, especially when pupils with learning disabilities are in the classroom. Currently, 66% of pupils with learning disabilities are located in general education classrooms in most parts of the world (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014). Reid, et al. (2013) explain the characteristics that pupils with learning disabilities often portray. One of these characteristics is a lack of attention.

Attention deficit

There are three important factors of attention, which would include task engagement, maintaining focus, and selective attention (Bowe, 2005). Pupils with learning disabilities are often off task in the classroom; they have a hard time staying on task if they are left on their own to do the work. They also have a hard time maintaining focus. Pupils with learning disabilities are often seen as “spacey” or “distractible.” They have a hard time focusing on the task at hand and can be easily distracted or sidetracked. Pupils with learning disabilities are also challenged by choosing where to place their attention (Bowe, 2005). They have problems with selective attention and have difficulty deciding between what is important and what is not (Bowe, 2005).

Memory deficit

Another characteristic of pupils with learning disabilities is being challenged by their memory. They often struggle with remembering the important information that they need. This could be due to lack of background knowledge or not using strategies to help with memorisation. Pupils with learning disabilities generally have less background knowledge about a topic, which makes it more challenging for them to remember that information. They also tend to struggle with recall. These pupils are less likely to use strategies, like chunking or repetition, to help them memorise information. Pupils with learning disabilities also have a negative attribution process. When they are successful academically, they claim it was due to external factors, like an easy test or being lucky. When they are not successful, they claim it was due to internal factors, such as not being smart or not having the skills for that task. They do not take any credit for their successes, only their failures.

Learned Helplessness

Learned Helplessness is also portrayed by pupils with learning disabilities. They feel that no matter what they do, they are just going to fail. These pupils do not believe that they will succeed in many tasks (Reid, et al., 2013). Kavale and Forness (1996) claimed that around 70% of pupils with learning disabilities exhibit this characteristic.

Lack of coordinated strategies

The last characteristic that Reid, et al. (2013), explains is the lack of coordinated strategies. These pupils often fail to respond to the requirements of an academic task in an appropriate manner. They struggle to find the appropriate strategies to use and lack the understanding of when to use strategies. pupils with learning disabilities fail to use the appropriate methods to help themselves succeed in an academic setting (Reid, et al., 2013).

The Concept of Reading

Different writers and researchers have come up with differing views on what reading really is (Kalindi, 2005; Frijters, 2000). However, this study shall dwell much on the definition by Rand (2002) which says that, “it is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (p.12). From the above definition, there seem to be two important key words which are defining reading comprehension; “extracting”, and “constructing”. Rand is looking at reading comprehension as a process through which learners are able to derive the meaning out of the text. In concurrence, Morrow, Gambrell and Pressley (2003), stated that comprehension is when a reader is able to make meaning from the text. However, extracting has more to it because it entails the ability

to dig out meanings from the text which relates more to deductive way of understanding. Despite that, both definitions have a reader in mind who has prior knowledge which is brought into the text. Reading comprehension is not mere word recognition and the ability to understand oral language (Duke, Pressley, & Hilden, 2004). This is more to the surface because some learners have problems with read the very words they speak. Ehri and Snowling (2004), are against the opinion that the ability to construct meaning from individual words ensures reading comprehension. Rand has pointed out that “construction” of meaning is done depending on the prior knowledge and word processing skills (Duke, Pressley, & Hilden, 2004). Rand is therefore emphasizing on the importance of interaction and involvement that learners may have with the words in their immediate environment or social-cultural context.

Reading Difficulty

Lovett, Steinbach and Frijters (2000), state that a reading difficulty is an individual’s failure to acquire rapid, context-free word identification skills, whilst for Shaywitz and Shaywitz (2004) it is characterised as an unexpected obstacle in reading for children who possess the intelligence, motivation and education necessary for developing accurate and fluent reading. The term ‘reading difficulties’ is, in most instances, equated or used synonymously with ‘reading problems’, and in the context of this study the former refers to problems associated with reading, whether it be the mechanical skill of the reading process or the comprehension of what is being read. Learners who struggle to learn to read are often discouraged in the world of school,

eventually dropping out without mastering this basic skill (Vaughn, Bos & Schumm, 2000).

According to Kalindi (2005), reading is significant in general ways that touch everyone because the ability to read and write is an essential ingredient of success in most societies where so much information is transmitted in written form. Learning to read seems like something which comes about naturally but for most children, learning to read requires extra effort and it may be a long and complicated process lasting several years. Reading skills are usually taught during the first three (3) years of primary education so that as pupils progress in their education, they are able to understand the concepts that they are taught (Paananen, et. al., 2009). In addition, research has shown that, there are high chances for children who have not acquired reading skills by grade 3 or 4 develop reading problems (McGuinness, 2004). In other words, the ability to read becomes useful if one is to gain more knowledge. This is so because, the growing technicalities of society has brought increasing demands for literacy (Kalindi, 2005). However, most learners are unable to use reading as a tool for learning new information. They are unable to read. Reading difficulties are usually detected in childhood, but it takes someone knowledgeable to identify that a child has a reading difficulty. If no interventions are put in place, reading difficulty can affect someone through adulthood.

Causes of Reading difficulty

There seems to be great controversy on what the causes of reading difficulties are. Some scholars relate reading difficulties to neurological factors while others relate them to environmental factors (Watanabe &

Maruyama, 2007; Duke, Pressley, & Hilden, 2004). Reading difficulties are complex and the causes are difficult to pin point.

Watanabe and Maruyama (2007) proposed three considerations which support the view that reading difficulties are caused by neurological factors. These are, disorientation and disorganization in the recognition of visual patterns due to brain damages, hereditary relationship of reading disability and the interrelationship between visual, auditory, temporal and kinaesthetic disorientation and disorganization. Kelly (2000), indicated that reading failure is mainly caused by failure to acquire phonological awareness and skills in alphabetical coding. Moreover, Ojanen (2007), noted that reading difficulty can be a result of inadequate teaching. Teachers have a lot of work in teaching literacy skills so that a lot of pupils would become fluent readers. Environmental factors also contribute to one having reading difficulties. For example, the home and school environments. If there is no one to motivate the pupil at home as well as in school, it will be very difficult for a pupil to develop interest in reading.

According to Paananen, Ristikari, Merikukka, Rämö, and Gissler (2009), the home environment plays a role on pupils' reading ability. It can affect someone either positively or negatively. In the home environment, there are many factors which can cause someone to have reading difficulties. These include; mother tongue interference, lack of motivation, lack of text books and reading materials, parents' literacy levels, effects of poverty (for example, poor nutrition, lack of proper furniture for studies), kind/nature of lighting system, lack of support by parents or guardians and the community at large. The home environment is very important for a child's growth in all aspects of

life and this includes education. For one to thrive academically, a conducive home environment is very cardinal (Paananen, et. al, 2009).

Gender Differences in Reading

Generally, girls tend to do better than boys when it comes to reading (Rathus, 2006). In the past, studies on gender differences in educational performance mainly focused on the underachievement of females (UNESCO, 2000). However, things are not the same anymore. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in (UNESCO, 2000) suggests that the trend has changed and now females perform better than males when it comes to reading. The tendency for females to be good performers in reading seems to be global. In most of the countries on average, it has been argued that females reach higher levels of performance in reading literacy than males (UNESCO, 2000). Moreover, in the process of child development on one hand, girls usually speak their first words earlier than boys. As a result, girls in general tend to acquire their language faster and develop large vocabularies than boys (Rathus, 2006). On the other hand, boys tend to have problems when it comes to reading and, in most cases, their reading is below their grade level (Rathus, 2006).

Furthermore, gender differences in reading literacy worldwide may also be as a result of broader societal and cultural contexts or of educational policies and practices. In most societies, parents tend to be gentle with the girl children as they are growing up. This could probably be due to the fact that girls are considered to be ‘a weaker sex’. Parents tend to spend more time talking to and smiling at and demonstrating more emotional expressiveness to and focusing more on emotions when talking to their infant daughters than

their infant sons (Martin, Hamilton, Ventura, Menacker, Park and Sutton, 2002). Finally, one of the scientific explanations for linguistic oriented skills favouring girls may lie in biological forces. The left hemisphere of the brain, which is central to language may mature more rapidly in girls than in boys Diamond, Piel, and Fill (2000) (as cited in Kail, 2007). This could be the reason for girls being better than boys when it comes to reading.

Challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading

In virtually every class, there could be a learner with a reading difficulty (Mando, 2008). As such, during their career, every teacher meets several learners for whom reading is laborious, and even learners who think that they cannot read. Teaching these learners is a challenge for the teachers and the entire school (Mando, 2008). Classroom effectiveness of teachers heavily depends on their knowledge of the subject matter and their pedagogical skills (Matafwali, 2005). Unfortunately, most teachers are not oriented towards helping poor readers in their classes. In their training, they were not adequately prepared to teach all children according to their needs (Matafwali, 2005). Therefore, even in cases where reading materials are adequate, reading skills of poor readers are not improved the most important person, who is the teacher in this case does not know how to help the poor readers (Kalindi, 2005).

It is also important to bear in mind that, teachers have been working under difficult circumstances such as, too many pupils in classes, erratic pupil attendance and others (Kachenga, 2008). When there are too many pupils in a classroom, it becomes difficult for the teacher to give individual attention especially to those who may be lagging behind in reading (Kachenga, 2008).

Furthermore, serious shortages of teaching and learning materials, as well as poor staffing especially in remote areas also make it a challenge for teachers in teaching reading (MoE, 2008). A teacher may have the required skills in teaching reading, but it becomes difficult for him/her to teach effectively if the necessary teaching and learning materials are not in place. Poor staffing levels means teachers have to attend to more than one class hence being overburdened. In turn, they will not be able to pay particular attention to those learners who have difficulties in reading.

Reading Models

Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2005), Norton (2007), Joubert, Bester and Meyer (2008) have identified three models of reading that influence the way it is taught, as follows.

Bottom-Up Model (Text-Based Model)

The bottom-up model (also known as the part-to-whole approach) for teaching reading begins with the sound of letters and progresses upwards from the single letters to the combination of letters that form words, and that the point of departure is to teach letter-sound relations and then sounds and say the words. In this model rules for word pattern and sounding out words are more important than understanding longer texts (Norton, 2007; Landsberg, Kruger & Nel, 2005; Joubert, Bester & Meyer, 2008).

Proponents of this model stated that if readers are able to carry out the process successfully, they will automatically understand what they are reading. Norton (2007), indicated that learners first learn the letters and then analyse words. The written words are then encoded in their sound components. He further said that this form of reading is very abstract because

the letter-sound connections are abstract; therefore, readers are unable to attach meaning to what they are reading from the start.

Norton (2007), further explained that the bottom-up model of the reading process is a text-based model because of its focus on the information provided by the text rather than the input from the reader's experiences or previous knowledge. In this model, reading begins with the sound of the letter and progresses upward from a single letter to the combination of the letters that form words and the words sentences. The reader first learns the letters and then how to analyse words. The written words are analysed and encoded in their sound components and then synthesised to spoken words. This form of reading is very abstract because the letter-symbol connections are abstract and readers therefore are unable to attach meaning to what they are reading from the start. It accentuates the development of sub-skills, which gradually lead to ostensibly complex reading skills. The readers move from the text to its meaning. Letters and words are perceived, analysed and decoded before he or she can understand what he or she has read. Reading skill is intimately linked to sound recognition and the reader's ability to make sound-symbol associations. Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2005), stated that teachers using this approach for reading instruction can use a synthetic approach in which letters, sounds and syllables are used to build meaning.

Top-down Model

This model (also known as the meaning-giving-theory) is based on the premise that reading forms a meaningful whole in which meaning and sense lie at the foundation (Joubert, Fize, Rousselet, and Fabre-Thorpe, 2008). This model concentrates mainly on the learners' association with real books and

authentic texts and on reading for meaning. Norton (2007), concurs that the top-down model of the reading process is a reader-based model because the reader brings his or her own knowledge, culture and experiences to the interpretation of the text. In this model, concepts held in the mind of the reader trigger information during reading. Readers' knowledge and expectations of language as well as their prior experiences help them to comprehend the material.

In the view of Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2005), the top-down model is to teach learners to identify whole words and to read sentences without sounding the words. The readers become aware of the phonemes and letter-sound relations while they are reading. The top-down model is concept-driven, the reader being more important than the text being read, and the reader has pre-knowledge which gives him or her an indication of its meaning. Readers' pre-knowledge therefore influences their understanding of the text, which is less important and the decoding action serves only to determine whether the meaning the reader assigns to the text is correct or not. Readers read complete sentences and consequently attach meaning to what they have read. Learners see words as a whole and learn to recognise them on sight. According to Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2005), teachers using this model employ a synthetic approach for reading instruction, such as the language experience approach. Norton (2007) refers to this approach as the whole language approach.

Interactive Model

Norton (2007) and Sethosa (2000) shared the same views on this approach, which is a combination of several methods of reading instruction.

They state that reading is simultaneously text-driven and concept-driven. The text and the person interact to extract meaning from the text, with readers understanding the text by simultaneously decoding it and relating it to their previous knowledge.

The interactive model emphasises sound recognition, sound-symbol association and reading comprehension. It takes the view that the reader continually shifts his/her attention between the text (that is, analysis of specific letters and words) and reading comprehension (that is, thought content of the reading material). According to this model the reader will use the top-down approach when the reading material is known and the bottom-up approach when the reading material is not known, and as the reader's skill increases more attention is given to reading comprehension and less to word recognition and analysis of individual letters (Norton, 2007).

According to Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2005), the interactive model became popular because of the limited success of the bottom-up and the top-down models. Rumelhart (as cited in Norton, 2007) states that the top-down and the bottom-up models of processing occur simultaneously and that most researchers agree that a combination of the two models is necessary for the successful teaching of reading and for reading comprehension (Norton, 2007). Teachers who use this model for reading instruction use an eclectic approach in which the strengths of both methods are used to acquire reading proficiency (Landsberg, Kruger & Nel, 2005). Norton (2007) refers to this approach as the "balanced approach", and points to the sub-skill approach to reading in which teachers using this approach believe that there is a set of sub-skills that have to be mastered for learners to read proficiently, for example, the use of a word in

its rightful context. These sub-skills include a set of identifiable skills that are considered the building blocks for reading.

Theoretical Framework

The Social Constructivism Cognitive Development theory of learning was reviewed.

Social Constructivism Cognitive Development Theory of Learning: The zone of proximal development (Lev Semeonovich Vygotsky, 1978)

Vygotsky (1978) believes that interpersonal relationship of learners with a more capable person improves their academic achievement, competency and dependency. He states that "an interpersonal process is transformed into an intrapersonal one, that every function in the pupil's cultural development appears twice that is, first on the social level (inter-psychological) and later on the personal level (intra-psychological)" (p.12). Vygotsky then, described Zone of Proximal Development as the distance between the actual development level as discovered by learner solving problem independently, and the level of potential development discovered through learner solving problem with the guidance of the adult or in cooperation with more capable peers. It is the problems that learners cannot solve independently but only through the assistance of more competent people (Vygotsky, 1978). He described actual development level as indicative of exact mental function of the pupil, that is, only those things that learners can do independently are indicative of mental abilities.

The implication of the theory for this study has to do with the researcher's conception of teachers having the prime duty to determining the actual development that is, mental ability of a pupil which will give them

insight on the area to assist such a pupil. This discovery can then be guided by, or in collaboration with more knowledgeable person. The direction of the capable individuals (i.e. teachers) will lead to acquisition of reading skills. It has been shown by researchers that what is in the zone of proximal development today will be actual development tomorrow (McCarthy, 1929, Vygostsky, 1978). This implies that what learners can do with the adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers today (ZPD), will be what they will be able to do independently later (Actual development). Moreover, apart from interpersonal relation concept in Vygostsky theory, he also describes the use of symbolic psychological tools (concrete objects) in facilitating development of higher forms of memory, attention and decision making (Vygostsky, 1978 & Kozulin, 1986). Kozulin (2003) describes psychological tools as those symbolic artifacts – signs, symbols, texts, formulae, graphic – symbolic devices that help individuals master their own natural psychological functions of perception, memory, attention and so on. In this regard, teachers' use of symbolic tools (such as teaching and learning materials and strategies) are more likely to better the lot of pupils with learning reading difficulties in the selected regular schools.

Empirical Review

This aspect of the review focused on prior studies conducted on teachers' perception on reading difficulties, instructional procedures for helping pupils with reading difficulties and the impact of such instructional strategies in the regular classroom.

Teachers' perception of pupils with reading difficulty

In the review process, the researcher did not specifically find studies that directly investigate teachers' perception about reading difficulty per se, however, the available literature was on "perception of specific learning disability". Fortunately, reading difficulty is a specific learning disability, hence the studies reviewed were deemed fit for the purposes of discussion.

Alkharusi (2018), examined school leaders' and teachers' perceptions of Learning Disabilities in Key Stage 1 Schools in a sample drawn from schools in Muscat, the capital city of Oman. A sample of 175 school leaders and 175 teachers completed The Survey on Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) such as reading difficulty, an instrument developed to explore beliefs and perceptions of the causes of learning disabilities. A principal component analysis indicated that six factors underlie perceptions of learning disabilities: The governmental formal educational system, repertoire of teachers' skills and school support, familial and cultural background, students, academic curriculum, and social change. Multivariate analyses showed that school leaders perceive more strongly than teachers that the governmental formal educational system and academic curriculum as main causal factors for reading difficulty and other forms of learning difficulties. The current study intends to explore not only the perception that teachers have about reading difficulty but also, the problems that they face when teaching pupils with reading difficulty.

Dev and Kumar (2015), investigated the regular school teacher's ability to handle students with learning disability and their perception and acceptance level to integrate the students into the regular school set up in

Dubai and Abu Dhabi. A five-point scale consisting of 25 items was designed to collect data from schools. Statistical techniques like t-test and ANOVA were used to find the difference in perception among teachers. The study discovered that teachers had an overall negative perception towards integrating students with learning disability in the normal class rooms. The analysis confirmed that the age, gender, educational level of the teachers and their awareness of learning disabilities had a significant influence on their entire perception about integration process. Dev and Kumar study used regular schools in two major emirates in United Arab Emirates, with no regards to performing and nonperforming schools. This current study however, intends to examine teachers in performing and nonperforming schools within three districts in the Central Region of Ghana.

Mudzielwana (2014), explored teachers' perception and understanding of learners' low reading performance. Teachers often feel they are able to teach and that learners are unable to read with comprehension. The design of this study was qualitative approach. A sample of eight teachers was randomly selected from four schools in Limpopo Province was used in this study. The instrument for data collection was focus group discussion with the teachers. It was revealed that teachers perceived pupils not to be reading on their own. The results also indicated that the major factors for low reading level amongst others include factors such as the introduction of new curriculum without proper orientation of those who will implement it on the ground. The limitation of this study has to do with the sample size, that is eight (8) respondents. This current study made use of relatively larger sample size to

get good views about the issue of reading difficulty and how it should be handled.

Chuunga's (2013) study focused on how teachers practice the teaching of reading (and writing) towards supporting learners with reading difficulties at the lower primary level in Zambia. In order to understand the phenomenon in depth, a qualitative approach was used with case study design. Six teachers of fourth-graders in three types of schools: rural, peri-urban and urban were interviewed. The interviews were supported by document analysis followed by classroom observation. The findings reveal that there were differences in the backgrounds and realities of the teachers but with similar patterns in the three types of schools. It was also evident that the teachers were trying their best however, they saw the task as a difficult one. Major problems that the teachers encountered were related to over enrollment, teacher-pupil ratio and lack of teaching and reading materials. Since the study made use of a qualitative design, the sample size was very small. This current study made use of both quantitative and qualitative approach to data collection in order to get a good picture of the issue.

Grönblad (2013), aimed at identifying, describing and analysing teachers' perceptions of teaching Swedish students with reading difficulty in four Swedish mainstream secondary schools. The data for this study was collected by interviews from four English teachers in four different mainstream secondary schools. The results show that teachers have the perception that they have received too little in-service training from their employer about reading difficulties. The findings of Grönblad may lack generalizability because of the usage of only four (4) teachers as the study

respondents. The current study made use of both quantitative and qualitative data, hence, the sample size was relatively large.

Bano, Dogar and Azeem (2012), investigated teachers' perception of what constitute reading difficulty and what educational implications they have and to determine if there was a difference in general education teachers and special education teacher's perception of disabilities. Ten null hypotheses were framed to investigate the perception of teachers about different aspects of learning disabilities. A sample of 300 teachers from special education public sector as well as 300 teachers from general education was selected for the study. A five-point Likert type questionnaire was developed to investigate the perception about the learning disabilities. After piloting, the final reliability of the instrument was 0.8143. Main findings showed that the concept of reading difficulty is perceived differently by the teachers of general education and that of special education. Teachers of special education had better perception of reading difficulty in children. In the same way special education teachers had better perception of characteristics of children with reading difficulty. However, the general education teachers (regular teachers) had negative perception about children with reading difficulty. Even though, Bano, Dogar and Azeem made use of large number of respondents, the study findings lacked certain details because they did not get the opportunity to interview some of the respondents due to strict adherence to quantitative design. The current study made use of a mixed method approach which will provide a better picture of the phenomenon under investigation.

Timor (2012), examined English Fluency Language (EFL) preservice teachers' perceptions of fluency learning problems with regard to how these

problems were linked to the fact that either the student was obese or suffer from measles in previous studies. The methodology was content analysis of an online forum as part of an academic course. Findings show that most preservice teachers perceive English fluency learning problems as obesity related, because they find similarities in the diagnosis, treatment, characteristics and manifestations of the condition. However, they show no clear-cut distinction between learning disability and fluency learning problems, and consequently they perceive most fluency learning problems as learning disability. Clearly, the preservice teachers had negative perception about fluency learning problems (that is, reading difficulties).

Abernathy and Taylor (2009), examined teachers' perceptions regarding students' knowledge and understanding of their learning disability; what teachers tell students about their identified learning disability; what specific activities, lessons, discussions teachers use to help students understand their disability; and how the disability affects the students' academic, social, and emotional lives. A mixed study design was adopted for data collection. Results of the study revealed that teachers often speak in jargon and euphemism to children with disabilities. They use deflecting behaviours to pass the responsibility onto parents and the students themselves. Although teachers are aware of self-determination activities, they fail to implement them appropriately.

Gromoll (2008), investigated special education teachers' perceptions, backgrounds and beliefs related to test performance of third grade students with reading problems who passed the reading portion of the state assessment in Florida, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). The

comparative descriptive research design was used to identify these factors and their effects in the study. Quantitative data collection was used. A survey instrument was developed to include information on teachers' background, beliefs, experience, and perceptions toward statewide assessments. The survey was sent to seventy-six third grade teachers of students with reading difficulties.

Teachers receiving the survey were categorized into two groups based on the outcome of the 2007 FCAT in reading. Significant differences between teacher responses were found in the areas of professional development for test accommodations, co-teaching, and working with professionals in the general curriculum. Response to survey items on service delivery models indicated that students who spend the majority of time in the general education classroom or in a resource room setting have increased student achievement on statewide assessments. Differences were also found between teachers on questions related to school location, percentage of minority students, students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch, and positions employees held in education by the teachers in the study. One of the most significant findings of this study concluded that increased time spent in the general education classroom and collaboration of special education teachers with general education staff proved to be most beneficial when addressing the needs of students with reading difficulty and statewide assessment.

Kataoka, Kraayenoord and Elkins (2004), explored perceptions of learning disabilities from 128 principals and 123 teachers in the Nara Prefecture, Japan. A factor analysis indicated that five factors underlie perceptions of learning disabilities: changes in the family and social situation,

insufficient knowledge of and support for learning disabilities, teachers' abilities and professional development, teachers' situation and governmental issues. Teachers' situation was perceived to be the main factor, whereas the least important factor was governmental issues. Teachers mainly indicated agreement on the factor of insufficient knowledge of and support for students with learning disabilities. Principals were more aware of governmental issues than teachers.

Alghazo and Gaad (2004), explored teacher's beliefs concerning the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms in the United Arab Emirate. The results showed that teachers were not inclined to include students with learning difficulties, as they believed that such work required more of their time for preparation, planning and providing adequate assistance.

Margalit, Mioduser, Al -Yagon and Neuberger (2000), examined consistency and change in teachers' and peers' perceptions and students' self-reports among children with learning disorders. Two groups were compared 117 children with learning disorders who received remedial teaching in school-based learning centers and 123 average achievers. Teachers rated children's social skills, behaviour adjustment and academic achievements. In addition, positive and negative nominations of the participants' peers were obtained, and participants reported their personal perceptions of loneliness, coherence and quality of friendship. These assessments were performed twice - at the beginning and the end of the school year. We found that teachers and peers rated children with learning disorders as demonstrating lower social skills, more behavioural difficulties and lower peer acceptance. Self-perceptions of learning-disabled children were characterised by lower

coherence, and increased loneliness. Time comparison revealed some change in teacher and peer perceptions, yet findings supported the deficit model in explaining the social competence of children with learning disorders. Regression analyses revealed that students' learning and behaviour difficulties in addition to the personal experience of loneliness significantly added to the prediction of teachers' perceptions at the beginning and the end of the year.

Conclusively, empirical studies relating to teacher perception about children with specific learning disability such as reading difficulties have shown inconclusive findings. Some studies demonstrated favourable perception while others unfavourable perception. On the positive side, some studies showed that teachers have adequate knowledge about the characteristics of pupils with learning difficulties while on the other side, teachers demonstrated inadequate knowledge base of characteristics of learning difficulty. The inconclusive nature of findings in literature set a good premise for more empirical investigation into perception of teachers on children with learning difficulties. This study would concentrate on teachers' perception on pupils with reading difficulty.

Teachers' instructional strategies for teaching children with reading difficulties

Talley (2017), examined the most effective teaching strategies that are implemented in the classroom to meet the needs of struggling readers, to find activities that motivate struggling readers, and to investigate the role of teachers in the development of struggling readers. Grounded qualitative design was adopted for the study. The data were gathered from six elementary teachers from grades third, fourth, and fifth. A structured interview was the

primary source of data for the grounded qualitative study. The study concluded that role play, poetry and group work were the common strategies used in teaching struggling readers. The findings further identified games and high interest texts to influence struggling readers to engage in the process of reading. The major flaw of this study has to do with the sample size that were used. The views of six teachers may not be a representative voice of all teachers within a school district. This current study therefore interviewed nine (9) teachers and further took quantitative data from 95 teachers within a single region.

Morgan (2017), explored the methods that educators used in teaching reading fluency in a low-fee private school in Pretoria. Using a qualitative research approach, data was collected using semi-structures interview, lesson observation and document analysis. Findings indicated that educators made use of synthetic phonic approach, dramatization and subtractive bilingualism predominantly. The study further showed that teachers differed in their use of these methods bases on their qualification. The current study also has similar focus as that of Morgan's study, however, in addition, this study will investigate the problems that teachers face when teaching pupils with reading difficulty.

Marima (2016), explored early childhood teachers' methods used in teaching children with reading difficulty. descriptive research design using the survey method and observation technique was adopted for the study. A sample of 10 primary schools from Dagoretti and 10 from Westlands Divisions in Nairobi County were studied. The study concludes that although most teachers indicated that they were confident, they also indicated that they were not well

equipped with the relevant teaching methods. Majority of pre-unit teachers used phonics and others whole-word methods. The current study differs from Marima's own in the choice of methodology. As the former made use of only a quantitative design, the latter combined both quantitative and qualitative methodology for triangulation purposes.

Phajane (2014), examined first grade teachers' perspectives on teaching beginning reading in Sesotho using the traditional method of approach. The researcher collected data from one Foundation Phase School in Mothotlung Circuit of Brits District in North West Province of South Africa; she observed and interviewed the teachers on the teaching of beginning reading. Findings indicated that traditional method was found effective in teaching children with reading difficulty because it emphasises phonemic awareness, phonics and alphabetic knowledge. The shortfall of Phajane's has to do with the design and the sample size used. Using a single teacher's view about how reading can be effectively taught would only yield an insufficient data for generalization. The current study made use of mixed method approach where nine (9) teachers were interviewed in addition to 95 students indicating their views on a questionnaire.

Chuunga (2013), investigated how teachers practise the teaching of reading (and writing) towards supporting learners with reading difficulties at the lower primary level in Zambia. In order to achieve this objective, five sub-questions were designed. The first two questions focused on the teachers' backgrounds towards teaching reading and their situations/conditions relating to teaching reading while the last three focused on assessment of reading, planning and classroom implementation. In order to understand the

phenomenon in depth, a qualitative approach was used with case study design. Six teachers of fourth-graders in three types of schools: rural, peri-urban and urban were interviewed. The interviews were supported by document analysis followed by classroom observation. The findings revealed that teachers used traditional direct group teaching and one on one method for those who had severe reading problems.

“Comprehension instruction, which presents a variety of strategies is most effective. Comprehension strategies assist students in recalling facts, generating questions, and summarizing, among other comprehension-related skills” (National Reading Panel, 2000, p.14). Adapting the text, literature discussion, close reading, and interactive reading opportunities are just some of the ways that a teacher can build comprehension in struggling readers. According to Duke and Pearson (2002), reading comprehension instruction should be balanced. This means there should be instructional time teaching new skills, but there should also be time to practice the skills by actually reading, writing, and discussing. Duke and Pearson (2002) introduced a model for teaching comprehension. They suggested first describing the strategy or skill that will be taught to the pupils. The teacher also models the skill in action. Next, the teacher gives pupils opportunities to practice the skill. This can include working with a group or partner. Finally, the teacher gets each pupil work individually on the skill. This method of teaching leads to student independence and learning. Below, are strategies that can be implemented into Duke and Pearson’s model in order to help the struggling readers.

Description of teaching strategies

1. Teaching Student Monitoring- Monitoring is thinking about how and what one is reading. Teachers can demonstrate how to monitor one's own reading by using read alouds. "Teaching students to monitor their own comprehension and clarify their confusion is a day-to-day process that requires consistent modeling and thinking aloud regarding how you personally monitor your own comprehension while reading." (McEwan-Adkins, 2011, p. 25).
2. Teaching How to Question-Demonstrating to students how to form questions regarding the text can improve their comprehension. Questions should provoke students to analyze the text, form conclusions, and draw on own experiences.
3. Teaching Summarizing- "It is one of the most important cognitive strategies in terms of academic success, and it requires mindful and skilled reading" (McEwan-Adkins, 2011, p. 37). Summarising is important for struggling readers because they have to gather the information and give a smaller description of what happened.
4. Providing Tiered-Text- Tiered-texts are used to help struggling readers understand the content in the desired text. There are three levels of text. The first level of text is the same reading level of the student. The second level is a little more difficult and provides more information. The target text is on grade-level and should be a comprehension goal for the teacher and student (Moss, Lapp, & O'Shea, 2011).
5. Incorporating Discussion Groups- "Talking about text out loud and to oneself can improve comprehension. Research has shown that

implementing literature discussion groups in a classroom can have a positive effect on comprehension. Students exchange new ideas that build on schema” (Moss, Lapp, & O’Shea, 2011).

6. Close Reading- “Close Reading of text involves an investigation of a short piece of text, with multiple readings done over multiple instructional lessons. Through text-based questions and discussion, students are guided to deeply analyze and appreciate various aspects of the text, such as key vocabulary and how its meaning is shaped by context; attention to form, tone, imagery and/or rhetorical devices; the significance of word choice and syntax; and the discovery of different levels of meaning as passages are read multiple times.” (Fisher & Frey, 2014, p. 368).

Impact of Teachers’ Instructional Strategies on Pupils with Reading difficulties

Alabsi (2016), explored the impact of role play method in the teaching of vocabulary to struggling readers. Quasi-experimental design was used for this study. pre and post-test comparisons were made of vocabulary test achievement between two first year classes in Al-Madinah girls’ secondary school. One (experimented) taught two units of their English course book through role play, the other (control) taught by traditional methods. T –test revealed no significant difference in vocabulary proficiency in the pre-test; however, in the post-test, the mean score of the experimental group was significantly higher than that of the control. The evidence supports the beneficial effect of incorporating role-play in English fluency teaching. The weakness of Alabsi’s has to do with the fact that he made use of only a single

girl's school, hence, the generalizability of the study findings would be limited to the only school used. This current study, however, made use of 30 basic schools within three selected districts. This was done to increase the findings generalizability to a wider scope.

Yusuf (2015), investigated the impact of interactive activities (group work) on students' performance in reading comprehension. Two secondary schools were used for the study. Eighty (80) homogenized senior secondary school II students were used for the study, that is, 40 students from each school. The two schools were located far apart that is, government secondary school Doka, Kaduna North, Government Secondary School, Makera in Kaduna South. Two instruments were administered on the students. T-test was used to analyse the results of the tests. The results revealed that interactive activities had significant impact on pupils' performance in reading comprehension. The findings suggest that interactive activities are helpful in understanding and comprehending written text. It also helps teacher to see how students' individual thought processes are working with the information received from texts. Teachers are encouraged to use interactive activities to facilitate students' reading comprehension. Interactive activities such as turn on the meaning by engaging students in purposeful strategic conversations provide students with ample opportunities to interact with the text, teacher and peers. Different from what Yusuf's (2015) study used, the current study made use of a mixed method approach that made it possible for triangulation and also getting detail meaning of how teachers have perceived the issue of reading difficulties.

Boges (2015), examined the archival STAR reading assessment pre- and posttest instructional reading level scores of 120 regular education 4th graders enrolled in a Title I school during the 2012 – 2014 school years. Using an experimental design and a STAR reading assessment instrument for data collection, the study discovered that the use of direct instruction (DI) strategies did not result in a significant effect on the reading learning assessment mean scores of struggling nor on-grade level readers. However, the results did show that the posttest mean scores did increase from the pretest mean scores for both groups. The fact that the mean scores did increase is an important fact. In my opinion this is an indication of the efficiency of using DI to support students with reading difficulty. Even though, the DI was found to improve teaching of children with reading difficulties, the study made no attempt to find out the problems that the teachers face as they implement the curriculum. This current study, however, explored the problems that teachers encountered as they implement the curriculum.

Oluranti, (2014), examined the various strategies teachers use in supporting learners with specific learning difficulties (such as reading difficulty) in an inclusive classroom. The study was centered on teachers' perspectives, experiences and practices. It explored teachers' understanding of the concepts of support to learners, learners' peer support, and their effects in facilitating instruction among learners in an inclusive classroom. Qualitative research approach with case study design was used. Two inclusive primary schools were purposively selected in two different geographical and cultural locations. Two teachers in each school, making four altogether, were purposeful selected with the same sample criterion. Data were collected with

semi-standardized-open-ended interview, and were analysed with Hermeneutics approach. The findings revealed that teachers need to have adequate knowledge and experience on how to give appropriate and adequate support. Further, the study discovered that the use of concrete objects such as pictures, smart boards and films are considered effective strategies in supporting learners facing difficulties. Also, offering of encouragements, and effective usage of learners' peer support are good supporting tools.

Awada (2014), investigated the effect of combined strategy instruction on improving the reading comprehension of narrative texts by grade 7 and 8 (12-14 and 13-15- year –old) dyslexic learners of English as a foreign language as well as the comprehension of expository texts by their grade 9 and 10 (14-16 and 15-17 –year old) counterparts. Using an experimental design, the study looked into the interaction effects of the treatment with combined strategies and the gender of the participants (male versus female) and the school type of the study participants (control versus experimental, using a mixed method factorial design where the variable of the treatment conditions with two levels (control versus experimental) was used as an independent variable, the variables of gender and school were used as moderator variable, and reading comprehension as dependent variable.

The combined strategy instruction consisted of graphic organizers, visual displays, mnemonic illustrations, computer exercises, predicting, inference, text structure awareness, main idea identification, summarization, and questioning on improving the reading comprehension of narrative texts for students with dyslexia in grades 7 and 8 (12- 14 and 13-15-year –old). However, the study which combined strategy instruction did not include

computer exercise for students with dyslexia in grade 9 and 10 (14-16 and 15-17 –year old), and the expository texts and not the narrative ones were used in grades 9 and 10 (14-16 and 15-17 –year old). Results showed that the public-school participants who received combined strategy instruction outperformed their private school counterparts in reading comprehension achievement. This may mean that combined teaching method is effective in helping children with learning disability, specifically, dyslexia.

Jaffe (2013), explored whether read-aloud strategy have a greater impact on pupils' comprehension when numerous factors are taken into consideration. It will be determined why read-aloud have a greater impact on student comprehension. Data were collected through numerous observations, interviews, assessments, in a read-aloud session with four second grade males. Based on the results from this study, it is proclaimed that read-aloud strategy have greater impact on pupils' comprehension. The use of read-aloud in a classroom setting will lead to higher levels of participation and engagement among students and eventually lead to student independence.

Oueini, Bahous and Nabhani (2008), conducted a study over ten weeks with fifty-three, 5 to 6-year-old kindergarteners from economically disadvantaged homes learning French as a second language. The read-aloud strategy consisted of two teachers reading story books to children and explaining unfamiliar words. The teachers engaged children in meaningful discussions about the text, involving logical and critical thinking. Data were collected through observations, conferences with children, and children's writing samples. Findings revealed gains in children's vocabulary and comprehension skills. Students were able to use the new vocabulary words and

engage in analysis and synthesis as they participated in discussions of the real-aloud stories. Although the findings of Oueini, Bahous and Nabhani study is insightful, the design they adopted made no way for a lot of respondents to be used. this current study made use of mixed method design that helped the researcher to include 30 basic schools and 95 teachers in a survey.

Challenges teachers face in teaching pupils' with reading difficulties

Gündoğmuş (2018), sought to identify the difficulties that primary school teachers experience in the primary reading instruction. The study sample was made up of 51 primary school teachers selected by criterion sampling as a type of purposive sampling. The qualitative method was used for the research. The instrument used was a semi-structured interview guide. Teacher opinions were taken purposely to identify the difficulties which they experienced when teaching primary pupils reading and writing. The data obtained from these interviews were analysed by the content analysis method. The study revealed that the difficulties they encounter include; poor parental support for pupils with reading difficulties, unreadiness of pupils for classroom learning activities, lack of professional development, frequent pupil absenteeism, lack of interest by pupils in reading, and inadequate teaching and learning materials. Gündoğmuş' study and the current study differed only in methodological approach. As the former made use of qualitative design, the latter utilized a mixed method approach where quantitative data was mixed with in-depth views of respondents.

Bano, Jabeen and Qutoshi (2018), explored parental role as a problem in developing reading habits among pupils. The study was conducted in one of the private schools of Gilgit city situated in the Northern part of Pakistan.

Using a case study design, semi-structured interviews were used for data collection, which enabled the researchers to capture qualitative experiences, opinions, beliefs and perceptions of purposefully selected research participants. The data were analysed using thematic analysis approach and emerging themes were represented in the form of figures to provide a clear understanding. The results of the study confirmed that reading habits, for example, out of school reading and reading for pleasure, have influenced academic performance and parental role is pivotal in developing children's interest in reading. The findings confirmed that if parents focused on reading improvement of their children in early ages, they could better develop reading as a routine activity.

Yussif (2017), investigated problems that war against teaching of reading fluency. The study employed action research. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 36 participants: 6 out of 32 teachers and 30 out of 817 pupils from Ridge JHS 'A'. The instruments used to collect data were teacher interviews and teachers/pupils' observations. Themes were drawn from the responses of the participants and analysed manually using the constant comparative method. The findings revealed that challenges that act as impediments to teaching and learning of English comprehension included: inadequate teaching-learning materials, uncondusive classroom atmosphere for learning, lack of good reading foundation in the English language and pupils' truancy. Yussif's study is limited only to the point that the study findings cannot be generalized to teachers outside the schools used because of the design that was used (i.e. action research). This study therefore made use of mixed method design where two data set were nested together.

Akubuilu, Okorie and Onwuka (2015), investigated the causes of reading readiness deficiency and ways of improving reading readiness among pupils. Using documents content analysis, the study identified factors such as socio-economic background, physical abnormalities, mental imbalance, lack of interest, and unfamiliarity with symbols and teachers' inability to help pupils as causes of reading readiness deficiencies. The study also suggested ways of improving reading readiness and recommended that parents should provide books and stimulating reading environments for their children and helps them cultivate the habit of using their leisure to read for pleasure. The usage of document analysis by Akubuilu, Okorie and Onwuka may deny them from information about other problems that teachers face as they implement the school curriculum. The current study therefore took data from teachers who are the implementors of the curriculum but did not depend on document as the former study did.

Gender difference in the teaching of reading

Murphy, Eduljee, Parkman and Croteau (2018), examined differences in gender, preferred teaching methods, and classroom participation activities for preservice teachers. Significant gender differences were obtained for four clusters of the preferred teaching methods (films, classroom discussion, experiential activities, and student presentations) with males indicating greater level of agreement than females.

Ghaleb, Abdulwahed, Hatem (2017), investigated the differences between male and female teachers' strategies used in teaching English language in elementary schools in the United Arab Emirate. Using a mixed method design, a questionnaire and focus group interviews were used as the

two main tools for data collection. Results show some significant differences between male and female teachers in the strategies they use in their classes.

Biria and Mirzaie (2015) investigated the relationship between gender and English teaching and learning. A sample of 87 teachers were selected by using a convenient sampling method. An observation checklist and two questionnaires were used for collecting data. The results showed that the difference between male and female teachers with respect to their pedagogical rhetoric in L2 classrooms was indeed significant, with females gaining a higher mean score than male teachers.

Differences in teaching strategy based on teachers' experiences

Morayo (2015), examined some teachers' demographic variables and how they impact on their classroom interaction patterns. The descriptive design of the survey type was employed. The population for the study comprised all English language teachers in Ado-Ekiti. Four teachers were purposively selected as the sample and data were collected through classroom lesson observations. The recorded lessons were transcribed using Hillman's 1997 new coding system to categorise them into seven categories called pedagogical moves. These coding were later subjected to statistical analyses. Results obtained showed that none of the demographic variables of gender, qualification and years of experience had any significant relationship with the teachers' patterns of interaction. The weakness of Morayo's study rest on the fact that only four teachers were used as respondents of the study. The current study, however, made use of 95 teachers in a survey and in addition, interviewed nine (9) teachers from three different districts.

Ratliff (2014), sought to determine kindergarten teachers' perceived knowledge of the informational text Common Core State Standards in Virginia. A population of 185 kindergarten teachers in 15 West Virginia counties were targeted. A developed questionnaire was mailed to respondents. Respondents were also given the option of participating in a follow-up telephone interview and interviewees were asked a series of questions based on a researcher-developed interview protocol. Respondents that participated in the interviews were asked if they were willing to be observed by the researcher for 30 minutes during reading instruction and an observation checklist was used to guide the time spent in the classroom. Statistically significant differences were found among the ability to implement the informational text Common Core State Standards based on years of experience teaching kindergarten. Even though, significant differences exist among teachers based on experience, Ratliff's study made no attempt to find out the perception that teachers had about pupils with reading difficulties that brought about the difference. This current study therefore, explored the perception that teachers had about pupils with reading difficulties.

Summary of literature Review

In the review, reading difficulty was identified as a contemporary challenge that need to be understood better and managed efficiently. Reading difficulty was conceptualised as an obstacle in reading for children who possess the intelligence, motivation and education necessary for developing accurate and fluent reading. To put the study in its rightful theoretical context, sociocultural theory of Vygotsky was review. Cardinal to the theory was the idea that what learners can do with the adult guidance or in collaboration with

more capable peers today (ZPD), will be what they will be able to do independently later.

Empirically, literature in the area of methods of teaching struggling readers were reviewed. It is important to note that, studies reviewed in this study were not conclusive on specific types of classroom procedures that work best for pupils with reading difficulties, even though several methods were outlined by several scholars to be effective. The inconclusive nature of findings on effective methods for teaching pupils with reading difficulties calls for more empirical investigations. In the light of this issue, this study sought to investigate teachers' perception about the impact of strategies they use in teaching pupils with reading difficulties.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The chapter discusses how the study was conducted. It discusses research design, population and sampling procedure. Again, it covers the research instruments (including the pre-testing that was done) used and the data collection procedure. Finally, how the data was collected and analysed has also being explained.

Research Design

A concurrent embedded mixed method design was used for this study. This research strategy can be identified by its use of one data collection phase, during which both quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously (Creswell, 2003). The researcher found this approach useful because, the mixing of the data from the two methods would help to integrate the information and compare one data source to the other (Halcomb & Andrew, 2009). Moreover, this approach provided an overall composite assessment of the problem (Halcomb & Andrew, 2009). Furthermore, the researcher used quantitative data to answer different research questions, while the qualitative aspect helped to answer different set of research questions. This design served the purpose of presenting broader perspective as a result of using different methods as opposed to using a predominant method alone (Creswell, 2003).

Most convincingly, this research design has several advantages; first, a researcher is able to collect the two types of data simultaneously, during a single data collection phase (Creswell, 2003). Second, it provides a study with the advantages of qualitative and quantitative data. In addition, by using the two different methods, a researcher can gain perspectives from the different types of data or from different levels within the study (Creswell, 2003). However, there are limitations to the use of this design. The data need to be transformed in some way so that they can be integrated within the analysis phase of the research (Creswell, 2003). In addition, if the two databases are compared discrepancies may occur that need to be resolved (Creswell, 2003). The researcher therefore transformed the data appropriately and also integrated the data at the analysis and interpretation phase well so as to minimise the effects that accompany this design.

Study Area

Central region of Ghana is the area for this study. The Central Region occupies an area of 9,826 square kilometers, which is about 6.6% of the land area of Ghana. It is bounded in the south by the Gulf of Guinea, on the west by the Western region. The region shares a border on the east by the Greater Accra region and in the north with the Ashanti and the north east with the Eastern region. The capital is the historical city of Cape Coast.

The Central region has an estimated population of 1,805,487 (Census, 2010) and an annual population growth rate of 2.1%. It now has 13 administrative districts, thus 12 districts and 1 Municipality. With a population density of about 162 inhabitants per square kilometers, the Central region has about 63 % of the region towns to be rural (Census, 2010). The Cape Coast

district is the smallest in size but least deprived, while Asikuma Odoben Brakwa district is the most deprived.

Adult literacy rate in the region is slightly more than 50%, with the highest being 75.3% in Cape Coast and the lowest 45.2% in Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese. There is a larger proportion of literate males (69.8%) than females (46.3%). The region is predominantly Akan, who constitutes more than 90% of the population in six districts and account for at least 60% in the remaining five districts. Majority of the Akans are Fantes, the indigenes of most districts in the region. The region is also on the topmost of all the regions when it comes to children below the ages of 15 dropping out of school (Randel, Moore & Blair, 2008; GNA, 2016). Even though the high percentage of the cause of school dropout has been attributed to socio-economic background of the children involved, part of the blame has also been apportioned to the difficulty experienced in learning academic tasks by most of these children while in school (Randel, Moore & Blair, 2008). Most definitely, the difficulty of reading might be the bed rock of all difficulties faced by struggling schoolers since efficient reading is required in understanding all other disciplines. This situation makes it ideal for the study to be conducted in Central region to explore the possible impact of teachers' pedagogies on reading.

Population

Population refers to all individuals of interest to the researcher (Marczyk, DeMatteon & Festinger, 2005). Agyedu, Donkor and Obeng (as cited in Ogah, 2012) also explain population as a set of individuals (objects, subjects, events) that have common observable characteristics for which a

researcher is interested. According to Amedahe (2002), the criteria for the inclusion of a unit in a survey are based on characteristics of respondents who are eligible for the participation in the survey.

The study targeted 10 schools each from three districts within Central Region. The targeted districts were: Assin South district, Gomoa West district and Komenda Edina Eguafo-Aberim Municipality. Although there were 12 districts and one Municipality in Central region, the study made use of the “adjudged best”, (Assin South district) and poorly performed district (thus, Gomoa West district) in the 2017 League Table. Komenda Edina Eguafo-Aberim (KEEA) was also included because it was the only Municipality as at the time the study was conducted. Since the prime purpose of the study was to investigate perceived impact of teachers’ instructional strategies on children with reading difficulty, the researcher thought of making use of only teachers from the schools of the three selected districts as the population of interest. Each district had more than 10 schools however, the researcher made use of first five and last five schools that appeared on the 2017 education league table reported by Ghana News Agency (GNA), 2018. In this case, for the three districts 30 schools were targeted with the corresponding number of teachers for the upper primary teachers estimated to be 95 teachers. Out of the 95, 53 of them were male while 42 were female. The distribution of schools for each district is shown in Table 1.

Table 1- *Distribution of Schools in the Districts*

Districts	Name of Schools	Number of Upper Primary Teachers
Assin South	Asamankese T. I. Ahmdiya Primary	3
	In God We Trust Primary	4
	Jakai D/A Primary A	3
	Jakai D/A Primary B	3
	Amoabin D/A Primary	3
	Kwaata D/A Primary	3
	Dawomako D/A Primary	4
	Homaho D/A Primary	3
	Tebil D/A Primary	4
	Manso D/A Primary	3
Gomoa West	Ajumako-Ankamu D/A Primary	3
	Abonko Methodist Primary	3
	Amenfi-Bewadze D/C Primary	3
	Ankamu Islamic Primary	3
	Dawurampong Cath Primary	3
	Abrekum D/A Primary	3
	Sampa D/A Primary	3
	Kokofu Muslims Primary	3
	Oguaa M.D.C.C. Primary	3
	Akyemfo D/A Primary	3
KEEA	Shafrif Islamic Primary	3
	Bronyibima Primary	4
	Komenda Basic Primary	3
	Aburansa Primary	3
	Agona Methodist Primary	3
	Mental Basic Primary	3
	Catholic Girls Primary	4
	Catholic Boys Primary	3
	Essaman United Primary	3
	Etsiapa Methodist Primary	3
Total		95

Source: Ghana league Table, 2017.

All the 95 upper primary teachers shown in Table 1, served as the accessible population for the study. The accessible population is the

population in research to which the researcher can apply their conclusions (Kothari, 2004).

Sampling Procedure

The sampling procedure was a multi-stage one. The first stage involved the selection of schools from the three districts selected for the study. In the selection of the schools, the researcher used purposive sampling method to pick the first five best and first five poorly performed schools on the 2017 League Table for each of the three-districts selected. This was to allow a fair representation of teachers from the already mentioned category (poor and achieving) of schools to be represented. In this case for each of the district, 10 schools were picked to represent the schools in the district in terms of performance. The second stage of the sampling process involved the selection of teachers from the selected schools to serve as the respondents of the study. In this process, the researcher obtained a sampling frame for teachers from the various districts.

The observation made was that the total population of the upper primary teachers in the selected schools was 95 (Refer to Table 1). The researcher considered the total population of teachers to be relative smaller hence, used census approach to involve all the teachers as respondents of the study. This decision was taken by the researcher because she was interested in arriving at a precise conclusion or prediction about the impact of teachers' strategies for teaching on pupils with reading difficulties, for this cause, census was appropriate (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). On the third stage of the sampling process, the researcher used simple random procedure

(specifically, lottery method) to select three teachers from each of the districts selected for an interview as part of the research process.

Data Collection Instruments

This section describes the research instruments that were used to gather data. These were questionnaire, interview schedule and an observation guide. A questionnaire was chosen because it is effective for collecting data from a large number of people within the shorter possible time (Amedahe, 2002). Again, interview schedule as a data collection tool was chosen because of its ability to give focus to the interviewer and the interviewee to solicit an in-depth information and offer the research respondents the opportunity to say what they think with greater richness and frankness (Amedahe, 2002). The two instruments were developed based on literature in the area. The following were details of how the instruments were developed.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire used for teachers was made up of four sub-sections numbered 'A' to 'D'. The section A constituted the background information of the teachers. The components for this section were, gender, age-range, number of years taught as a teacher and qualification of the teacher. Section B constituted 10 items measuring teachers' perception of children with reading difficulty. The items for this section were crafted by adapting the instruments for measuring teachers' perception about specific learning difficulty in two different studies, these are Alkharusi (2018) and Dev and Kumar (2015). Section C of the questionnaire was about 'instructional strategies' used by teachers in the regular school to teach children with reading difficulty. Seven

items were crafted for this sub-section based on two different studies (Boges, 2015; Awanda, 2014) from the literature reviewed.

Section D which was the last subsection for the questionnaire elicited information on the “perceived impact” of instructional strategies of teachers on pupils with reading difficulties. Ten items were crafted by adapting the instruments of Oluranti (2014) study about the impact of regular teachers’ instructional strategies. After thorough proof reading of the items to check for all grammatical inconsistencies, the items were put together as a single instrument on a four-point Likert kind of scale ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, agree and strongly agree. The instrument was however forwarded to the study supervisors for professional scrutiny before pilot testing it. This was purposely for face validity checks (Creswell & Zhang, 2009).

Interview schedule

The instrument was made of two sub-sections with seven items. The interview schedule was developed such that the researcher would get the overall view of the challenges that teachers face in the teaching of pupils with reading difficulty. The first question elicited information on issue about challenges that teachers face relating to the characteristics of the child. The second question was about the challenges that teachers face. These were related to teaching and learning materials availability whereas the third question elicited information on challenges related to the cooperation of parents of the children with learning disability. Finally, the fourth question elicited information on challenges of the reading curriculum.

Pilot Testing the Questionnaire

The adapted questionnaire was pilot tested using 30 basic school teachers from ten basic schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed to check the discriminant and convergent validity of the instrument. The questionnaire was administered to the ten teachers in the selected school by the researcher. The responses given by respondents were used to refine the questionnaire (Amedahe, 2002). For example, on the instructional strategies sub-scale, the word ‘pedagogy’ was not understood by respondents, and so it was changed to the word ‘strategies’. The pilot-testing was necessary because it enhanced the content validity and reliability of the instrument, and to improve questions, format and scales after careful analysis of the items based on the comments passed by respondents concerning the weaknesses, clarity and ambiguity on all aspects of the questionnaire (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

In addition, the pilot-testing provided the opportunity in assessing the appropriateness and practicality of the data collection instrument. Also, it tested the adequacy of the procedures that were used for the study. On the whole, the pre-testing helped to fine-tune the instrument (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

Credibility

Credibility refers to the level of acceptability; how acceptable or credible is the research? The criterion of credibility (internal validity) can be met by two standards; the use of more than one research method, and the use of respondent validation. The former refers to the use of more than one method to ensure complementarity of findings. The latter refers to the findings

of the research being sent to participants for their comments. This means that comments and conclusions can be supported or rejected by respondents, and with that (if necessary) readjusted to best represent the nature of the concept investigated (Bryman, 2008). In this research, the researcher used more than one method to make sure there is complementarity of findings. The data interpretation write-up, discussion and conclusions were forwarded to 60 (more than half) respondents via email for their comments. All the respondents supported the fact that what the researcher had shown them was exactly what they said.

Dependability

Dependability refers to the level to which a research is reliable. For a qualitative research to be reliable, complete records of the research data and process must be made available to others; all interviews, observations and interview guides, and also given sufficient information on the research methods used (Bryman, 2008). With these records, there should be a possibility of other researchers to conduct the same research by using the exact same methods and participants. The keeping of such records further gives the opportunity for another person to check whether your data is sufficient and whether your interpretations and conclusions are convergent with your data or not (Bryman, 2008). For this research it implies that all methods used for the research is mentioned, that the data presented are accurate to the information gathered, and that conclusions are drawn on the basis of that data.

Confirmability

This is the research criterion of objectivity. Objectivity is said to be weak in qualitative research. It can be argued that full objectivity is not

possible when researching social phenomena. However, as a researcher, using the qualitative approach, it is important that one's own values, thoughts and assumptions do not interfere with the presentation and analysis of the data collected. It is important that it is the voice of the respondents that is represented in the discussions and conclusions (Bryman, 2008). As mentioned earlier, playing back the recorded tape to the respondents before final analysis of the data can ensure greater objectivity and the avoidance of wrong interpretations of their thoughts and actions (Bryman, 2008).

Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations in social research primarily entails the notions of informed consent, confidentiality and ethical review board's assistance. Informed consent entails the researcher to give accurate information about the aims of the research to the respondents (Kothari, 2012). In this research, the researcher informed the respondents about the topic and purpose, and why the researcher was interested in using them. Further, the researcher asked all respondents (teachers) whether she could use them for the study or not. Confidentiality, on the other hand, also involves concealing information given and high level of anonymity (Bryman, 2008; Patton, 2002). In this regard, names and locations of the schools and teachers are not indicated in this study. This is especially important with regards to the schools and teachers, so that teachers' classroom practices and personal impressions and experiences of children with reading difficulties are not tracked. The respondents were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any point if they so wish. Finally, the researcher obtained a letter from the Ethical Review Board,

University of Cape Coast, for clearance before the commencement of the data collection procedure (See Appendix B).

Data Collection Procedure

Quantitative part

An introductory letter was taken from Department of Education and Psychology, University of Cape Coast. Copies of the introductory letter were made and submitted to Education directorate for the various districts for the directors' briefing and permission. Permission was granted and the participating schools informed. For ethical reasons, at the schools, the rationale for the study and all other ethical issues involved in the study were explained to the respondents. Three weeks was used in administering the questionnaires to all the sampled teachers at their respective schools. In all, the response rate for the data collection exercise was 100% which is deemed appropriate (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010)

Qualitative part

All interviewees (n=9) were given copies of the interview schedule to study before the interview was conducted. This was to facilitate interaction between the interviewer and the interviewees. The interviewees were given the opportunity to choose the time, date and venue in order not to disrupt their normal schedules. Additionally, they were assured of confidentiality and also that at no point in time would their identities be revealed. No respondent was pressured or forced to participate in the study. The principles of informed consent and voluntarism were strictly adhered to (Denscombe, 2010). Even though the interviewees were given the option to choose where the interview

should be conducted (home or school), all of them opted to be interviewed at the school.

To ensure that the data were accurately recorded, permission was sought from the interviewee to tape-record the session. Furthermore, after the interviews, the tape was played back to each interviewee. This was to enable respondents to cross-check comments and the information recorded or simply validate what they had said during the interview.

Data Processing and Analysis

The completed questionnaires were serially numbered for easy identification and were coded. The completed and returned questionnaires totaled 95 for the teachers. Items on the four-point Likert scale were scored 4, 3, 2 and 1 with the response strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree, respectively. Items in the negative were reverse coded.

Research questions 1, 2 and 4 were analysed using mean and standard deviation. This technique was ideal because it helped the researcher to understand the homogeneous or otherwise heterogeneous nature of the responses and draw a conclusion out of that.

Data to answer hypothesis 1 was tested using an independent samples t-test. The reason for the choice of this statistical tool was because two groups were to be compared. Again, data to answer hypothesis 2 was tested using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The reason for the usage of this statistical tool was due to the fact that the researcher was interested in comparing three groups with respect to the methods they use when teaching pupils with reading difficulties.

Analysis and coding of the interview data

For research question 3, thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used. Thematic analysis “is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail” (Braun & Clarke 2006, p.79). The general approaches to analysing qualitative data were considered (Creswell & Zhang, 2009). The steps were:

1. Organising and preparing the data for analysis.
2. Reading through the data for familiarisation.
3. Coding the data.
4. Using the coding process to generate themes or descriptions.
5. Describing how the descriptions and themes will be represented in the analysis.
6. Making interpretation or meaning of the data.

The analysis was conducted thematically, building on the steps outlined above.

The following section describes how it was done.

Familiarisation with the data

The audio recordings of the interviews were listened to repeatedly for familiarisation purposes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Each interviewee was given a numeric code for easy referencing (Bishop & Colby, 2002). The code assigned was based on the order in which the parents were interviewed (1-20). The recording of each interview was typed verbatim and hesitations and pauses were noted (McLellan, Macqueen & Neidig, 2003). The goal was to preserve originality and ensure that no information was misinterpreted or lost.

The transcribed version was read through while listening to the audio tape several times to ensure there were no omissions. Each interview was then summarised. Doing this helped to conceptualise what the interviewees said and identify similarities and differences in their statements. It also drew attention to the close link between the research questions and the responses given. Additionally, general notes and comments were written about initial thoughts and relevant issues that were starting to emerge from the data. This stage subsumes the first two stages in the approach to qualitative analysis suggested by Creswell and Zhang (2009). The modifications made to this phase of thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006) was to give each interviewee a code and to write the summary of each interview.

Generating initial codes

Coding is part of analysing qualitative data and helps the researcher to think critically about the meaning of the data (Bryman, 2008). The units of analysis were identified. These are described as the basic text unit that contains the essential idea in relation to the research questions (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). The similar essential ideas were colour-coded, underlined and notes made to make meaning of the text (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process was guided by the general topics under investigation. To address coding of multiple issues in a single response, I split the response into segments and coded them under the appropriate theme or sub-theme.

Searching for themes

The structured interview schedule had predefined main themes that were closely linked to the research questions and the quantitative data. However, I was able to identify one main theme that was not predefined. This

was ‘problems relating to teaching of reading difficulties. The subthemes however, were not predefined, but rather identified from the data. The process of arriving at the final subthemes or ideas involved constant referral to the transcribed interviews and the already identified ideas/themes; if they matched existing ones, I added them, if not, they were named and included. This exercise helped me to see how the different parts of the data fitted together to form a whole and helped to generate a framework for the analysis.

Defining and naming subthemes

I read the coded data and the illustrative extract of the responses, and organised them into a coherent whole. I ensured that the names I had given to the subthemes were concise to immediately give the reader a sense of what the theme is about.

Producing the report

In writing the findings chapter of the study, all the ideas were reviewed and put under themes. The main themes were selected and included in the final report. This offered the opportunity for the “selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature. The selections of verbatim extracts included in the final write-up were chosen from the pool of responses based on their detail, clarity, relevance and vividness. Also, the number of responses used to support each theme varied; this was to lay emphasis and also to illustrate the different aspects of the responses to that particular theme. I tried to go beyond just describing the data to interpret the results obtained in the analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter, the data collected from the respondents were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations, independent samples t-test, One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The qualitative data was also analysed with thematic analysis and the results was presented with discussions.

Gender Distribution of Respondents

Out of a census sampled size of 95 teachers, 53 (56%) teachers were male, while 42 (44%) teachers were female. Gender information is shown in Table 2. The data suggest that upper primary level of Central Region schools is dominated by men. This was observed consistently across the three districts selected for the study.

Age-range of Respondents

The item 2 of the questionnaire sought to find out the age-range of the sampled teachers for the study. Table 2 shows the age-range of respondents.

Table 2-*Gender and Age-range and Experience of Respondents*

Variable	Sub-scale	No.	%
Gender	Male	53	56
	Female	42	44
	Total	95	100
Age (in years)	21-25	2	2
	26-30	25	26
	31-35	34	36
	36-40	22	23
	41-45	-	-
	46-50	-	-
	51-55	-	-
	56-60	12	13
	Total	95	100
Years of teaching	Less than 3yrs	5	5
	3-6yrs	17	18
	7-10yrs	36	38
	Above 10yrs	37	39
	Total	95	100

Source: Field survey, (2019)

Table 2, shows that majority (n=34, 36%) of the respondents (teachers) were between the ages of 31-35 years. This was followed by a number (n= 25, 26 %) of the respondents who lie between the ages of 26 and 30. Moreover, 22 of the respondents representing 23% were in the age category of 36-40 years. For the teachers who had less than 10 years to retire, that is in the age category of 56-60 years, they numbered 12 representing 13%. Finally, respondents in the age category of 20-25 were in the minority (n=2, 2 %). The import of this information is that, majority (n= 61, 64 %) of the respondents were relatively young teachers who have the zeal and enthusiasm whom when committed can use varieties of strategies to assist pupils with reading difficulty. The study

also investigated the number of teachers based on the district or municipal category. Summary of the analysis is in Table 3.

Table 3-District/Municipality of teachers

Districts/Municipal	Frequency	%
Assin South	32	34
Gomoa West	28	29
KEEA	35	37
Total	95	100

Source: Field survey, (2019)

Table 3, shows that majority (n= 35, 37%) of the respondents sampled for the study were from Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrim Municipality. Thirty two of the respondents representing 34% were taken from Assin South and Gomoa West was in the minority (n= 28, 29 %) with respect to the number of respondents that were taken from the district. The significance of this data is on the fact that the sub-sample from each of the district represent ten schools each in the districts. The number (n= 95, 100 %) of respondents (teachers) adequately represent the number of teacher population who teach upper primary for the three districts. The fact is that the sample procedure used in this study allowed for all the accessible population to be used.

Results of the Research Questions

This section of the study presents results and discussions as obtained from the data gathered from participants. In gathering the data, a questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale was used and it was coded as Strongly Agree (SA)=4, Agree (A)=3, Strongly Disagree (SD)=1 and Disagree (D)=2. In this case, the highest score was 4, lowest score 1 and cut-off average score for

interpretation was 2.5. The summary of the results and the discussions are shown in the tables below.

Research Question One: What is the perception of regular school teachers in the Central Region about reading difficulties?

The research question sought to explore respondents’ (teachers) perception about reading difficulty. The data was collected using a questionnaire and the analysis was done using mean and standard deviation scores. Summary of the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4- *Teachers Perception about reading difficulty*

Statements	Mean	Std.
Pupils with reading difficulty make regular school teaching very difficult.	3.3	.61
Inadequate teaching can make pupils poor readers.	3.1	.84
Teaching pupils with reading difficulty requires extra classroom instructional time.	3.5	.56
Pupils with reading difficulty have behavioural problems.	2.4	1.1
Pupils with reading difficulties are not teachable.	1.6	.73
Reading difficulty is a neurological condition.	2.4	.96
Reading difficulty is caused by our educational system in the country.	2.9	.95
The home environment plays a role on pupils’ reading ability.	3.6	.54
Teaching pupils who have problems with reading to be efficient readers is a difficult task.	3.0	.89
Poor readers often perform poorly in all other aspect of academic work.	2.9	1.2
Average Mean and Std. Deviation	2.6	.84

Source: Field survey (2019)

From Table 4, based on the cut-off score, respondents agreed ($M= 3.6$, $SD=.54$) to the statement that “The home environment plays a role on pupils’ reading ability.” This is to say that the child is a poor reader because the home environment of the child was not supportive. This is followed by respondent’ agreement ($M=3.5$, $SD= .56$) of the fact that “Teaching pupils with reading difficulty requires extra classroom instructional time.” Again, on respondents supported ($M= 3.3$, $SD= .61$) the idea that “Pupils with reading difficulty makes regular school teaching very difficult.” Reading difficulty seen as emanating from inadequate teaching of pupils were also supported ($M= 3.1$, $SD= .84$) by the respondents. Furthermore, respondents also agreed ($M=2.9$, $SD= .95$) on the statement “reading difficulty is caused by our educational system”. However, there were some ideas that respondents rejected as being the cause or part of reading difficulty. For example, respondents disagreed ($M= 2.4$, $SD= .96$) that reading difficulty is a neurological condition. Again, they disagreed ($M= 2.4$, $SD= 1.1$) that pupils with reading difficulty have behavioural problems. On the grounds that reading difficulty is not a neurological condition, they further disagreed ($M= 1.6$, $SD= .73$) that pupils who have difficulty in reading are not teachable.

All in all, the mean of means scores ($M= 2.6$, $SD= .84$) suggests that teachers have negative perception about reading difficulty even though they do not think reading difficulty is a neurological problem. They have the opinion that reading difficulty makes regular school teaching difficult. Again, reading difficulty requires extra teaching time and the fact that inadequate teaching can lead to reading difficulty. Further, teachers have the perception that reading difficulty exists because of the kind of educational system that we

have. In this case, teachers are more likely to see themselves as not part of the problem.

Research Question Two: What instructional strategies do teachers in the Central Region use to support pupils with reading difficulties in an inclusive classroom?

The research question sought to investigate the instructional strategies that respondents use in helping pupils with reading difficulty. Questionnaire helped in the collection of the data and the analysis was done using mean and standard deviation scores. Summary of the analysis is shown in Table 5.

Table 5-*Instructional strategies that teachers use to support pupils with reading difficulty*

Statements	Mean	Std.
I write key words on the board and ask pupils to pronounce them after me.	3.7	.51
I use pictures and other objects for my children to make connections between words and the associated objects.	3.2	.76
I ask pupils to read aloud.	3.5	.59
I ask pupils to explain in their own words how they understand what they have read.	3.3	.65
I sometimes make my pupils listen to stories in oral audio tape format and ask them to mention new words that they heard in the story.	2.0	.94
I encourage my pupils to read faster to improve their reading.	3.0	.94
I give room for peer correction, self-correction and later teacher correction.	3.1	.84
I employ “role play” to encourage pupil-pupil communication.	2.7	.83
I use literary texts to teach reading.	2.8	.77
I ask pupils to do a group activity about what they have read.	2.9	.84
Average Mean and Std. Deviation	3.0	.77

Source: Field survey (2019)

From Table 5, respondents agreed (M=3.7, SD= .51) that when teaching pupils with reading difficulty, they write words on the board and ask

pupils to pronounce them after me. When respondents were provided with the statement “I ask pupils to read aloud,” they agreed (M= 3.5, SD= .59). This is probably because the pupils were first assisted to pronounce key words to aid their reading aloud. This is followed by the agreement (M=3.3, SD= .65) of the strategy in which teachers ask pupils to explain in their own words how they understand what they have read. Moreover, respondents agreed (M= 3.2, SD= .76) that they use pictures and other objects for pupils to know the connection between those words and their associated objects. Again, when posed with the statement, “I give room for peer correction, self-correction and later teacher correction,” respondents agreed (M= 3.1, SD= .84). After respondents agreed (M= 2.9, SD= .84) on group activity and literary text usage (M= 2.8, .77) as strategies, respondents further indicated (M= 3.0, SD= .94) that they encourage pupils to read faster to improve their reading. Role play as a strategy to encourage pupil to pupil communication was also agreed (M=2.7, SD= .83) on.

In a nut shell, the mean of mean scores (M= 3.0, SD= .77) support the fact that respondents are of the view that beginning lesson with writing of key words, helping pupils to read aloud, allowing pupils to explain what they read in their own words are effective strategies for teaching pupils with reading difficulty. In addition to the already mentioned strategies, respondents believe that the use of literary text, role play and group activities are among the effective strategies for teaching pupils with reading difficulty.

Research Question Three: What is the perceived impact of the instructional strategies that teachers in the Central Region use to support pupils with reading difficulties?

This research question sought to find out the impact of instructional strategies on children with reading difficulty as perceived by respondents. Questionnaire was used to measure the data and the analysis was done using mean and standard deviation scores. Summary of the analysis is shown in Table 6.

Table 6- *Perceived impact of instructional strategies on pupils with reading difficulty*

	Mean	Std.
The practice of introducing the lesson with keywords in the passage helps engage the pupils to actively get involved in the reading lesson.	3.8	.39
Literary text usage as a strategy for teaching reading help pupils to interact with each other to get better understanding of the passage.	3.3	.62
The instructional strategies that I use help me to practically demonstrate the content of the text.	3.3	.52
Pupils are able to model the content of what they read in class on their own because of the use of role-play in teaching reading.	3.2	.59
Pupils are able to maintain optimum attention in class because of the use of pictures and objects when teaching reading.	3.6	.62
The use of group work strategy helps pupils to do more reading with friends during their leisure time.	3.4	.71
Encouraging pupils to read louder helps them to be corrected whenever they miss a word.	3.5	.74
Encouraging pupils to read faster boost their confidence in reading.	3.4	.74
Pupils are able to develop collaborative skills through reading in groups.	3.3	.71
The use of reading aloud strategy helps pupils to develop listening skills.	3.6	.48
Average Mean and Std. Deviation	3.4	.61

Source: Field survey (2019)

Table 6, reveals that respondents agreed (M= 3.8, SD= .39) to the statement, “The practice of introducing the lesson with keywords in the passage helps engage the pupils to actively get involved in the reading lesson.”

This is followed by respondents' agreement ($M= 3.6$, $SD= .62$) of the statement, "Pupils are able to maintain optimum attention in class because of the use of pictures and objects when teaching reading" and "The use of reading aloud strategy helps pupils to develop listening skills". Again, respondents agreed ($M= 3.5$, $SD= .74$) that encouraging pupils to read louder helps them to be corrected whenever they miss a word. Moreover, respondents approved ($M= 3.4$, $SD= .71$) of the fact that the use of group work strategy helps pupils to do more reading with friends during their leisure time. They (respondents) believe ($M= 3.4$, $SD= .74$) that encouraging pupils to read faster boost their confidence in reading. Moreover, respondents accepted ($M= 3.3$, $SD= .71$) that pupils are able to develop collaborative skills through reading in groups. Furthermore, respondents agreed ($M= 3.2$, $SD= .59$) that when a teacher uses role play technique, pupils are able to model the content of what they read in class for better learning.

All in all, the data appears to suggest that the use of strategies such as the use of: Introduction of key words at the beginning of a lesson, read aloud strategy, pictures and objects, group activity and role play have great positive effect on the pupils with reading difficulty. Data gathered have shown that the strategies help the pupils to actively get involved in the reading lesson especially, the use of 'introduction of key words' strategy. Again, pupils with reading difficulty are able to pay maximum attention when pictures and objects are used to teach reading. Pupils' confidence in reading as well as listening skills are enhanced with the use of read aloud strategy. Furthermore, the use of group activity strategy also helps pupils to learn collaborative and

peer tutoring skills. Finally, the use of role play helps pupils to model the content they read in class which help them to understand what they read.

Hypothesis One: There is no statistically significant difference between male and female teachers in the Central Region with respect to instructional strategies used in the inclusive classrooms. The hypothesis sought to find out whether significant differences exist between male and female teachers with respect to their choice of instructional strategies for teaching pupils with reading difficulty. The hypothesis was tested using independent samples t-test at 0.05 alpha level. Detail of the results is shown in Table 7.

Table 7-Independent Sample t-test of teachers' instructional strategies based on gender

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value
Male	53	31.13	4.3	2.31	93	.023
Female	42	29.05	4.4			

Source: Field survey (2019); $\eta^2 = .054$

The data was tested for two primary assumptions; Normality and Equality of variances assumption. First, in checking the normality assumption, a histogram graph was inspected. The output of the graph showed that, the normality assumption was not violated. Secondly, the data was also checked for “equality of variance” assumption. This was done by inspecting the Levene’s test for equality of variances. This actually test whether the variation of scores for the two groups (Male and Female) is the same. After thorough inspection, the significance level of Levene’s test is ($p=.496$). This shows that equality of variances assumption was not violated.

The independent samples t-test for equality of means shows statistically significant difference, $t(93) = 2.31, p = .023$. This implies that

there is a calculable difference between male (M= 31.13, SD= 4.3) and female (M= 29.05, SD= 4.4) teachers with respect to their use of instructional strategies. The magnitude of the differences in the mean scores was moderate ($\eta^2=0.54$) (Cohen, 1988).

Hypothesis Two: There is no statistically significant difference among teachers in the Central Region on the kind of instructional procedures they adopt based on their experience.

This hypothesis sought to investigate the difference in use of instructional strategies with reference to teachers’ years of teaching. One-Way Analysis of Variance was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level. Summary of the results is shown in Table 8.

Table 8-ANOVA Test for instructional strategies based on teaching experience

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Between groups	103.392	3	34.464	1.762	.160
Within groups	1780.397	91	19.565		
Total	1883.789	94			

Source: Field survey (2019)

The data was tested for “Homogeneity of Variances” assumption. In the light of this, Levene’s test was inspected and the significance value of the test was (p=.395). The significance value suggests that variances within the factor are assumed equal hence, Homogeneity of variances assumption was not violated.

One-Way between group analysis of variance was conducted to explore the differences that exist among respondents in terms of their

instructional strategies based on the number of years they had taught as teachers (experience). The factor, that is ‘experience’ comprised; less than 3 years, 3-6 years, 7-10 years and above 10 years. Analysis of the data revealed that, there was no statistically significant difference at the $p < .05$ level in the choice of instructional strategies for the four groups [$F(3, 91)=1.762, p=.160$]. This suggests that “teacher experience” does not matter when it comes to strategies that they use in teaching pupils with reading difficulty. All teachers irrespective of the number of years taught tend to use the same set of strategies to help improve the reading fluency of the children.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

The researcher interviewed six teachers, that is two teachers from each district. The aim of the interview data was to address research question 4. The interview data was collected using an interview schedule and the analysis was done using Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis approach. Detail of the analysis are shown below.

Research Question Four: What challenges do teachers in the Central Region face when teaching pupils with reading difficulties?

The research question sought to investigate and outline the challenges that teachers face when teaching pupils with reading difficulty. Interview data was taken from the respondents and analysed as follows: After the coding of the data had been successfully done, the following themes emerged for further analysis. They include:

1. Inadequate teaching and learning materials.
2. Lack of Parental involvement in the children’s education.

The views of respondents were presented based on the up listed thematic areas which were seen by respondents as the problem areas impeding the smooth teaching of children with reading difficulty.

Inadequate teaching and learning materials

The first and most prominent theme that resonated in every single interview was inadequate teaching and learning materials (TLMs). Even though the interview sessions were different for each of the six respondents, the same question was posed to all of them concerning teaching and learning materials. The researcher asked: Do you have a problem relating to availability of adequate TLMs for your class?

Respondent 1, 32years, Assin South, responded this way:

“Well, I think if you ask of problems then you have asked the right question. The truth is TLMs are major problem in this school but for this class we are even worse of. When it comes to TLMs, they are woefully inadequate. It will interest you to know that a class of 32 children we have only 10 English reading books, how do you expect me to teach them reading?”

The emotional response of respondent 1 (teacher) appears to suggest that indeed, the inadequacy of reading books was a problem to the class. On this same issue, **Respondent 2, 35years, Assin South, answered:**

“For me I think I have several problems in this class but if I should narrow it down to problems that confront my teaching of reading, then I can say we don’t have reading books. We don’t have some at all. I always have to painstakingly write a whole passage on the board before I can teach reading and comprehension. Things like small small dictionaries, literature books and story books are all needed but we do not have them”

Respondent 2, acknowledges that the problems are many for him in the class, however, narrowing it down to what impedes the teaching of reading, he suggested that not having reading books for the children is the foremost challenge. As if it were not enough, the respondents in the other districts enumerated their challenges in a like fashion:

Respondent 3, 28years, Gomoa West, says:

“I am actually tired for this teaching job, since I started teaching for five years now, I have complained to my head several times but not having reading books continue to be a problem in this class”.

Respondent 4, 31 years, Gomoa West, intimated:

“Oh, for problem, the only problem that I have is that our text books are not enough. We are 38 in class but our books are only 25 in number and even with the 25 some are torn apart”

Respondent 5, 42 years, KEEA, responded this way:

“I have some books but they are not enough. We are left with about five more reading books before it will be up to the number of my children in the class. Because of that I put them into groups when I am teaching reading and comprehension”

Respondent 6, 29 years, KEEA, also say:

“Yes! I have a single reading book which is in good shape, the rest are torn apart that if you put them together you don’t get all the pages. I actually came to meet them in this state. So, you see, that is my problem. Also, we do not have charts and dictionaries too”

Clearly, respondents’ responses indicate that they do not have enough English reading text books that would support them in the teaching of reading.

On this premise, the researcher was interested to know how the situation of not having enough reading books do affect children with reading difficulty. A follow-up question was asked: How does the situation of not having enough English reading books affect your teaching of children with reading difficulty? The responses of respondents were as follows:

Respondent 1, 32years, Assin South:

“Because 32 children have to share 10 English reading books, I normally put the pupils into groups, in this case I do not get enough time to attend to the children with reading problems one after the other. The truth is that we are many but the books are not there”

Respondent 2, 35years, Assin South:

“My sister, because I always have to write the whole passage on the board before I start teaching them, I always do not get enough time to specially attend to children with reading problems.”

Respondent 3, 28years, Gomoa West, also had this to say:

“You see, ideally, when you are teaching reading and comprehension, all the children are supposed to be following you while looking through their own books but this is the case that the books are not enough so if you put them into groups, they get distracted by friends and do not follow as you want them to do”

Interestingly, the response of the fifth respondent was quite different from what the earlier respondents have said about the effect of inadequate English reading text books on children with reading difficulty.

Respondent 4, 31 years, Gomoa West:

“Well, the effect is actually on me and not the children. Because you see, I put them into groups and ensure that the few children who are unable to read properly sit in the middle so they can see the words well. After arranging them this way, I ensure that they are not distracted by the other children so that they can get the what we are doing. In this way the work has become difficult.”

The last two respondents comment on the follow-up question, however, was in line with the earlier respondents. They responded as follows:

Respondent 5, 42 years, KEEA:

“Because the English reading books are not many, I always have to write the passage on the board and because of that, we do not get enough time to read one after the other. I think the children will suffer this way”

Respondent 6, 29 years, KEEA:

“If you do not English reading books, how can you teach children how to read?” This was a rhetorical question so he continued by adding that:

“What I do is that, I normally write the passage on the board and use it to teach the children. This is not good because, poor reader need encouragement and not embarrassment. Occasionally, what happens is that, if you call him or her to read the text on the board, if he/she makes mistake and the friends begin to laugh their confidence drop and this tend to affect them.”

From the above responses, it is clear that teachers perceive the inadequate text books as the first and foremost challenge or problem that prevent efficient teaching of children with reading difficulty. Respondents further mentioned the effect of inadequate English reading text books to include the fact that; first it denies teachers of adequate instructional time to

teach reading since part of the time is spent on writing the passage on the chalk board. Secondly, teachers are unable to give individualized attention during reading so as to help the weak ones. Finally, since, mostly pupils are put into groups, the poor readers get distracted and are unable to follow the reading sessions well.

Lack of parental involvement in the children's education

One of the key themes concerning the challenges that teachers face in the teaching of children with reading difficulty was noted to be lack of parental involvement in the children's education. Most of the respondents (n=4) indicated that lack of parental involvement in the education of children with reading problems is not encouraging at all. The respondents gave the following responses:

Respondent 2, 35years, Assin South, had this to say:

“Hmmm, the community is such that if people bring their children here, that is all. They do not for once, within the term pass by to even ask whether the child's performance is good or not”

The respondent further intimated that:

“You see sometimes, the parents think that if they pay their wards a visit, we will be bothering them with financial issue but that is not the case, if you need to buy something, for that one, I will tell you”

Respondent 4, 31 years, Gomoa West, said that:

“I don't think that word you are talking about (i.e. making reference to parental involvement) exist in the confines of this school and for that matter this class. Six of my pupils are very poor readers, they just don't know how to

read. I have personally contacted the parents to come but to no avail. What else can I do again my sister?"

Respondent 5, 42 years, KEEA:

"As for the parents of the children in this class, if you do not call them, they will not come oooo. I think you understand what I want to say? Yes! If you don't call them, they will not come. I feel their commitment as far as their children schooling is concern is not encouraging. That is all that I can say for now"

Respondent 6, 29 years, KEEA:

"Madam researcher, let me tell you in this community, the problems that the parents of the children that we have here are thinking about, I can tell you that their children reading problems are not part of it. For example, this child (name withheld) is a poor reader. At the beginning of the term I called for the father that he should come for us to discuss how we can help the child both at school and home. Hmm, my sister, we are in the 8th week now he has not step foot here" He continued:

"It is good that you are researching into this, please for this school, parents are not cooperative at all"

Even though majority of the respondents (teachers) indicated that parental cooperation in the school is low, two of the respondents gave a counter response. Their responses are transcribed as follows:

Respondent 1, 32years, Assin South:

"At least for the children who are experiencing reading difficulty in this class, I have contacted their parents and they're actually helping the situation. some of them pay us a visit at least three times a term which I think is ok. Some of

them have even given their children extra classes teachers at home and their reading is now improving day by day”

Respondent 3, 28years, Gomoa West:

“Oh! For the children who are poor readers in this class, I must say that their parents are very helpful. I think they are three in number, I mean three parents. For one of the parents, since the day that I notified her that the child is not doing well in reading, she comes here almost twice a week to find out how things are going.”

A follow-up question was asked. What is the negative effect of parents not collaborating with school teachers? In this question, the researcher was interested in finding out the adverse effect of parents not showing commitment toward helping children with reading difficulty. In this follow-up question, only two respondents were asked. Their responses are transcribed as follows:

Respondent 2, 35years, Assin South, said this:

“The issue is that, as a teacher I need the parents to provide certain things like pens, exercise books, English reading book for the child’s personal studies. When these things are provided, the child will be able to do his or her own personal studies at home. I must say that, it is the responsibility of the parents to make the child read at home. When these things happen, the condition of the child will improve drastically and everybody will be happy”

According to respondent 2, the primary roles of parents who have children with reading difficulty concerns provision of learning items like reading book, pens and exercise books as well as encouraging children to read at home as a way of revising what was taught in school. On the same issue,

Respondent 6, 29 years, KEEA, had this to say:

“Parental involvement is very important in a child’s education. As it is your responsibility to ensure that you tell your child to read at home. The more they read what was done in school, the more they become efficient readers”

Conclusively, information gathered from the interview sections appears to suggest that two major themes emerged (inadequate TLMs and lack of parental involvement) and they were the issues that were relevant to respondents as far as challenges relating to teaching of children with reading difficulty were concern. Merging the two views, it can be concluded that, inadequate teaching and learning materials such as English reading textbooks, charts, dictionaries, story books etc for the pupils and lack of parents not supervising their wards’ learning at home constituted the challenge that war against teaching children with reading difficulties.

Discussion

This section discusses the research findings in relation to perceived impact of teachers’ instructional strategies on children with reading problems. The discussion specifically addresses:

1. Teachers’ perception about children with reading difficulty.
2. Instructional strategies that teachers use in helping children with reading difficulty.
3. Perceived impact of teachers’ instructional strategies on children with reading difficulty.
4. Challenges that teachers face in the teaching of children with reading difficulty.
5. Differences in instructional strategies used by male and female teachers.

6. Differences in instructional strategies of teachers based on years of teaching experience.

Teachers perception about children with reading difficulty

Research question one sought to investigate upper primary teachers in some selected district in the Central region perception about reading difficulty. From the data analysis, results revealed that teachers have negative perception about reading difficulty even though they do not think reading difficulty is a neurological problem. They hold the opinion that reading difficulty makes regular school teaching difficult. Again, reading difficulty requires extra teaching time which make the job of the teacher very cumbersome. Further, they are of the perception that the home environment plays a role on pupils' reading ability which turn to later put burden on teachers. In this case, some pupils have reading difficulty because the families they are coming from did not support them. The findings of this study corroborate with several study findings in the literature. For example, Chuunga (2013), investigation of how teachers practise the teaching of reading (and writing) towards supporting learners with reading difficulties at the lower primary level in Zambia. In order to understand the phenomenon in depth, a qualitative approach was used with case study design. The findings reveal that teachers were trying their best however, they saw the task as a difficult one.

In another study, Bano, Dogar and Azeem (2012), investigated teacher's perception of what constitute reading difficulty and what educational implications they have and to determine if there was a difference in general education teachers and special education teacher's perception of reading difficulties. Main findings showed that the concept of reading difficulty is

perceived differently by the teachers of general education and that of special education. Teachers of special education had better perception of reading difficulty in children. In the same way special education teachers had better perception of characteristics of children with reading difficulty. However, the general education teachers (regular teachers) had negative perception about children with reading difficulty. It was therefore not surprising that this current study also found regular teachers in the selected districts in Central Region of Ghana, perception about reading difficulty to be negative. Timor (2012), also examined English Fluency Language (EFL) student-teacher's perceptions of FL learning problems with regard to the analogy to obesity and to measles from previous studies. Findings showed that the preservice teachers had negative perception about fluency learning problems (i.e. reading difficulties). It is possible that the negative perception of teachers about the condition of "reading difficulty" among pupils may be largely due to the absence of, or possibly, inadequate in-service training on how to teach pupils with reading difficulty as earlier found by (Grönblad, 2013).

Instructional strategies that teachers use in helping pupils with reading difficulty

The research question on this theme sought to investigate the frequently used strategies for teaching children with reading difficulty among the samples investigated. The respondents outlined strategies such as; beginning lesson with writing of key words (mostly on the chalkboard), helping pupils to read aloud (especially the key words before the text), allowing pupils to explain what they read in their own words, the use of literary text, role play method and group activity method. It is worthy of

mentioning that a lot of strategies for teaching pupils with reading difficulty exist in practice but the above listed strategies were those that were frequently used by the study respondents. In the literature, similar findings were noted. For example, in the literature, the practice of identification of key vocabulary or words and its meaning as shaped by the context were identified as relevant (Talley, 2017; Fisher & Frey, 2014). Again, teaching pupils monitoring strategy has also been identified as effective. This strategy requires teachers to demonstrate how to monitor one's own reading by using 'read aloud' (McEwan-Adkins, 2007).

Moreover, making use of groups as a strategy for teaching struggling readers has been identified to be feasible. Talley (2017), examine the most effective teaching strategies that are implemented in the classroom to meet the needs of struggling readers. The findings revealed that role play, poetry and group work were the common strategies used in teaching struggling readers. Chuunga (2013), investigated how teachers practice the teaching of reading (and writing) towards supporting learners with reading difficulties at the lower primary level in Zambia. The findings revealed that teachers used traditional direct group teaching and one on one method for those who had severe reading problems. One might ask or desire to know the possible reasons for the usage of group activity in particular, in the teaching of children with reading difficulty.

Perceived impact of teachers' instructional strategies on children with reading difficulty

Research question three was used to solicit data to address this aspect of the study particularly, concerning the perception of teachers regarding the

impacts of the strategies they use in teaching children with reading difficulty. Findings revealed that the use of strategies such as the use of; introduction of key words at the beginning of a lesson, read aloud strategy, pictures and objects, group activity and role play have great positive impact on the pupils with reading difficulty. Data analysis has shown that the strategies help the pupils to actively get involved in the reading lessons in class especially, the use of 'introduction of key words' strategy. Again, pupils with reading difficulty are able to pay maximum attention when pictures and objects are used to teach reading. Pupils confidence in reading as well as listening skills are enhanced with the use of read aloud strategy. Furthermore, the use of group activity strategy also helps pupils to learn collaborative and peer tutoring skills. Finally, the use of role play helps pupils to model the content they read in class which help them to understand what they read. The findings are in line with earlier findings in the literature.

Oluranti (2014), examined the various strategies teachers use in supporting learners with specific learning difficulties (such as reading difficulty) in an inclusive classroom. The findings revealed that the use of concrete objects such as pictures, smart boards, films, etc is considered an effective strategy in supporting learners facing difficulties. In the case of teachers within the three-district selected within the Central Region of Ghana, the researcher's observation revealed predominant usage of pictures and charts during reading lessons in class. Yusuf (2015), investigated the impact of interactive activities (group work) on students' performance in reading comprehension. The findings suggest that interactive activities are helpful in understanding and comprehending written. It also helps teacher to see how

students' individual thought processes are working with the information received from texts. Moreover, Alabsi (2016), explored the impact of role play method in the teaching of vocabulary to struggling readers. In a quasi-experiment, the mean score of the experimental group (taught with role play method) was significantly higher than that of the control (taught with traditional method). The evidence supports the beneficial effect of incorporating role-play in EFL teaching. In addition, Alessandra (2012), explored whether read-aloud strategy have a greater impact on pupils' comprehension when numerous factors are taken into consideration. The study revealed that read-aloud strategy have greater impact on pupils' comprehension. Furthermore, direct instruction where teachers begin with writing key words on the chalk board and drill pupils on the words before engaging them to read the text was identified as an effective strategy that support struggling readers fluency in reading (Borges, 2015).

Challenges that teachers face in the teaching of children with reading difficulty

This aspect of the study focused on reporting the problems that teachers encounter in the teaching of children with reading difficulties in the three selected districts within the Central Region. Respondents were interviewed to gather information to answer research question three which address this issue. Thematic analysis of the data revealed that, available but inadequate essential teaching and learning materials such as English reading textbooks, charts, dictionaries, story books etc for the pupils and parents not supervising their wards' learning at home constitute the problems that war against teaching children with reading difficulties. This finding supported

earlier studies. For example, Gündoğmuş (2018), sought to identify the difficulties that primary school teachers experience in the primary reading and writing instruction. Using an interview procedure to gather data, findings revealed that, the difficulties teachers encounter included; poor parental support for pupils with reading difficulty, unreadiness of pupils, lack of professional development, frequent pupil absenteeism, lack of interest by pupils in reading, and inadequate teaching and learning materials.

Moreover, Yussif (2017), investigated problems that militate against teaching of reading fluency. The study employed action research. The findings revealed that challenges that act as impediments to teaching and learning of English comprehension included: inadequate teaching-learning materials and unconducive classroom atmosphere for learning. From the studies (Gündoğmuş, 2018; Yussif, 2017), mentioned, it appears that teaching and learning materials are critical for effective teaching of children with reading difficulty. This is to say that; the absence of this materials tends to put teachers in a handicap position to help pupils with reading difficulties. Equally, it is worthy to note that parental support in the form of visiting the school of the child to inquire about progress, provision of essential materials such as personal reading books of the child, dictionaries, school uniforms etc and also supervising the child's reading at home are relevant. The absence of these tasks has the potency to stifle the child's reading progress no matter how hard teachers try to help (Bano, Jabeen and Qutoshi, 2018).

Differences in instructional strategies used by male and female teachers

Hypothesis one sought to investigate whether teachers differ on the usage of instructional procedures with respect to gender. Findings showed that

there was a statistically significant difference in the use of teaching strategies based on gender. In other words, male teachers were found to differ from their counterpart female teachers in the teaching strategies that they often use when teaching children with reading difficulty. The finding is in line with Murphy, Eduljee, Parkman and Croteau (2018) who obtained significant gender difference in the preferred teaching methods of teachers. Moreover, Ghaleb, Abdulwahed and Hatem (2017) investigated the differences between male-female teachers' strategies used in teaching English language in elementary schools in the United Arab Emirates. Results show some significant differences between male and female teachers in the strategies they use in their classes. Furthermore, in the same manner as earlier studies have found, Biria and Mirzaie (2015), investigated the relationship between gender and English teaching and learning. The results showed that the difference between male and female teachers with respect to their pedagogical rhetoric in L2 classrooms was indeed significant, with females gaining a higher mean score than male teachers.

Differences in instructional strategies of teachers based on experience

The second hypothesis sought to find out whether significant differences existed among teachers in their teaching strategies based on teaching experience. Results revealed that, there was no statistically significant difference in the choice of instructional strategies for teachers based on experience in the service. This is to say that teachers used the same teaching strategy when teaching children with reading difficulty without recourse to the number of years they have taught as teachers. There appears to be gap in the literature on the issue of differences in the use of strategies based

on years of teaching experience. However, the little empirical evidence available tend to be inconclusive. Morayo (2015), examined some teachers' demographic variables and how they impact on their classroom interaction patterns. Results obtained showed that years of experience had no significant relationship with the teachers' patterns of interaction.

Summary

The descriptive statistics (That is percentage and frequencies, mean and standard deviation), inferential statistics (i.e. t-test and ANOVA) tools and thematic analysis were employed in analysing the four research questions and two hypotheses. The findings are presented as follows:

1. Teachers have negative perception about pupils with reading difficulty.
2. Role play, read aloud, direct instruction and group activities were the frequently used strategies for teaching pupils with reading difficulty.
3. Frequently used methods for teaching pupils with reading difficulty in the districts were found to have positive impact.
4. Inadequate teaching and learning materials and low parental involvement were the two major problems identified to be encountered by teachers when teaching pupils with reading difficulty.
5. There was a statistically significant difference in the use of teaching strategies based on gender.
6. There was no statistically significant differences in the use of instructional strategies by teachers based on teaching experience.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of Research Problem and Research methods

The study sought to investigate perceived effect of teachers' instructional strategies on children with reading difficulty. A concurrent embedded mixed method design was adopted for the study. The study targeted schools within three districts (Assin South, Agona West and KEEA) in the Central Region. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to arrive at the required sample. On the first stage, a purposive sampling technique was used to select 10 schools from each district. On the second stage, census approach was used to involve all the teachers (n=95) from the selected schools because the number was considered as relatively small. Data was collected using questionnaire, interview schedule and an observation checklist. Quantitative data was analysed using mean and standard deviation, independent samples t-test and One-Way Analysis of Variance. Qualitative data was analysed using Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic approach.

Summary of Key Findings

Survey results revealed that teachers have negative perception about reading difficulty even though they do not think reading difficulty is a neurological problem. They are of the opinion that difficulty makes regular school teaching difficult. Again, reading difficulty requires extra teaching time

and the fact that the school system with the curriculum in place make some pupils poor readers.

Findings suggest that teachers within the two districts and the municipality selected frequently use teaching strategies such as; role play method, group activity, read aloud method, literary text and direct instruction (i.e. writing key word on the board, guiding pupils through before reading begins) when teaching pupils with reading difficulty.

Findings further suggested that instructional strategies used by teachers help the pupils to actively get involved in the reading lessons in class. Again, pupils with reading difficulty are able to pay maximum attention in class due to the strategies that teachers use. Pupils confidence in reading as well as listening skills are enhanced.

Analysis of the data revealed that, available but inadequate essential teaching and learning materials such as English reading textbooks, charts, dictionaries, story books etc for the pupils and parents not supervising their wards' learning at home constitute the problems faced by teachers in the teaching of pupils with reading difficulty.

There was a statistically significant difference in the use of teaching strategies based on gender with males doing better. However, the study did not show any statistically significant differences in the use of instructional strategies by teachers based on teaching experience.

Conclusions

Based on the study findings it can be concluded that teachers are more likely not to commit themselves so much to helping children with reading

difficulty since they perceive ‘the teaching of pupils with reading difficulty’ as a tedious job attached to the teaching profession.

Teachers from the two districts and a municipality study are more likely to use role play method, group activity, read aloud method, literary text and direct instruction when the need arise to teach a pupil with reading difficulty.

Pupils with reading difficulty are able to participate in classroom instruction, maintain attention, gain self-confidence in reading as well as the skill for attentive listening when the right procedure such as those that are commonly used (e.g. Role play, direct instruction, group activity etc).

Children who exhibit reading difficulties are more likely not to improve in the near future if public school continue to run out of teaching and learning materials while parents also sit aloof and remain passive in their ward’s academic pursuit.

It can also be concluded that male teachers use different methods when teaching children with reading difficulty compared to their counterpart female. Further it can also be concluded that teachers from the two districts and the municipality do not differ in the methods that they use in teaching pupils with reading difficulty based on the number of years that he or she has taught as a teacher.

Recommendations

In line with the research findings and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made for policy and practice:

1. Ghana Education Service in collaboration with all the head teachers must organize regular workshop on ‘reading difficulty’ for teachers in

the two districts and municipality to resource the teachers on the dynamics of the condition to improve their view and knowledge about it.

2. Head teachers should at regular point in time encourage teachers through award schemes and recognition to continue using the effective methods such as role play, read aloud, group activity and direct instruction which they already know of.
3. Ministry of Education through the Ghana Education Service as a matter of priority should ensure that all the schools in the two districts and municipality as well as similar schools across the region and even in the country are provided with all the needed materials such as English reading text books, dictionaries, charts and all other relevant materials to assist teachers to teach reading effectively in schools.
4. Parents Teachers Associations, head teachers and teachers of the various schools in the three districts and across the region should as a matter of urgency educate parents about the need for them to assist their wards at home to read at home.

Suggestions for Future Research

The following are suggested for future research:

1. The study should be replicated in other regions to further explore the methods that teachers in those regions also use in teaching pupils with reading difficulty to make the findings of this study more generalizable.
2. Investigate stress and burnout and coping mechanisms of teachers who teach children with reading difficulty.

3. Difference in the attitude both regular and special school teachers in the teaching of pupils with reading difficulty.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

Telephone: 233-3321-32440/4 & 32480/3
Direct: 033 20 91697
Fax: 03321-30184
Telex: 2552, UCC, GH.
Telegram & Cables: University, Cape Coast
Email: edufound@ucc.edu.gh



UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

8th May, 2019

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

THESIS WORK

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: MS. FELICITY ADUSEI-BONSU

We introduce to you Ms. Adusei-Bonsu, a student from the Department of Education and Psychology, University of Cape Coast. She is pursuing Master of Philosophy degree in Special Education and she is currently at the thesis stage.

Ms. Adusei-Bonsu is researching on the topic: **“PERCEIVED IMPACT OF TEACHERS INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES ON CHILDREN WITH READING DIFFICULTY.”**

She has opted to collect data at your institution/establishment for her Thesis work. We would be most grateful if you could provide her the opportunity and assistance for the study. Any information provided would be treated strictly as confidential.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,


Theophilus Amuzu Fiadzomor (Mr.)
Senior Administrative Assistant
For: **HEAD**

APPENDIX B

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
ETHICAL REVIEW BOARD

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: CES-ERB/ucc.edu.gh/13/19-44 
Your Ref:

Date: March 4, 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH STUDY

Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. J. A. Omatosho
jomatosho@ucc.edu.gh
0243784739

Vice-Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. K. Edjah
kedjah@ucc.edu.gh
0244742357

Secretary, CES-ERB
Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
lforde@ucc.edu.gh
0244786680

The bearer Jelmy Adusei-Bonsu, Reg. No. EF/SDP/17/003 is an M.Phil. / ~~Ph.D.~~ student in the Department of Education and Psychology in the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana. He / She wishes to undertake a research study on the topic:

Perceived impact of teachers' instructional strategies on children with reading difficulty.

.....
The Ethical Review Board (ERB) of the College of Education Studies (CES) has assessed his/her proposal and confirm that the proposal satisfies the College's ethical requirements for the conduct of the study.

In view of the above, the researcher has been cleared and given approval to commence his/her study. The ERB would be grateful if you would give him/her the necessary assistance to facilitate the conduct of the said research.

Thank you.
Yours faithfully,



Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
(Secretary, CES-ERB)

APPENDIX C

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

THESIS TOPIC:

TEACHERS PERCEPTION OF THE IMPACT OF
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES ON PUPILS WITH READING
DIFFICULTY IN SOME SELECTED DISTRICTS IN THE CENTRAL
REGION

QUESTIONNAIRE ON TEACHERS INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire aims to collect data that will help the researchers to “investigate the instructional strategies teachers use in teaching children with reading difficulty” which is a chosen area of study. The exercise is for academic purpose only. Whatever information you give will be kept confidential. The questionnaire measures your perception regarding the phenomenon under study. Instructions to fill out the questionnaire are given at the top of each section. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Questionnaire Number..... Date.....

SECTION A:

BACKGROUND DATA OF RESPONDENT.

Please tick (√) or provide the appropriate response.

1. Gender

Male [] Female []

2. Age range

20 – 25 [] 26 -30 [] 31 – 35 [] 36 -40 [] 41-50 [] 51-60 []

3. Number of years taught as a teacher

Less than 3yrs [] 3-6yrs [] 7-10yrs [] Above 10yrs []

4. District/Municipality of your school

Assin South [] Gomoa West [] KEEA []

SECTION B

TEACHERS PERCEPTION ABOUT READING DIFFICULTY

For each of the statements, indicate by ticking (√) the extent to which you agree to them, use the following scale: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD).

NS	Statements	SA	A	SD	D
1	Pupils with reading difficulty make regular school teaching very difficult.				
2	Inadequate teaching can make pupils poor readers.				
3	Teaching pupils with reading difficulty requires extra classroom instructional time.				

4	Pupils with reading difficulty have behavioural problems.				
5	Pupils with reading difficulties are not teachable.				
6	Reading difficulty is a neurological condition.				
7	Reading difficulty is caused by our educational system in the country.				
8	The home environment plays a role on pupils' reading ability.				
9	Teaching pupils who have problems with reading to be efficient readers is a difficult task.				
10	Poor readers often perform poorly in all other aspects of academic work.				

SECTION C

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES THAT TEACHERS USE TO ASSIST
CHILDREN WITH READING DIFFICULTY**

For each of the statements, indicate by ticking (√) the extent to which you agree to them, use the following scale: More often (MO), Often (O), Not often (NO), Not Used (NU).

NS	Statements	More often	Often	Not often	Not used
1	I write key words on the board and ask pupils to pronounce them after me.				
2	I use pictures and other objects for my children to make connections between words and the associated objects.				
3	I ask pupils to read aloud.				
4	I ask pupils to explain in their own words how they understand what they have read.				
5	I sometimes make my pupils listen to stories in oral audio tape format and ask them to mention new words that they heard in the story.				
6	I encourage my pupils to read faster to improve their reading.				
7	I give room for peer correction, self-correction and later teacher correction.				
8	I employ “role play” to encourage pupil-pupil communication.				
9	I use literary texts to teach reading.				
10	I ask pupils to do a group activity about what they have read.				

Indicate if there is any additional strategy that you use-----

SECTION D

**IMPACT OF TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES ON
CHILDREN WITH READING DIFFICULTY**

For each of the statements, indicate by ticking (√) the extent to which you agree to them, use the following scale: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD).

NS	Statements	SA	A	SD	D
1	The practice of introducing the lesson with keywords in the passage helps engage the pupils to actively get involved in the reading lesson.				
2	Literary text usage as a strategy for teaching reading help pupils to interact with each other to get better understanding of the passage.				
3	The instructional strategies that I use help me to practically demonstrate the content of the text.				
4	Pupils are able to model the content of what they read in class on their own because of the use of role-play in teaching reading.				
5	Pupils are able to maintain optimum attention in class because of the use of pictures and objects when teaching reading.				
6	The use of group work strategy helps pupils to do more reading with friends during their leisure time.				
7	Encouraging pupils to read louder helps them to be corrected whenever they miss a word.				
8	Encouraging pupils to read faster boost their confidence in reading.				
9	Pupils are able to develop collaborative skills through reading in groups.				
10	The use of reading aloud strategy helps pupils to develop listening skills.				

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

The interview schedule is made up of two parts. The first part captures the demographic information of respondents. The second part captures challenges that teachers face in the teaching of pupils with reading difficulty.

Part A

Demographical Information

1. What is your Gender?
2. What is the highest level of your education?

Part B

Challenges that teachers face when teaching people with reading difficulty

1. Which characteristics of the students affect ability to read fluently?
2. How do the characteristics influence the ability of the student to read fluently?
3. What problem relating to availability of adequate teaching and learning materials do you have (if any)?
4. What is the cooperation level of parents of children with reading difficulty?
5. Which aspect of the English reading and comprehension curriculum do you find problematic?

APPENDIX E

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Prior to the commencement of the data analysis, the questionnaire was validated. Summary of the analysis of the results is shown in the CFA tables. This was done before the commencement of the entire data analysis of the study.

Factor Loadings (CFA)

Factor	Indicator	Estimate	SE	Z	p	Stand. Estimate
Perception of RD	P1	0.0790	0.0726	1.087	0.277	0.1303
	P2	-0.0591	0.0994	-0.595	0.552	-0.0709
	P3	0.0360	0.0670	0.537	0.591	0.0644
	P4	-0.5251	0.1236	-4.250	< .001	-0.5023
	P5	-0.6240	0.1269	-4.918	< .001	-0.8534

Factor Loadings (CFA)

Factor	Indicator	Estimate	SE	Z	p	Stand. Estimate
	P6	-0.2245	0.1242	-1.808	0.071	-0.2340
	P7	-0.2738	0.1234	-2.218	0.027	-0.2878
	P8	-0.0918	0.0714	-1.285	0.199	-0.1722
	P9	-0.0152	0.1101	-0.138	0.891	-0.0172
	P10	-0.0453	0.1367	-0.331	0.740	-0.0394
Strategies for RD	S1	0.1922	0.0547	3.513	< .001	0.3755
	S2	0.1600	0.0829	1.930	0.054	0.2115
	S3	0.1275	0.0653	1.953	0.051	0.2144
	S4	0.3406	0.0668	5.099	< .001	0.5239

Factor Loadings (CFA)

Factor	Indicator	Estimate	SE	Z	p	Stand. Estimate
	S5	0.3264	0.1009	3.233	0.001	0.3474
	S6	0.8085	0.0849	9.521	< .001	0.8607
	S7	0.5562	0.0809	6.879	< .001	0.6687
	S8	0.5982	0.0813	7.355	< .001	0.7190
	S9	0.4112	0.0803	5.118	< .001	0.5365
	S10	0.4462	0.0856	5.215	< .001	0.5324
Impact of strategies	E1	0.0988	0.0446	2.216	0.027	0.2578
	E2	0.3936	0.0681	5.784	< .001	0.6382
	E3	0.1558	0.0615	2.532	0.011	0.3024

Factor Loadings (CFA)

Factor	Indicator	Estimate	SE	Z	p	Stand. Estimate
	E4	0.1288	0.0719	1.790	0.073	0.2171
	E5	0.2819	0.0704	4.002	< .001	0.4573
	E6	0.4740	0.0745	6.360	< .001	0.6754
	E7	0.4919	0.0794	6.195	< .001	0.6666
	E8	0.3050	0.0876	3.482	< .001	0.4100
	E9	0.2808	0.0831	3.379	< .001	0.3978
	E10	0.1591	0.0559	2.848	0.004	0.3319

Source: Field Data, (2019), AVE: F1= 0.08, F2= 0.22, F3= 0.09

Model Fit

Test for Exact Fit

χ^2	df	p
983	402	< .001

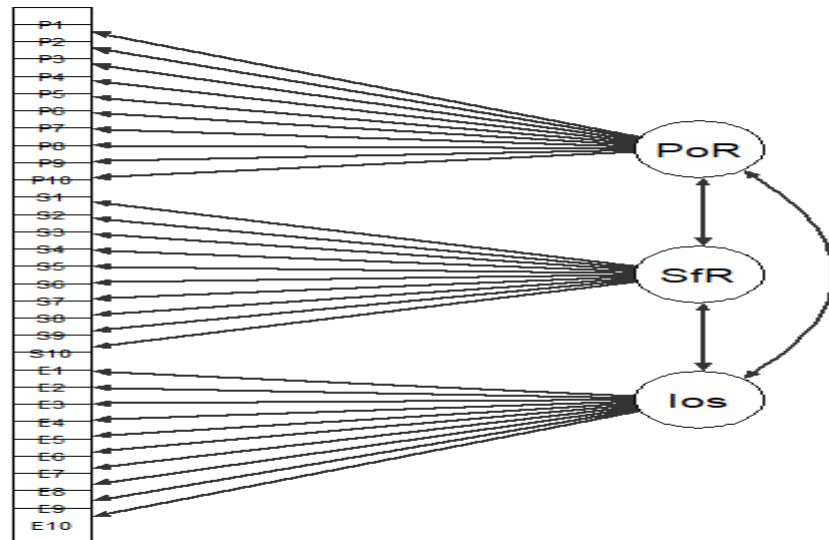
Factor Estimates

Factor Covariances

		Estimate	SE	Z	p	Stand. Estimate
Perception of RD	Perception of RD	1.00000 ^a				
	Strategies for RD	0.04661	0.129	0.3626	0.717	0.04661
	Impact of strategies	0.34219	0.135	2.5426	0.011	0.34219
Strategies for RD	Strategies for RD	1.00000 ^a				
	Impact of strategies	-0.00263	0.131	-0.0200	0.984	-0.00263
Impact of strategies	Impact of strategies	1.00000 ^a				

^a fixed parameter

Path Diagram



The overall Chi-square model fit index was significant $(402) = 983, p = .001$. This suggests that the data for this study accurately fit the model (latent construct of interest, i.e. perceived impact of teachers' strategies measured on a continuum). The factor estimate table also shows that the relationship between the three factors is not strong. Thus, 'Perception of RD' dimension did not relate to 'Strategies for RD' ($r = .04, SE = .129, p = .72$), however, 'Perception of RD' and 'Impact of strategies' were somewhat related but the relationship is not strong ($r = .34, SE = .131, p = .01$). The import of these factor covariances is that, the first two factors (Perception of RD and Strategies for RD) can be treated as a multidimensional scale if the intention is to use the scale for prediction. However, the first factor and the third factor (i.e. Perception of RD and Impact of strategies) could be treated as unidimensional scale in any regression-based analysis since they somewhat relate. A critical observation of the path diagram shows a covariate path between the 'Perception of RD' dimension and 'Impact of strategies' dimension. This corroborates the idea

already raised regarding the fact that both can be used as a unidimensional scale.

An observation of the 'factor loading' table show that out of the 10-item variables on the first factor, only three of them (item 4, 5 and 7) loaded well on the construct. The revealing aspect of it is that the Cronbach Alpha index for that subscale was .62, which shows that the items are not themselves bad rather it is possible that the sample size may have contributed to such a description. It must be noted that, the researcher of this current study had no intention to use the scale for prediction and hence, it is therefore justifiable for the scale results to be used in this study. On the other side of the coin, the items on the two other factors (i.e. Strategies for RD and Impact of strategies) loaded perfectly on the constructs of interest as shown by their p-values which are all less than .05. The Cronbach Alpha indexes of the two scales were .86 and .90 respectively.

Conclusive, Fornell and Larcker (1981) procedure for estimating construct validity, neither, Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) was followed. The reasons for this decision include the fact that the researcher was not interested in doing any prediction analysis and did not state a hypothesis for that. Moreover, the sample size of this current study (n=95) was somehow insufficient for the required sample size (i.e. above 150 cases) for Confirmatory Factor Analysis to be done (Pallant, 2010). The researcher, however, depended on the internal consistency of the items on each of the construct gauging it from the overall Cronbach Alpha index of the entire scale which was .92. The validation of the instrument was done before the entire analysis of the data begun.

APPENDIX F
CODING SCHEME

Main themes	Sub themes	Categories of codes	Examples of patterns of response
Availability of Teaching and Learning Materials		1. Teaching materials	“.... we do not have charts and dictionaries too” Respondent 6.
		2. Learning materials	“It will interest you to know that a class of 32 children we have only 10 English reading books, how do you expect me to teach them reading?” Respondent 1. “.....if I should narrow it down to problems that confront my teaching of reading, then I can say we don’t have reading books” Respondent 2.
	Unavailability of TLMs effect on teaching of reading comprehension.		“Because 32 children have to share 10 English reading books, I normally put the pupils into groups, in this case I do not get enough time to attend to the children with reading problems one after the other”. Respondent 1.
Parental		1. Visiting the	“----if people bring their children here, that is all. They do not for once,

involvement in the children education		child's school regularly	<p><i>within the term pass by to even ask whether the child's performance is good or not"</i> Respondent 2.</p> <p><i>"Six of my pupils are very poor readers, they just don't know how to read. I have personally contacted the parents to come but to no avail. What else can I do again my sister?"</i> Respondent 4.</p>
		2. Provision of extra tuition for the child at home.	<p><i>"At the beginning of the term I called for the father that he should come for us to discuss how we can help the child both at school and home."</i> Respondent 6.</p> <p><i>"At least for the children who are experiencing reading difficulty in this class, I have contacted their parents and they're actually helping the situation. some of them pay as a visit at least three times a term which I think is ok. Some of them have even given their children extra classes teachers at home and their reading is now improving day by day"</i> Respondent 3.</p>
			<p><i>"Parental involvement is very important in a child's education. As it is your responsibility to ensure that you tell your child to read at home. The more they read what was done in school, the more they become efficient readers"</i> Respondent 6</p>

	Effect of parental Involvement on the teaching of reading comprehension		<p><i>“The issue is that, as a teacher I need the parents to provide certain things like pens, exercise books, English reading book for the child’s personal studies. When these things are provided, the child will be able to do his or her own personal studies at home. I must say that, it is the responsibility of the parents to make the child read at home. When these things happen, the condition of the child will improve drastically and everybody will be happy” Respondent 2.</i></p>
--	---	--	---