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## Inclusive Schools' Teachers' Perspectives about the Academic Achievement of the Type of Emotional and Behavioural Difficulty

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### **Abstract:**

*Teachers in inclusive schools in Ghana are expected to have positive perception and believe in the Special Educational Needs children that they can achieve academically. This study was conducted in inclusive schools where teachers teach various children with special educational needs who have learning difficulties. The problem was that most teachers believe that children with emotional and behaviour difficulties cannot achieve academically. In all, there were 243 teachers and three educational directors involved in the study. The study revealed that majority of the teachers believe that children with emotional and behaviour difficulties cannot achieve academically. On the contrary, the Directors of Education who were involved in the study revealed that if children with emotional and behaviour difficulties are handled well, they can perform better, but the problem is about how to identify the needs of these children. The research confirmed that, the Directors of Education believe the children with emotional and behaviour difficulties can be high academic achievers provided there is a positive change in behaviour. The findings of this study have important implications for policy and practice for growth and performance of children with emotional and behaviour difficulties in Ghanaian schools.*

**Keywords:** Teachers, perspectives, academic achievement, emotional and behaviour difficulties

### **1. Introduction**

Most children with emotional and behaviour difficulties (EBD) are included in mainstream schools in Ghana. The policy of Inclusive Education which is being implemented in Ghana makes provision for this. The Inclusive Education policy is being implemented in the public basic schools in Ghana, and for such a policy to be successful, teachers need to have positive attitude towards EBD children in order to help them achieve academically. Apart from positive attitudes, there are other factors that have been identified as contributing factors towards the achievement of academic success. Some of these factors are working relations between the teachers (Pugach and Johnson, 1994), instructional approaches and curriculum innovations (Udavari-Solner & Thousand 1995). There are other factors like teacher's knowledge about the EBD children ([www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)). Irrespective of the professional skills and knowledge the teachers have, some teachers believe that children with EBD are unable to perform academically compared to their other counterpart that do not have EBD.

Several studies reveal that there is a huge gap in term of academic achievement when comparing children with EBD and their other counterpart who do not have EBD. The children with EBD performance are 1-2 years below grade level (Kauffman 2001; Reid et al. 2004; Trout et al. 2003). There are many academic areas where EBD show such deficits. These includes numeracy, writing, comprehension reading and vocabulary (Anderson et al. 2001; Coutinho 1986; Greenbaum et al. 1996; Lane et al. 2006; Nelson et al. 2003; Trout et al. 2003). Researchers have different views on whether the academic deficits of pupils with emotional and behaviour difficulties decline or increase with time. Some think children with EBD have deficits, while others think otherwise. The works of Anderson et al. 2001 & Nelson et al. 2004 reveal that pupils with EBD who have deficits in academic do not improve over time. For example, the study by Nelson (2004) and his colleagues on 155 pupils with EBD in K-12 indicates that certain aspect of deficit of EBD's student gets worse with time. Some researchers also posit that the deficit of children with EBD is stable over years which is evident in the works of Mattison et al. 2002, Reid et al. 2004 & Nelson, 2004.

Listen (2010) asserts that children with disabilities can achieve academically through improved accommodation and modification of instructions and classroom activities. Children with EBD can be academically good when they have the same playing field characterised by modified curriculum, a distinct teaching method delivered by trained and support staff. Accommodation and modification play a vital role in the academic performance of children with EBD although they are used interchangeably. Accommodation is any adjustment in teaching practice that makes the same teaching material accessible to pupil. In the classroom, accommodation by teachers can change their presentation or classroom setting among others. Some examples include making large-print book available to a visually impaired pupil. On the other hand, modification is any change that is made to make pupil's learning materials simple. Modification deals with how difficult a

material is and the level of mastery a pupil is expected to have. Some of these include bringing a pupil with hearing problems to the front row in the class as well as teaching pupils using simple techniques to do their assignment among others. Modification or accommodation must be done on individual basis because not all pupils have the same problems. To Lane et al. 2005a, EBD's pupils can improve academically when their teaching settings are changed. It is imperative for any school that seeks to make children with EBD achieve academically to have enough infrastructure to accommodate setting changes.

### 1.1. Previous Studies

A study conducted by Castro and Morgado (2004) on support teachers' beliefs about academic achievement of student with special educational needs which was guided by the questions on the factors that contribute to the academic achievement and academic failures of children with special educational needs revealed the very important findings. In this study, the researcher analyses the data collected from 76 support teachers. Castro and Morgado (2004) looked at the various themes like teaching approach, curriculum design, children characteristics, support teachers (Wang, et al., 1993), school climate (Anderson, 1985) and out-of-school contextual variables.

The research revealed that positive interactions is the means to successful planning and curriculum adaptations. Ysseldyke, et al. (2017) conducted a study about the academic growth expectations for children with emotional and behaviour disorders. In this study computer adaptive assessments were used to monitor the academic status and growth of students with emotional and behaviour disorders (EBD) in reading (N = 321) and Mathematics (N = 322) in a regional service centre serving 56 school districts. A cohort sequential model was used to compare that performance to the status and growth of a national user base of more than 7,500,000 students without disabilities. Consistent with numerous previous findings, status or level of performance of children with EBD was consistently low relative to their nondisabled peers. However, for the most part the children with significant EBD demonstrated rates of growth similar to the nationwide sample of nondisabled peers. There was considerable variability in the academic growth of children across grades and between treatment programmes

Another study conducted by Lane, et al, (2007) describes the academic, social, and behavioural performance of elementary and secondary children with emotional and behavioural disorders (EBD). These children with serious emotional disorders were obtaining services in a self-contained school. The study looked at how school adjustment and problem behaviour patterns predict academic performance. The study disclosed that elementary and secondary group scores were well below the 25th percentile on reading, math, and written expression measures.

Further, a seven variable model representing academic, social, and behavioural domains was able to differentiate between age groups explaining 54% of the variance and correctly classifying 78.26% (n = 18) of the elementary children and 84.21% (n = 16) of the secondary children. The outcome of the study suggested that behavioural variables for example, school adjustment, externalizing, and internalizing were predictive of broad reading and broad written expression scores, with school adjustment (a protective factor) accounting for the most variance in the three-variable model.

## 2. Research Methodology

The aims of the research were:

- To find out the type of emotional and behaviour difficulties that persist in Primary and Junior High Schools in Ghana.
- To examine the perception of inclusive school teachers on the type of emotional and behaviour difficulty children that can achieve academically.
- To examine the factors that inclusive school teachers think could help children with emotional and behaviour difficulties achieve academically.

The researcher adopted survey research design and employed mixed methods in gathering the responses of the teachers. The researcher used both the questionnaires and interview to collect the data from the teachers and the directors of education respectively. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analyse the data collected. Ethical considerations underpinning survey research were adhered to and all the respondents were assured anonymity. The participation in the research was voluntary, that no teacher was forced or enticed to participate in the research.

### 2.1. Population and Sample

The population of the study included teachers in inclusive schools. In all, there were 243 teachers involved in the study. These teachers were selected from inclusive schools from four selected Regions in Ghana. Teachers in inclusive schools were considered for this study because of their professional skills and knowledge in handling children with special educational needs. It is believed that the teachers implementing the inclusive education policy and are employed in inclusive schools should be in the best position to state if children with emotional and behaviour difficulties can achieve academic success in the schools implementing the inclusion policy.

### 2.2. Data Collection Tool and Procedure

The questionnaires designed were piloted before sending it to the field to collect teachers' responses. The questionnaire meant for piloting was given to three schools under Accra Metropolitan Education office. The schools selected were teachers teaching in inclusive Primary and Junior High public schools. The piloting was done to check for

clarity of the questions, whether the questionnaire covers the areas supposed to cover and also to check for face validation and the reliability of the questions. Test for consistency was conducted for the data collected for the piloting.

Three different set of questionnaire items were designed. The first set of questionnaires was meant for the teachers to identify the type of emotional and behaviour difficulties that were persistent in Ghanaian schools. The second questionnaire items were meant to solicit from the teachers about their belief that children with emotional and behaviour difficulties can achieve academically. The teachers were to indicate of the scale of 5 ranging from strongly agree to disagree. The behaviour types identified were summarised from the literature review of behavioural characteristics found in the various literature concerned with children with emotional and behaviour difficulties. The items on the questionnaire were piloted and analysed using Cronbach alpha and the result was as follows:

<b>Cronbach Coefficient Alpha</b>	
Variables	Alpha
Raw	0.964890
Standardized	0.962739

*Table 1: Cronbach Coefficient Alpha of The Type of EBD That Can Achieve Academically*

*Source: Field Data 2016*

The third set of questionnaires was meant to collect data from the teachers on the factors that contribute to the academic achievement of EBD children. There are various factors that contribute to the academic success of children with special educational needs. These factors relate to teaching methods, school climate, curriculum design, student characteristics and out of school programs that could help children with educational needs to be successful. The literature reviewed some factors that could help children with special education needs to achieve academic success and was used to design questionnaire to solicit from the respondents the factors they think are most contributing to the academic success of emotional and behaviour difficulties. These items were piloted before sending to the field and the Cronbach alpha result was as follows:

<b>Cronbach Coefficient Alpha</b>	
Variables	Alpha
Raw	0.945626
Standardized	0.945837

*Table 2: Cronbach Coefficient Alpha of factors that Contribute to academic success of EBD Children*

*Source: Field data 2016*

### 2.3. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used as the analytical tool and was done with the help of Scientific Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer software. Percentages, Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the data collected from the teachers. Some of the results were ranked in order of magnitude based on the responses from the teachers.

Demographic of respondents is presented in table 3

<b>Gender Distribution of Teachers</b>		
	No of Respondents	Percentage
Male	95	39.1
Female	148	60.9
Total	243	100.0

*Table 3: Gender Distribution of Teachers*

*Source: Field Data 2016*

Table 3 shows the gender distribution of teachers. Out of 243 respondents, 91 of them representing 39.1 per cent were male and 148, representing 60.9 per cent were female.

### 3. Results

The first questionnaire items were used to collected data from the teachers on type of emotional and behaviour difficulties they think that exist in Ghanaian schools. Table 4 presents the analysis of responses of the teachers who think these type of behaviour characteristics exists in Ghanaian Schools.

Behaviour Type	Persistent	Percentage (%)	Not Persistent	Percentage (%)	Rank
Rule breaking	215	88.5	28	11.5	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Self-injurious behaviour	102	42.0	141	58.0	27 <sup>th</sup>
Aggressive behaviour	179	73.7	64	26.3	10.5 <sup>th</sup>
Hyperactivity (short attention span, impulsiveness)	202	83.1	41	16.9	7.5 <sup>th</sup>
Development of physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems	152	62.6	91	37.4	14 <sup>th</sup>
Immaturity (inappropriate crying, temper tantrums, poor coping skills)	140	57.6	103	42.4	18.5 <sup>th</sup>
An inability to build and maintain relationships with peers and teachers	129	53.1	114	59.3	23 <sup>rd</sup>
Learning difficulties that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors (academically performing below grade level)	165	68.0	78	32.0	12 <sup>th</sup>
Noise Making	214	88.1	28	11.5	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Defiance (disobedience)	209	86.0	34	14.0	4 <sup>th</sup>
Fighting	208	85.6	35	14.4	5 <sup>th</sup>
Bullying	189	77.8	54	22.2	9 <sup>th</sup>
Disruptiveness (indiscipline)	202	83.1	40	16.5	7.5 <sup>th</sup>
Exploitive (oppressive, cruel)	127	52.3	116	68.3	24 <sup>th</sup>
Disturbed relations with both peers and adults	135	55.6	108	44.4	21 <sup>st</sup>
Selfish (self-centered)	157	64.6	86	35.4	13 <sup>th</sup>
Inconsiderate (uncaring)	142	58.4	101	41.6	17 <sup>th</sup>
Demanding (requesting for more all the time)	130	53.5	113	46.5	22 <sup>nd</sup>
Unapproachable (distant himself)	120	49.4	123	50.6	25 <sup>th</sup>
Remote (Quiet, secluded)	146	60.1	97	39.9	16 <sup>th</sup>
Impetuous (reckless, impulsive, rash)	136	56.0	107	44.0	20 <sup>th</sup>
Delinquency (criminal behaviour)	140	57.6	103	42.4	18.5 <sup>th</sup>
Truancy (not coming to school)	217	89.3	26	10.6	1 <sup>st</sup>
Dropping out of school	204	84.0	39	16.0	6 <sup>th</sup>
Attention problems –(Immaturity) These children may have attention deficit disorders, are easily distractible and have poor concentration and may not think about the consequences of their actions.	150	61.7	93	38.3	15 <sup>th</sup>
Anxiety/Withdrawal: These children are self-conscious, reticent, and unsure of themselves.	96	39.5	147	60.5	26 <sup>th</sup>
Psychotic behaviour: This student displays more bizarre behaviours than others do. They may hallucinate, may deal in a fantasy world, and may even talk in gibberish.	179	73.7	64	26.3	10.5 <sup>th</sup>
Motor Excess: Children with motor excess are hyperactive. They cannot sit still nor listen to others nor keep their attention focused.	50	20.6	193	79.4	28 <sup>th</sup>

Table 4: Behaviour Types Persistent In Ghanaian Schools

Source: Field Data, 2016

Truancy is the disturbing behaviour type that teachers recorded as most common in Ghanaian schools. Out of the 243 teachers, 217 teachers representing 89.3 per cent said truancy is the most persistent behaviour type that exist in schools and 26 of the respondents representing 10.6 per cent indicated it is not the behaviour type common in schools. This is evident in Table 4 where truancy is ranked 1<sup>st</sup> as most behaviour problem in Ghanaian in Ghanaian schools. Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> shows that rule breaking, as confirmed by 215 teachers representing 88.5 percent is a common behaviour type in schools while 28 of the respondents, representing 11.5 per cent did not confirm that is common in schools. Noise making with 3<sup>rd</sup> as its rank is also another behaviour problem among the children in inclusive schools. Respondent numbering 214, representing 88.1 per cent affirm that noise making is behaviour problem common in schools and 28 of the respondents representing 11.5 per cent do not see noise making as a problem in schools. Table 4 confirms this indicating 3<sup>rd</sup> on the rank. The respondent numbering 209(86.0%), having 4<sup>th</sup> as its rank indicated that children who show defiance are very common in schools while 34 respondents (14.0%) indicated that is not very common in schools. Fighting was identified by 208 respondents (85.6%) as common in Ghanaian schools while 35 respondents (14.4%) think otherwise representing a rank of 5. With a rank of 6, teachers 204(84.0 %) indicated that children dropping out of school is persistent in Ghanaian school while 39 of them (16.0%) think otherwise. The respondents 189(77.8%) think that bullying is persistent in schools as 54(22.2%) are of the opinion that is not a common characteristic.

On the other hand, most respondents 193(79.4%) think that motor excess, that is children who cannot sit still nor listen to others nor keep their attention focused is not very widespread in schools. Having the least ranking (28<sup>th</sup>), 50(20.6%) of the respondents think that there are children who show motor excess in schools. Self-injurious behaviour is also not seen as very persistent in schools as indicated by 141(58.0) as against 102 (42.0%) teachers who responded that it exists in schools. Most teachers 147(60.5%) were of the opinion that anxiety/withdrawal is common characteristics exhibited by children in schools. In contrast, 96 respondents (39.5%) think that anxiety/withdrawal is a characteristic persistent among children in schools representing a rank of 26.

The third questionnaire items required from the respondents to answer series of questions to ascertain the level of agreement held with the certain characteristics of children with emotional and behaviour difficulties and if these children can achieve academically. The researcher thought that if the teachers respond positively to the characteristics listed, then it is likely teachers will work harder to help these children with emotional and behaviour difficulties to achieve academically. Scores 1 to 5 were assigned to various items which are the characteristics of children with emotional and behaviour difficulties which form the scale on teachers' belief whether the children with these characteristics can achieve academically. Response to item indicating positive statement were scored with 5 indicating strongly agree, 4 equals to agree, 3 equals neutral, 2 disagree, 1 representing strongly disagree. The higher the mean score, the more positive the belief and the lower the mean score, the less positive the belief that children with emotional and behaviour difficulties can achieve academically.

Types of Behaviour	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Rule breaking	243	1.74	.947	.061
Self-injurious behaviour	243	1.83	.706	.034
Aggressive behaviour	243	1.85	.937	.060
Hyperactivity (short attention span, impulsiveness)	243	1.84	.946	.061
Development of physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems	243	1.87	.940	.060
Immaturity (inappropriate crying, temper tantrums, poor coping skills)	243	1.77	.912	.058
An inability to build and maintain relationships with peers and teachers	243	2.02	.966	.062
Learning difficulties that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors (academically performing below grade level)	243	1.66	.897	.058
Noise Making	243	2.09	.965	.062
Defiance (disobedience – breaking the rules)	243	1.83	.945	.061
Fighting	243	2.03	.962	.062
Bullying	243	1.99	.971	.062
Disruptiveness (indiscipline)	243	2.01	.968	.062
Exploitive (oppressive, cruel)	243	1.82	.936	.060
Disturbed relations with both peers and adults	243	1.87	.962	.062
Selfish (self-centeredness)	243	2.21	.938	.060
Inconsiderate (uncaring)	243	2.06	.949	.061
Demanding (requesting for more all the time)	243	2.17	.924	.059
Unapproachable (distant himself)	243	1.95	.948	.061
Remote (Quiet, secluded)	243	2.31	.909	.058
Impetuous (reckless, impulsive, rash)	243	1.78	.940	.060
Delinquency (criminal behaviour)	243	1.63	.901	.058

Types of Behaviour	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Truancy (not coming to school)	243	1.59	.888	.057
Dropping out of school	243	1.53	.849	.054
Attention problems -- Immaturity: These children may have attention deficit disorders, are easily distractible and have poor concentration and may not think about the consequences of their actions.	243	1.68	.906	.058
Anxiety/Withdrawal: These children are self-conscious, reticent, and unsure of themselves.	243	1.70	.912	.058
Psychotic behaviour: This student displays more bizarre behaviours than others do. They may hallucinate, may deal in a fantasy world, and may even talk in gibberish.	243	1.79	.896	.057
Motor Excess: Children with motor excess are hyperactive. They cannot sit still nor listen to others nor keep their attention focused.	243	1.84	.945	.061
Average of Averages		1.87		

Table 5: Can EBD Children Who Show Different Kinds Of Behaviour Characteristics Achieve Academically?

Source: Field Data 2016

From Table 5, it could be deduced that majority of the teachers believe that children with emotional and behaviour difficulties cannot achieve academically. This is supported with an average mean of 1.87. The mean of 1.53 and a standard deviation of 0.849 indicates that majority of respondent strongly agree that dropping out of school can make children not achieve academically. The teachers also agree strongly agreed that truancy and delinquency alsomake pupils not to achieve academically. This is evident in Table 5 showing a mean and standard deviation of 1.59,1.63 and 0.888,0.901 respectively.

Among respondents, almost half of them with a mean of 2.09 said that noise making prevents pupils from achieving academic success. On the selfish (self-centeredness) some teachers disagreed that pupils can achieve academically representing a mean of 2.21 and standard deviations of .938. Remoteness (quiet and seclusion) recorded a mean of 2.31 showing that teachers disagree that it accounts for pupils' academic non-performance.

The three education directors involved in the study expressed their views on teacher's belief about the academic achievement of children with emotional and behaviour difficulties.

Respondent # 1	Teachers believe if these children are handled well, they can perform better, but how to identify needs is the problem.
Respondent # 2	They belief they are low achievers and that teachers can do little or nothing about it. Others belief such children can be high academic achievers provided there is a positive change in behaviour so they try to help them or refer them to specialities.
Respondent # 3	Teachers believe that EBD children are Poor or low academic achievers.

Table 6: What Are the Teachers' Beliefs about Academic Achievement Of?

Children With Emotional and Behaviours Difficulties

Source: Field Data 2016

### 3.1. Factors That Contribute to Academic Success

The results were gathered from the Teachers on the perspectives of the factors that contribute to academic success and the analysis is shown in table 7.

Theme	Category	Yes	Percentage of Respondents	No	Percentage of Respondents	RANK
Teaching Approach	Teacher –Student Interactions.	233	95.9	10	4.1	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Instructional Approach.	194	79.8	49	20.2	5 <sup>th</sup>
	Class Room Resource Management.	209	86.0	34	14.0	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Student Progress monitoring.	210	86.4	33	13.6	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Quality and amount of education delivered.	188	77.4	55	22.6	6.5 <sup>th</sup>
	The Use of Devices to Monitor Children' progress.	188	77.4	55	22.6	6.5 <sup>th</sup>
	The Establishment of Classroom Routines.	196	80.7	47	19.3	4 <sup>th</sup>
School Climate	Characteristics of Their Physical Environment.	176	72.4	67	27.6	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Milieu Variables focusing on The Characteristics of Persons and Group Within the School Environment.	136	56.0	107	44.0	4 <sup>th</sup>
	Social System Variables Such as	83	34.2	160	65.8	5 <sup>th</sup>
	The patterns of interactions and relationships within a school.	194	79.8	49	20.2	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Culture variables including the values and beliefs of the Various groups within a school.	174	71.6	69	28.4	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Curriculum Design	Delivery of Instructional Materials and their organization and disposal.	200	82.3	43	17.7	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	The strategies set out in the curriculum and its instructional materials.	205	84.4	38	15.6	1 <sup>st</sup>
Student Characteristics	Children' Academic characteristics with particular emphasis on aspect such as retention or placement of special education structures	190	78.2	53	21.8	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Children' social characteristics with Emphasis on psychological aptitude and affective variables.	177	72.8	66	27.2	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Out-of-School Contextual Variables	Parental expression of interest that are reflected in children's school work.	205	84.4	38	15.6	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Parents' participation in school meetings.	210	86.4	33	13.6	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Parental expectation about educational success.	187	77.0	56	23.0	4 <sup>th</sup>
	Parental accompaniment and supervision of student s' learning activities.	214	88.1	29	11.9	1 <sup>st</sup>

Table 7: Factors That Contributes To Academic Success Of Children With Emotional Behaviour Difficulties

Source: Field Data, 2016

The respondents when asked whether if teacher-children interaction could contribute to academic success of the children with EBD children, 232 (95.9%) indicated 'yes' and 10 (4.1%) responded 'no'.

The teachers were told to indicate if a factor like instructional approach could help EBD children to achieve academic success. The analysis indicates that 194(79.8%) agreed that instructional approach is a factor that could help EBD children to achieve academically but 49(20.2%) indicated that instructional approach cannot help the EBD children to achieve academically.

Regarding classroom resource management, most teachers 209(86.0%) believe that children with special educational needs can achieve academic success if there exist, a good classroom resource management but 34(14.0%) of the teachers do not believe that classroom resource management could help the EBD to achieve academically. Student progress monitoring is very important in helping to improve academic success of EBD children. When the respondents were asked to indicate if they agree to this factor, 210(86.4%) indicated 'yes' and 33(13.6%) indicated 'no'. Respondents numbering 188(77.4%) believe that 'quality and amount of education delivered could help improve pupils with EBD achievement but 55 of the teachers representing 22.6 per cent did not agree that quality and amount of education delivered could the children with special education to achieve academic success. Establishment of classroom routines could help improve academic success of children with special educational needs. A total of 196(80.7%) respondents supported the view that establishment of classroom routines could help EBD children to achieve academic success but 47 respondents, representing 19.3 per cent indicated 'no' to the statement. Most teachers also believe that characteristics of the student's physical environment could enhance the children' academic achievement. This is evident in Table 5 where 176 (72.4%) teachers responded 'yes' to the question and 67(27.6%) of the teachers responded 'no'. Respondents were also asked if milieu variables focusing on the characteristics of a person and group within the school could help improve academic success of EBD children. Teachers numbering 136(56.0%) responded in the affirmative while 107(44.0%) responded 'no'. On the average, Table 5 clearly shows that teaching approach, school climate, curriculum design, student characteristics and out of school programs could help children with educational needs to be successful.

#### 4. Discussion

Problem behaviour is a challenge in many schools (Lewis, Barbara, Bruntmeyer, & Sugai, 2015). The study shows clearly that Emotional and behaviour difficulties exist in basic schools in Ghana. The commonest emotional and behaviour difficulty in schools in Ghana is truancy. The children do not like going to school. Children who are not frequent to school and not attending classes can be affected academically. Rule breaking is another behaviour type that is common in schools. If most children break school rules and is on the high, then it implies that schools need to be provided support to handle these children. The research revealed that noise making is common in schools and most children show disobedient and fight other children in school. Drop out was recorded as another high incident in schools. Conversely, the research revealed that the behaviour type which is not common in Ghanaian schools are children showing anxiety in terms of withdrawal from peers. It is also uncommon to see children who are unapproachable, exploitive and cruel in Ghanaian schools.

Almost all the teachers think that the children who show emotional and behaviour problems cannot achieve academically. This is supported by the assertion made by Anderson et al. 2001 & Nelson et al. 2004 that pupils with EBD's deficits in academic do not improve over time. The teachers also indicated that children who drop out from school, children who are truants, make a lot of noise, fight their peers, disobedient and many others cannot achieve academic success.

On the whole the teachers responded negatively to the characteristics listed that children with all the behaviour type can achieve academically. This is an unfortunate situation because teachers need to have positive attitude towards the EBD children in order to receive the appropriate services from them. As the literature shows that apart from positive attitudes of the teachers, working relations between the teachers as asserted by Pugach and Johnson (1994) can be helpful for the children with emotional and behaviour difficulties to achieve academic success.

Two of the directors interviewed said that children with emotional and behaviour difficulties are low achievers and that teachers can do little or nothing about it. This is contrary to what Listen (2010) asserted, that children with disabilities can achieve academically through improved accommodation and modification of instructions and classroom activities. Lewis, Barbara, Bruntmeyer & Sugai, (2015) confirmed this by saying that children with EBD can be academically good when they have the same playing field characterised by modified curriculum, a distinct teaching method delivered by trained and support staff. The unfortunate situation is that there are many evidence-based strategies which are used to address problem behaviours, which educators need to tap that, but they continue to rely on strategies which are not very effective including exclusionary options and fail to build comprehensive school-wide systems necessary to truly realize effective intervention potential(Lewis, Barbara, Bruntmeyer & Sugai, 2015).Accommodation and modification plays a vital role in the academic performance of children with EBD although they are used interchangeably. Other teachers believe that such children can be high academic achievers provided there is a positive change in behaviour so teachers try to help them or refer them to specialities. This is a good practice because EBD children need to be helped by professionals.

From the directors' perspectives, teachers believe if EBD children are handled well, they can perform better, but how to identify their needs is the problem. This implies that most schools lack the infrastructure to help these children. As Lane et al. (2005a) noted, that it is necessary for school that seeks to make children with EBD achieve academically to have enough infrastructure to work with. The availability of infrastructure provides opportunities for the provision of the necessary services to meet the diverse needs of children with EBD compared to others (Lane et al. 2005a). These infrastructures include provision of varied instructional strategies, small class size, and better management of classroom (Singer et al. 1986, Lane et al. (2005a, b), Meadows et al. 1994, & Kauffman and Wong 1991).



On the factors that contribute to academic success of children with emotional and behaviour difficulties, the teachers confirmed that, Teacher –student interaction is the best teaching approach that could help EBD children. This is good because this will enhance teachers' attitudes toward these children. Regarding the school climate, the teachers see the category which is the about the patterns of interactions and relationships within the school as one of the best contributing factors to improve academic success of EBD children. This is confirmed by the studies conducted by Pugach and Johnson (1994) that working relations among teachers is one of the contributing factors which enhances academic performance of EBD children.

In terms of curriculum design, teachers are of the opinion that the strategies set out in the curriculum and its instructional materials are very important in planning instruction to help EBD children. The teachers also placed emphasis on students' characteristics. According to them, children academic characteristics with particular reference taking into consideration aspects such as retention or placement of special education structures is very crucial in relation to student characteristics. Regarding the out-of-school context, the teachers ranked 'parental accompaniment and supervision of students learning activities' as most important factor in helping EBD children.

## 5. Conclusion

The characteristics of EBD identified by the teachers in inclusive schools indicate that teachers are faced with challenging behaviours that need professional experience to help modify children behaviours in schools. Most of these behaviours are probably suppressed because of the way the children are handled. These are the children who should be handled by trained professionals else their situation become worsened. Handling emotional and behaviour difficult children requires professionalism and therefore if children are not treated well there will be more truants and drop out as most schools see these types of behaviours as common in schools.

If truancy is seen as most common behaviour type in schools, then teachers need to look at the most effective ways children could be handled. Most inclusive schools do not have the necessary materials and support to handle these children. With most teachers thinking that children with emotional and behaviour difficulties are unable to achieve academically, then there will be less effort by the teachers to help these children.

Children with emotional and behaviour difficulties are faced with many challenges in the process of learning. Some of these challenges include unfriendly classroom, neglect by peers, and inappropriate teaching techniques among others. Most of these children are unable to attain higher education because of lack of sensitivity, untrained staff, and lack of accessible content and modern learning technologies made for EBD children. For professionals to be able to help these children with modern teaching technologies, most facilities should be made available in schools as well as constant training for the teachers.

It is worrying that some teachers still see some of the factors that contribute to academic success as not useful. Which means that still there should be in-service training for teachers on these factors to help improve the teachers' professional knowledge and skills. Educators should know that EBD problems can be solved if they begin to have eclectic views and understanding of the causes of the EBD problems. That EBD should be understood in the context of the family, culture and community. Professionals should examine the family relationship. Educators should begin to question themselves on how the family relate with the child with behaviour problem. There is the need to look at the changes to the family circumstances and also think far to examine the children in case they have been exposed to drugs. EBD children need to be assessed if they have been having limited social experiences. Anything which is unusual happening to the child should be identified by the professionals and smoothly managed by the carers of these children with emotional development and temperament issues. Having insight into the above-mentioned issues will help educators to develop effective strategies in helping EBD children.

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