

PROBLEMS TEACHERS FACE IN TEACHING CHILDREN WITH DYSGRAPHIA AND ITS IMPLICATION ON THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN FAKO DIVISION OF THE SOUTH WEST REGION OF CAMEROON

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ABSTRACT

The study entitled “Problems Teachers Face in Teaching children with Dysgraphia and its implication on their Academic Performance in Fako Division of the South West Region of Cameroon”. The study had aimed to investigate, the effect of inadequate instructional material on the Academic performance of children with dysgraphia, inappropriate class size, inappropriate teaching strategy, inappropriate teaching method. These objectives were further translated to research question thus how do inadequate instructional materials impact the academic performance of children with dysgraphia? How does inappropriate class size influence the academic performance of children with dysgraphia? How do inappropriate teaching strategies impact the academic performance of children with dysgraphia? This study used a sample population of 98 pupils and 24 teachers giving a total of 122 respondents to the questionnaire. 6 schools were selected randomly and class 3-6 were selected purposively. The collected data were subjected to quantitative analysis. The research design used for this study was the descriptive survey design. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics

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The findings from this study indicated that inadequate instructional materials, inappropriate class size, inappropriate teaching strategies, inappropriate teaching methods have a negative effect on the

academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia. This means that if all of these challenges are looked into by school administrators, the teaching and learning process will be easier hence good handwriting as a result of the corrections. These children will also contribute greatly to the society as a result of their good hand writing. From the findings, some recommendations and suggestions for further research were made. It was recommended that there should be in-service training for teachers who find difficulties in teaching children with dysgraphia; also, funds should be allocated by the government for the construction of bigger classrooms in future that would not hinder children's learning.

INTRODUCTION

Handwriting is an important means of communication that enables the expression, recording, and transmission of ideas of children throughout their educational careers (Dennis & Swinth, 2001). Though handwriting enables the transmission of ideas, it is a complex skill that combines motor and linguistic components and is acquired over an extended period of time. Furthermore, handwriting is needed for many reasons that people might not readily recognize. Writing notes, recipes, prescriptions, messages, checks, and filling out applications are among a few reasons why the developing and teaching of handwriting skills needs to be continued in the schools and at home. Writing is important to every child in our society Marentette (2011).

As written expression is emphasized in the education system, children who are unable to express themselves through writing are handicapped by their inability even though their cognitive abilities are non-impaired. A child who has difficulties expressing her in writing is said to have dysgraphia. Another very important issue about writing is that writing is a lifelong skill that everyone needs to be Proficient with in his/her day to day activities. It is an integral part of communication even in the present day of computer era. Handwriting practice is a key component of the motor learning necessary to form letters and numerals correctly (Asher, 2006). Disorders of written expression (dysgraphia) are defined as a combination of difficulties in an individual's ability to compose written text Its characteristics include unreadable handwriting, letter shape distortions, diffluent writing, spelling errors and difficulty in written expression of ideas (Deuel, 2001).

Unfortunately, many pupils fail in primary schools today because of their handwriting which in the long run affect their academic performance ,it makes the teaching and learning process difficult which stands as a challenge to the teacher (Ediger, 2002). These writing problems affect both the teachers and the learners in the educational sphere in one way or the other. Many children with dysgraphia are not able to keep up with written assignments, cannot put coherent thoughts together on paper, or write legibly. Hence, this disability needs to be recognized and remediated before it creates long lasting negative consequences for the child. Some Teachers are not aware of the signs and symptoms of dysgraphia which even makes the case worse. (Asher, 2006) The problem sets in when diagnosis is difficult. If a teacher starts to see a trend of illegible writing, it is appropriate for them to question whether this child has dysgraphia or not. Teachers should note which parts of the writing process are most difficult for the pupils at this early stage of learning. If a teacher is able to consider all the appropriate stages right from diagnosis, then he or she will be effective because from that point appropriate measures such as follow up will be given to the pupil who will make the teacher effective on her part as the performance of the pupil might be positively affected (Leach 2009).

Although there has been a fair amount of research on reading and mathematics for students with LD,

research on the challenges teachers face in teaching pupils with dysgraphia is lacking, moreover, writing is a challenge and this can negatively impact children's academic performance across all subject areas (Harris, Graham, Brindle, & Sandmel, 2009) The chapter further deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, research hypotheses, justification of the study, scope of the study and finally operational definition of terms.

Background

Writing is an important and complex task that typically develops in early childhood .As a result of this, when a child starts developing writing problems, signs known as dysgraphia set in. According to (Deuel, 2001) dysgraphia is a learning disorder in which the individual's writing skills are below the level expected for his or her age and cognitive level. There are many ways by which dysgraphia may occur. It can be present in isolation or with other learning or psychiatric disorders, and can often go undiagnosed. Although the diagnosis and management of dysgraphia usually occurs in an educational setting, the teacher plays an important role in guidance and evaluation. Dysgraphia is a learning disability and can manifest at any level, including slow rate of writing, difficulty spelling, and problems of syntax and composition (Fink, 2000).

It was stated that writing disorders decreased as the age of the pupil increased. It was estimated that in the beginning of the second grade, 37% of pupils had a form of dysgraphia which decreased to 17% at the end of the year. This further decreased as the pupils progressed to their third grade and on (Karen Harris 2000). According to Reynold (2007), prevalence of dysgraphia is estimated at 5-20% of all pupils having some type of writing deficit. In the pediatric News journal of April 2008, it was stated that the prevalence of dysgraphia is unknown and it is likely under identified. Learning Disability (LD) is not a new concept involving scholastic difficulties; its roots can be traced back to the early 1800s. The earliest believed recognized case of LD occurred in 1802 when Franz Joseph Gall-a German-French anatomist and physiologist and Napoleon's surgeon-recognized an association between brain injury in soldiers and subsequent expressive language disorders.

After some time in 1998, Grace Fernald after seeing the importance of writing, developed her own kinesthetic method of teaching spelling. She used her finger to trace in the air words that gave her students difficulty; thus incorporating visual aid into the learning process. She became famous for her teaching methods and students having difficulties were frequently referred to her by academic diagnosticians (Barchas, 1998).

Conceptually, according to Farombi (2000), assess that the availability, adequacy and relevance of instructional materials or teaching aids in classrooms can influence academic performance either positively or negatively. Farombi linking instructional resources to children's academic performance is critical in the provision of quality education for children with writing difficulties. Some of these include pens, pencils, and graph papers. Ajayi & Ogunyemi (2001) pinpoint that when instructional materials are provided in the teaching learning transaction, students will have access to the reference materials mentioned by the teacher, and also each student will be able to learn at his or her own pace either symmetrically or asymmetrically and hence performance will be increased.

Despite the years of teaching experience, there is always a room for improvement and innovation for the teachers to adapt as per their requirement. Demands and needs change from time to time so the

teachers should also undergo professional and personal development to benefit both, the pupils and themselves. There is no age limit for learning; it depends on priorities and awareness only. Another researcher, Deppeler (2000) suggests that the teachers would be able to change their teaching strategies when they would reflect upon them and engage themselves in examining their own theories of teaching strategies. But, ironically, it is a fact that the teachers hardly get any time to reflect on their daily strategies, leading to improvement, or they are unaware of this process and it is out of question for them. They believe that delivering the content which has been planned for a specific day and subject is the basic necessity, neglecting the fact and being least bothered about knowing if the pupil learned or it was impossible for a pupil to grasp the basic concept. All these fall back on the children because they will still find difficulties in writing even though the teachers see it as a challenge on their part. In addition, it is widely recognized that if pupils are to maximize their potential from schooling they will need the full support of their parents. The support may come in the form of assistance or help from the parents by assisting them with class work at home; this will depend on how the pupil's parent is educated. An educated parent will know the importance of assisting the child with class work back at home thus reducing the challenge the teacher faces in the teaching and learning process (Farombi, 2000). It is anticipated that parents should play a role not only in the promotion of their own children's achievements but more broadly in school improvement and the democratization of school governance. The European Commission, for example, holds that the degree of parental participation is a significant indicator of the quality of schooling (Sacker, 2002, p 871). Current research suggests that one does not learn so much except he pays attention and shows interest in a subject. This cannot be effectively achieved except something important can captivate the expected interest of the learners; their interests can be captivated with the use of aids. Teaching with instructional materials like text books, charts, chalkboard management, real objects just to name a few ease the problems the learners find in the lesson. Therefore some teachers face challenges in teaching because of the inappropriate instructional materials they teach the children with, this makes them ineffective to a greater extent and hence the performance of children will drop (Edward, 2014). Conceptually, during the researchers coursework and through in class discussions added to the Literature she read, she came across some reasons teacher's face problems in teaching children with Dysgraphia, and saw instructional material as a challenge. According to Farombi (2000), he addresses that the availability, adequacy and relevance of instructional materials in classrooms can influence academic performance, it can have a positive effect on students' learning and academic performance. Farombi linking instructional resources to children's academic performance is critical in the provision of quality education for children with writing difficulties. Some of these include pens, pencils, and graph papers.

Ajayi and Ogunyemi (2001) emphasize that when instructional materials are provided to learners it help make them curious and more active in the teaching learning problems that help meet learners needs during the teaching process, students will have access to the reference materials mentioned by the teacher, and also each student will be able to learn at his or her own pace either symmetrically or asymmetrically, and hence performance can improve.

Furthermore, according to Alton-Lee (2004), the teachers should align their professional experiences with their teaching strategies and their pedagogical knowledge in order that their students benefit in the teaching learning process. Agreeing with Alton-Lee, these days one of the major roles of the teachers is to ensure that the content delivered has achieved the learning objective, which can be considered a key challenge especially in teaching children with dysgraphia. Despite the years of teaching experience, there is always a room for improvement and innovation for the teachers to adapt as per

their requirement. Demands and needs change from time to time so the teachers should also undergo professional and personal development to benefit both, the pupils and themselves. In addition, it is widely recognized that if pupils are to maximize their potential from schooling they will need the full support of their parents. The support may come in the form of assistance or help from the parents by assisting them with class work at home; this will depend on how the pupil's parent is educated. An educated parent will know the importance of assisting the child with class work back at home thus reducing the challenge the teacher faces in the teaching and learning process (Farombi, 2000). It is anticipated that parents should play a role not only in the promotion of their own children's achievements but more broadly in school improvement and the democratization of school governance. The European Commission, for example, holds that the degree of parental participation is a significant indicator of the quality of schooling (Sacker, 2002, p 871). Current research suggests that one does not learn so much except he pays attention and shows interest in a subject. This cannot be effectively achieved except something important can captivate the expected interest of the learners; their interests can be captivated with the use of aids. Teaching with instructional materials like text books, charts, chalkboard management, real objects just to name a few ease the problems the learners find in the lesson. Therefore some teachers face challenges in teaching because of the inappropriate instructional materials they teach the children with, this makes them ineffective to a greater extent and hence the performance of children will drop (Edward, 2014).

Theoretically, the following theories below were found relevant to the study. Lev Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory that emphasized that learning takes place at the zone of proximal development. At the zone of proximal development, the teacher is able to assist the learners through scaffolding and aid them. Students can also be assisted by more experienced peer or more knowledgeable peers through peer tutoring. So mediation helps to solve the problem of the learners.

Bandura's theory of social learning is also very relevant in the study, where learners learn by observing models, imitation and through observation. It is based on the principle of attention, retention, motor reproduction and motivation.

Gagne's Theory of Instruction, Gagne's Theory of Instruction talks on the Conditions of Learning. The Conditions of Learning are the required states needed for the learner to acquire new skills. They can be internal states or personal requirements of the learner, such as self- motivation. There are also the external conditions of learning such as environmental stimuli that support the internal learning process, which include a quiet, well-lit classroom setting or having the necessary tools available. The third and final component of Gagne's Theory of Instruction is the Nine Events of Instruction. Gagne believe that learning occurs in a series of events. The learning events must be organized in a hierarchy of complexity and must correspond with deliberate instruction. The significance of the hierarchy is to identify basics that need to be completed at each level. Each learning objective must be accomplished before effective learning of the next outcome can begin. As an instructor and instructional designer, it's important to understand how instruction and learning objectives can be deliberately designed for effective learning .This will improve the academic performance of the pupil in a great way. In Cameroon the Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education (UNESCO, 1994), talked on the right of every child to an education. It was proclaimed in the universal declaration of Human Rights and was reaffirmed by the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA). More specifically, "Dysgraphia" comes from two Greek words. "Dys" meaning "difficulty with" or "poor," while "graph" is Greek for "writing," The name really got its start from "agraphia," a term coined in

the 1940s by Austrian doctor Josef Gerstmann. H. Joseph Horacek, in his book "Brainstorms," describes that the condition Gerstmann named refers to a complete inability to write. He linked this inability to brain trauma, resulting from an accident or injury. There are two subtypes of dysgraphia: specific and nonspecific dysgraphia. The specific form of the disease refers more to neurological problems that impact motor skills. Nonspecific dysgraphia points to outside influences as the root cause, such as psychosocial problems or absence in school. According to research, the prevalence of dysgraphia is higher in boys than in girls and typically is diagnosed at the 2nd or 3rd grade level when writing is more considerable (Leach, 2009).

Furthermore, in relation to some decrees of the country, on human rights grounds, all learners must have access to education in order that they may contribute to socio-economic development. It is for this reason that the Cameroon government is a signatory to various international conventions and declarations including the Salamanca Conference (UNESCO, 1994) and the Dakar Framework of Action (UNESCO, 2000).

To attest to this, the government of Cameroon declared Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 as government's commitment to achieving Education for All (EFA). UNESCO (2006) observes that, despite continued overall global progress at the primary level, too many children are not in school, with some of them dropping out early or not reaching minimal learning standards. Today Studies show that teaching methods used by teachers has an impact on pupils' writing skills thus the potential to meet the individual needs of pupils with writing difficulties leads to the increasing academic performance. Furthermore it is suggested that the use of adapted teaching methods for the needs of the child allows pupils with writing difficulties to experience a positive academic achievements in reading and writing (Snowling, 2006). In this case, it implies that teachers need to adjust their teaching methods so that children with writing difficulties can successfully learn to write. Teachers need to make considerable adjustments in their teaching strategies, support services, assessment procedures, methods of teaching in terms of delivery of content and class organization. These are the adjustments which the researcher is curious to research on. It is for this reason that the researcher wishes to investigate the challenges faced by teachers in teaching children with dysgraphia and its impact on Children's academic performance.

Dysgraphia

A disorder in written expression is often termed dysgraphia. Dysgraphia can be categorized into either developmental dysgraphia (childhood onset) or acquired dysgraphia also known as agraphia (more so in adulthood onset and in the form of brain damage). Kay (2004) defined dysgraphia as: "A specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin (This means that one can improve the condition but not cure it) characterized by difficulties with accurate spelling as a result of phonological processing deficit (dyslexic dysgraphia) and by poor penmanship or handwriting due to inadequate motor skills (motor dysgraphia) and/or spatial perception (spatial dysgraphia). These difficulties typically result in problems in written expression that can be unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and with the adequate pedagogy" Causes of Dysgraphia like all other Learning disabilities, the actual cause is not yet known, but it is presumed to be a neurological dysfunction in the central Nervous system. The neurological damage may be due to the following causes:

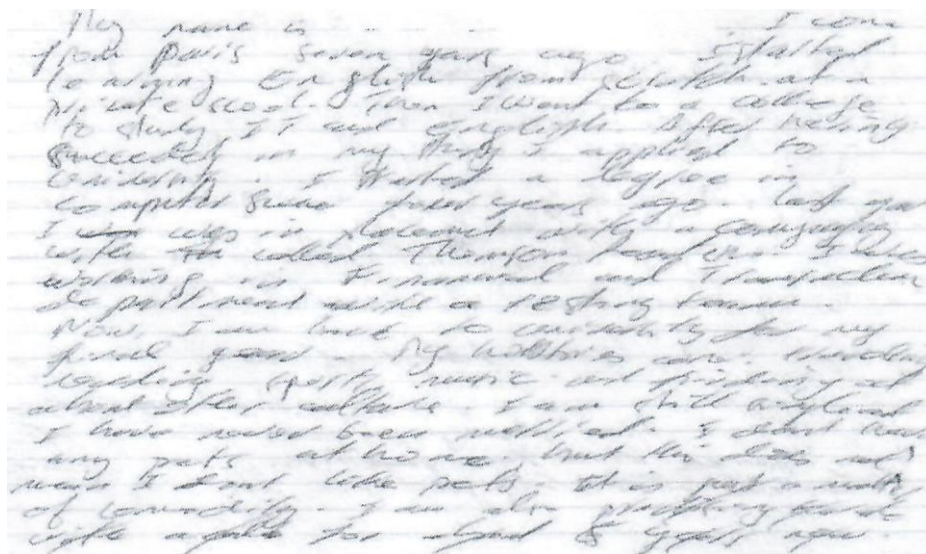
- Brian injury; Often times, injury to specific parts of the brain cause paralysis to specific functions of the body. Since the brain is divided into parts, each directing a different part of the body, injury

to one part may compromise that function. Injury to the area of the brain that affects your fine motor skills may, in fact, cause dysgraphia (Deutsch, 2005). Hereditary; Many individuals with learning disabilities reported that they have relatives who have similar problems (Deutsch, 2005).

- Socio-economic factors such as poverty. A parent who does not have enough finance to afford writing materials for his child at school may be a contributing factor to the child having dysgraphia. Some of the writing materials include; textbooks and workbooks, writing books for home practice (Deutsch, 2005). Characteristics of children with dysgraphia According to Berninger (2002) Individuals with Dysgraphia may display the following academic characteristics in writing: Cramped fingers or unusual grip on writing tool Odd wrist, body, and paper position Excessive erasures Inconsistencies: mixing print/cursive and upper/lower case letters, irregular shapes, sizes or slant of letters.

Unfinished words or letters

- Inconsistent position on page
- Inconsistent spacing between letters and words
- Slow or labored copying or writing
- Misuse of line and margin
- General illegibility - despite training
- Inattentiveness about details when writing
- Frequent need for verbal cues and use of sub-vocalizing
- Heavy reliance on vision to monitor what hand is doing during writing
- Slow implementation of verbal directions that involve sequencing and planning



Identifying Children with Writing Difficulties (Dysgraphia)

Teachers have the obligation to identify children with writing difficulties. It is argued that teachers need to take extra care during the identification process and avoid confusing instances. For instance, nearly half of the children with writing difficulties experience the challenges that are also experienced by children with other learning disabilities this stand as a big challenge to teachers because they get

confused at this point and may easily come up with a wrong diagnosis which will not only affect the teacher in the course of teaching but will also affect the children in relation to their performance (Bishop, 2004). On this basis, teachers need to conduct an identification process to decide whether children have writing difficulties or not. Teachers may conduct the identification process by using case history and observation checklist (McMaster, 2008). Further, they may randomly collect handwriting samples of children to suggest whether the children have writing difficulties or not (Reid, 2009). In addition, they may assess language skills of children by using standardized test. Teachers may also use standardized tests to assess children's competence in word knowledge (McMaster, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

Every child's greatest desire is to learn how to read and write. A child will write well if he/she is given the right instructions, teaching methods, quality instructional materials, put in a conducive social learning classroom, and assistance from guidance as far as reading and writing is concern. This in a nutshell will ameliorate the academic performance of the pupils and the teaching effectiveness of the teachers in teaching in an inclusive classroom.

Despite the efforts made by the government of Cameroon, various non- governmental organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders of education, to improve on the standard of education in Cameroon especially at the primary schools, pupils hand writing and writing skills have been a nightmare. In this effect the government has made education at this level to be free and have brought in some approaches such as competency based approach which is pupils-centered to improve academic performance of this pupils coupled with other measures like education for all strategic plan. Teachers are therefore left at the mercy of the poor writing skills of these pupils which have been jeopardizing their effectiveness in one way or the other, therefore posing a big problem to these regular teachers in handling pupils with dysgraphia in the classroom as compared to other learning disabilities. The teacher's effectiveness to a greater extend is tempered because of the limited knowledge and awareness on how to handle pupils with dysgraphia in an inclusive class like what is operating in Cameron today. The government has been putting more emphasis on other categories of disabilities such as visual impairment, physical disabilities, hearing impairment and intellectual disabilities but there are no guidelines from the Ministry of Education specifying clearly how pupils with dysgraphia ought to be handled in the regular classrooms according to literature. This hand writing difficulties coupled with other factors have made primary school teachers think that they made a mistake in taking teaching as a profession. This is because no matter how intelligent a child is, if he/she cannot express his/her intelligence in writing and reading then he cannot be promoted to next class or become productive even after completing primary school in the society where he/she is found. The consequences of children's academic performance falls more on the pupils, parents and the government. Pupils end up dropping out from schools, spending more years in school, become delinquent due to their inability to write and read. The parents as well as the government on their parts end up spending more resources in the education of these pupils with dysgraphia.

It is due to this backdrop that teachers have problems as to which instructional materials, teaching methods, teaching strategies they can use to teach pupils with dysgraphia and how to manage class size in teaching these pupils in the teaching learning process.

Research Objectives

General Research Objective

- To assess the effect of instructional materials on the academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia.
- To ascertain the effect of class size and its impact on the academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia.
- To determine the effect of teaching strategies on the academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia.
- To predict the effect of teaching methods on the academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia.
- To envisage the effect of Parental Level on Education on the academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia.

Research Questions

- To what extent does instructional materials impact the academic performance of children with dysgraphia?
- To what extent does class size influence the academic performance of children with dysgraphia?
- Do teaching strategies impact the academic performance of children with dysgraphia?
- Do teaching methods impact the academic performance of children with dysgraphia?
- Does the parental level of education impact the academic performance of children with dysgraphia?

Justification of the study

The study seeks to investigate the challenges faced by teachers teaching children with dysgraphia. In this study the research will sample out the opinion of teachers on the challenges they face in teaching pupils with dysgraphia and how it impacts pupils' academic performance.

This problem is worth investigating because little research has been done in Cameroon specifically in Wum as revealed by literature. The few studies that have been carried out in other African countries and western world were mostly focused on teacher's effectiveness as a result of the challenges faced by the teachers in teaching pupils with dysgraphia. Based on literature a research of this magnitude has not been carried out on the academic performance with respect to challenges faced in teaching pupils with dysgraphia in the South West Region of Cameroon.

METHODOLOGY

The research design selected for this study was a cross-sectional survey design. The purpose of a cross-sectional survey design is to promote greater understanding of not just the way things are, but also why they are the way they are. The subset of the sample was the representation of the larger population.

The population of the study was made up of all the Primary school pupils in the South West Region with dysgraphia from class 3-6 (with Seven Sub Divisions) and all the teachers teaching these respective classes. This is made up of 502 schools, 150 pupils with dysgraphia and 916 teachers (Regional Delegation MINEBUB South West Region for 2017/2018 Academic year).

The target population of the study comprised of all the public primary school pupils with dysgraphia from class (3 -6) and all the teachers teaching these classes for all the seven (7) Sub Divisions in Wum sub- Division (Wum, Limbe 1, Limbe2, Limbe 3, Muyuka, Tiko and West Coast) comprising of (68)

schools with a total of 150 pupils with dysgraphia. However, to make the study more realistic, the assessable population is made up of pupils with dysgraphia from 8 Primary schools in (Wum and Limbe) drawn from the above mentioned (7) Sub Divisions in Wum sub- which are ; Government school (G.S) Bokwango ,Government School(G.S) Bonduma (Wum Sub Division), Government School(G.S)Wum Town(Wum Sub Division), Government School (G.S) Bota (Limbe 1 Sub Division),Government School(G.S) Mile 1(Limbe 1 Sub Division),Government School(G.S) Mile 4(Limbe 1 Sub Division), Government School(G.S) Great Soppo 2 with a total 125 pupils with dysgraphia and 32 Teachers from class 3-6 in all the above mentioned Primary schools.

The sample of the study comprise six schools that is, some Primary schools selected from two sub Divisions, Buea and Limbe 1. The sample of the study therefore was made up of 98 pupils with dysgraphia drawn from six public primary schools, selected using the purposive and simple random sampling techniques. The researcher selected public primary schools from the 2 Sub Divisions (Wum and Limbe 1) and in each school pupils with dysgraphia from classes 3 to 6 are selected. This is because pupils at this level, (class 3 -6) according to Piaget's formal operational stage, are able to interpret information, think abstractly, and can provide solutions to their problems based on the experiences to make learning meaningful.

By simple random sampling technique the researcher obtained the Sub Divisions and the schools from which the sample was drawn. By this sampling technique, the researcher wrote names of the seven Sub Divisions on pieces of papers and shuffled them from which she had the chance to pick six times and the same procedure was also applied in obtaining accessible population (six public Primary schools) from which the sample was drawn.

Table 1: Sample Population

<i>SIN</i>	Name Of Public Primary Schools	Number of Teachers (Class 3-6)	Sample	Number of Pupils with Dysgraphia	Sample
1	G S Bonduma 1	4	4	16	15
2	G.S Bonduma 2	4	4	14	13
3	G.S Wum Town	4	4	20	19
4	G.S Bota	4	4	18	17
5	G. S Mile 1	4	4	15	14
6	G.S Mile 4	4	4	15	14
	TOTAL	24	4	98	92

Source: Deduced from table 3

The samples represented on the table is according (Krejeic and Morgan 1979)

The researcher used a simple random technique in choosing the sample on which this research was conducted and the data collected. This was to give equal chances to the schools to avoid bias (O.S Bonduma 1, G.S Bonduma 2, G.S Wum Town! G.S Bota, O.S Mile 1, G.S Mile 4). The researcher wrote the names of the objects to be sampled on pieces of papers folded them and put in a basket and reshuffle. A child was called up to pick a paper from the basket after thorough mixing at random. This was done with replacement (when a paper was picked, that is the paper was folded and put back into

the basket after writing the name for the next picked) so as to give equal chances of selecting the others avoiding bias. This procedure began with the Divisions, public primary schools were selected from the accessible population that will make up (six public primary schools from two sub Divisions; Wum and Limbe 1. This will give convenient information that the researcher needs for the study. The classes 3 -6 were also purposively selected as well as their respective teachers. This class is chosen because children in this class can at least understand the questions posed for them to answer.

With regard to the identification process, exercises will be given in their writing books to see their how far in writing out letters. The only way out is to give them exercises because their information by word of mouth will not totally be considered as true because not all of them may be truthful. The teachers will also be asked to give their own opinions as concerns the children's writing performances in class after at least checking their sequential reports.

The researcher will use a questionnaire to collect the data for the study. The questionnaire will consist a total of 25 items divided into 5 blocks of five items each covering the research objectives formulated at the beginning. The questionnaire will contain a brief letter of introduction to explain the purpose of the study to the respondents in completing the questions on the questionnaire. The questionnaire will be divided into two parts; part (A) of each item (question) will be based on yes or no response option by a tick, Gender, class, school, parental level of education while part (B) will be the closed ended question type, drawn from the likert scale used to structure the items in order to evaluate the knowledge of the teachers and pupils by strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD). The questionnaire use for data collection will be constructed by the researcher. It will be validated by the supervisor following some adjustments and amendments done on it as directed.

The data to be collected for the study will be done personally by the researcher after approval of instrument by supervisor. The researcher will go to the respective schools under study, meet the administration, get their concern and explain to them reasons for being in the school. The researcher will use the direct delivery technique in administering the questionnaire. The researcher will personally distribute the questionnaires to teachers and pupils. They will be filled and returned to the researcher, this is done because if the questionnaire is taken home, some pupil can be influenced by their siblings or parents in filling the questionnaire which will later on affect the results.

The data will be analyzed using the descriptive statistics. This will be represented on a simple percentage and frequency distribution table. Here, data will be analyzed chronologically and systematically. This will be done based on the formula below.

$$\frac{\text{Number of response}}{\text{Total Number of responses}} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

FINDINGS

The study investigates the problems teachers' face in teaching children with dysgraphia and its implication on their academic performance. The findings are organized and discussed by research

objectives. The aim was to situate the findings on the challenges teachers face in teaching children with dysgraphia as well as the academic performance in Fako division. It also consists of the implications of findings to psychological research.

Research Objective One: To Examine the impact of inadequate instructional Materials on the academic performance of pupils with Dysgraphia

Finding showed that inadequate instructional materials have negative materials has a negative effect on the academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia. In order words, when teachers teach pupils with dysgraphia with inadequate instructional materials, they stand a high chance to perform poorly in school. This corroborated the view of Atiento (4004) who found out that, inadequate instructional materials such chalks, dusters, textbook and charts influences pupils' academic performance with dysgraphia negatively. The unavailability of these teaching learning materials make teaching to be ineffective, which leads to a decrease in pupils' academic performance.

Akidi (2012) concluded that: availability of teaching learning materials therefore enhances the effectiveness of schools, as they are the basic resources that bring about good academic performance in the pupils with dysgraphia. Mwiria (1985) also supports the view that pupils' performance of dysgraphia is affected by the quality and quantity of instructional materials. The author noted that institutions with adequate facilities such as textbooks stand a better chance of performing well in examination, than poorly equipped ones. In conformity to this finding, Mwiria (2001) in another study revealed that, teaching learning materials when available, help improve access and educational out comes since pupils of dysgraphia are less likely to be absent from schools that provide interesting, meaningful and relevant experiences to them. These instructional resources should be provided in quality and quantity in schools for effective teaching learning process.

This study is also in congruence with Momoh (2010) who opined that instructional materials have a significant effect on students' achievement of pupils with dysgraphia since they facilitate the learning of abstract concepts and ideas and discourage rote learning. When instructional materials are inadequate, education is comprised and this inevitably is reflected in low academic achievement. This result is in contrast with a study which was carried out by Anyamebo (2005) which revealed that inadequate instructional materials such as chalks, library and laboratory, stationary materials, computers which did not have an effect on the performance of pupils with dysgraphia.

This finding is in line with the systems theory which says that: When the inputs into the school system (teaching learning materials, teachers, students, maps, charts etc) are good, adequate and efficient, the processes will obviously be effective which will result in the training of pupils with dysgraphia who are not only knowledgeable but effective and productive. This also corroborates the view of Thorndike which emphasized that: For learning to be effective, the environment needs to be stimulating by adequate instructional materials which will enable teachers to carry out desired actions if the required facilities are to be provided. Pupils can easily learn when the schools are well equipped with the valuable resources both material and human. For any connection to be strengthened, practice must be done continuously. For instance, pupils with dysgraphia can only achieve better if opportunities for practice are available. Teachers are experienced and the classroom sizes are manageable. Using this equation, optimal conditions for learning are those that encourage practice, reward positive behaviors that help learners make connections with prior knowledge.

This is also related to Gagne's theory of instruction which stipulates that there are several different types or levels of learning and each different type requires different types of instruction and different types of teaching methods and materials. When these learning materials and effective methods are not used, students will obviously perform poor in their academic. Gagne identifies five major categories of learning: verbal information, intellectual skills, cognitive strategies, motor skills and attitudes. Different internal and external conditions are necessary for each type of learning. For example, for cognitive strategies to be learned, there must be a chance to practice developing new solutions to problems; to learn attitudes, the learner must be exposed to a reliable role model or convincing arguments. The absent of such will lead to poor performance of pupils with disability.

Research Objective Two: To investigate Inappropriate class size on the Academic performance of pupils with Dysgraphia

Finding showed that inappropriate class size have negative effects on pupils' academic performance. This implied that inappropriate class/overcrowded class size negatively affect the academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia. This is in congruence with Pedder (2006) who opined that inappropriate class size negatively affect the academic performance of learners with dysgraphia. This is because teaching learning process is affected by number of learners in class and the conditions under which the teaching learning is taking place as class size affects teacher's sense of realistic instructional tasks. Blatchford, Russel, Bassett, Brown, and Martin (2007) argued that large classroom size influences academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia negatively. They argued that larger classes increase the administrative and procedural burden on teachers and decrease the time they can spend on instruction and addressing students' individuals needs which stands as a challenge to their instruction and addressing students' individual needs which stands as a challenge to their instruction in the class room. This is also in line with Slavin (1989) who supported that appropriate class size positively affected the individual attention pupil received, teachers' responsiveness to pupil, the prolonged and fixed nature of interaction between teachers and pupils, the depth of teachers' knowledge of their pupils, and compassion for individual children's specific needs.

Horning (2007) opined that in Cameroon the class size of every primary school is to be 60 pupils in a class, but looking at our class room situation, some schools do not respect the class size and have close to 70 or 75 pupils in a class which makes it difficult to teach such a vast class without complications. In this class room situation, children with writing difficulties are found because the teacher does not have time meeting each pupils needs. This therefore stands as a challenge for teachers in teaching children with dysgraphia, that is, it slows down their effectiveness and hence the academic performance of the children.

This research is contrary Nasongo (2013) who opined that class size does not have any effects on students' academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia as students in larger classes had slightly higher graduation rates, and a larger proportion planned to depends on the type of child rearing practice of the family the child is raised. He further explains that the academic performance of children in authoritarian parent families are rated to be low about their expected work at school in terms of resistance, motivation and satisfaction which further retards academic performance. This is supported by Momboh (2010) who found out that pupils perform better in smaller classroom than larger ones. As smaller classroom permits teachers to be more effective, efficient allocation of resources, good teacher student interaction, frequent evaluation which all facilitates an increase in performance. This result opposes the findings of Okendi (2000) which stated that: there was no such difference in terms of

academic achievement, students in larger classes performed the same or better than students in smaller classes.

According to Vygotsky's theory, for learning to take place effectively, students have to actively participate in problem solving and thinking. For this to occur, appropriate class size and learning environment needs to be very conducive in all aspects, such as the availability of resources, good well organized and small classroom sizes. The classroom should be one in which they can actively participate for learning to take place.

Research Objective Three: To find out the impact of inappropriate teaching strategies on the academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia

The findings indicated that inappropriate teaching strategies have a negative effect on pupils' academic performance. This implied that inappropriate teaching strategies negatively affect the academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia. This is in congruence with Alton-Lee (2004) who argued that the teachers should put their professional experiences with their teaching strategies and pedagogical knowledge in order that, their students benefit from pedagogical knowhow. Agreeing with Alton-Lee, these days one of the major roles of the teachers is to ensure that the content delivered has achieved the learning objective, which can be considered a key challenge especially in teaching children with dysgraphia. Despite the years of teaching experience, there is always a room for improvement and innovation for the teachers to adapt as per their requirement. Demands and needs change from time to time so the teachers should also undergo professional and personal development to benefit both, the pupils and themselves. There is no age limit for learning; it depends on priorities and awareness only.

Another researcher, Deppeler (2000) suggest that the teachers would be able to change their teaching strategies when they would reflect upon them and engage themselves in examining their own theories of teaching strategies. But, ironically, it is a fact that the teachers hardly get any item to reflect on their daily strategies, leading to improvement, or they are unaware of this process and it is out of position for them. They believe that delivering the content which has been planned for a specific day and subject is the basic necessity, neglecting the fact and being least bothered about knowing if the pupils learned or it was impossible for a pupil to grasp the basic concept. All these fall back on the children because they will still find difficulties in writing even though the teachers see it as a challenge on their part.

In addition, it is widely recognized that is pupils are to maximize their potential from schooling they will need the full support of their teachers. The support may ccome in the form of assistance or help from the pupils by assisting them with class work at home; this will depend on how the pupils teachers strategies put in place. Experienced teachers will know the importance of assisting the pupils thus reducing the challenge the teacher faces in the teaching and learning process (Farombi, 2000). It is anticipated that parents should play a role not only in the promotion of their own children's achievements but more broadly in school improvement and the democratization of school governance. The European commission, for example, holds that the degree of parental participation is a significant indicator of the quality of schooling (Sacker, 2002).

Edward, (2014) suggest that one does not learn so much except he pays attention and shows interest in a subject. This cannot be effectively achieved except something important can captivate the expected interest of the learners; their interests can be captivated with the use of aids. Teaching with

instructional materials like text books, charts chalkboard management, real objects just to name a few ease the problems the learners find in the lesson. Therefore, some teachers face challenges in teaching because of the inappropriate instructional materials and strategies they teach the children with, this makes them ineffective to a greater extent and hence the performance of children will drop.

This finding is also supported by Haller (2004) who opined that inadequate teaching strategies influence learning of people with dysgraphia negatively and as such stakeholders all over the world need to strive for quality education of children. he opined that there is a need to defined quality education so that one can differentiate it from less-preferred education. According to Coleman (2003), minimal role is played by the school as far as the students' achievement is concerned because it is dependent of their background as well as societal. On the other hand, a few researchers suggest that factors like teaching strategies (Glass, 2001), teachers' qualification (Ferguson 2004) and more variables play a vital role in what student learn in general.

This is supported by Vygotsky's principle of zone of proximal development as it relates to the challenges faced by teachers in teaching pupils with dysgraphia. Some of the challenges that these teachers face in teaching pupils with dysgraphia are the absence of support from the parents, if these pupils receive adequate support or the necessary help from them, this will make them do better in academics. For instance, if the teachers as well as the peers in class give support to these children in class given the fact that they are considered to be more knowledgeable than others it will make them to do better or improve in writing. Also if parents assist their children back at home to do their assignments this will enable these pupils with dysgraphia to improve on their writing. As they will learn better as they consider the home and school not to be two different places of learning and their parents as role models. The parents and teachers who assist these children using the Vygotsky's second principle of ZPD, and this help or assistance given to these children is called scaffolding. Children suffering from dysgraphia and any other learning disability are often very sensitive especially when it concerns their affective domain. Thus if the parents do not consider this and give the necessary help with caution these teachers will still face difficulties.

Research Objective Four: To determine the impact of inappropriate Teaching Methods on the Academic Performance of Pupils with Dysgraphia

The findings of this study revealed that inappropriate teaching methods have negative effects on pupils' academic performance. This implied that inappropriate teaching strategies negatively affect the academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia. This is in conformity with a study carried out by Oworye (2009) who opined that inappropriate teaching method hindered effective learning and produced poor academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia. However, he observed differences in students' performance were statistically significant. This was due to the influence of pupil and inappropriate teaching methods related factors. It was concluded that inappropriate teaching methods have negative effect on pupils' performance. This is due to the fact that teacher's effort is not the sole determinant of students' academic outcome. Students related factors such as intelligence, parental education, socioeconomic statuses, and personalities may have significant effect on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools.

This is in line with the empirical work of Atiento (2004) who reveal that the use of inappropriate teaching and learning method by pupil with dysgraphia in free day secondary schools affect students' performance negatively. This was done by determining the availability of teaching methods and

learning methods, physical facilities and human resources influence students' performance negatively in Kenya's certificates for secondary schools in Embakasi district. This is in line with Lev Vygotsky's social constructivism theory which also emphasized the role of a teacher in facilitating learning, the aspect of guidance and collaboration with a more knowledgeable person. When we talk of guidance, the role of the teacher comes into place; an experienced and qualified teacher has to instruct pupils on what to do, how to do it and the steps or procedures involved in doing it. Collaboration, on the other hand, can be seen in two different aspects; either the pupils collaborating with classroom teacher to solve a problem, discover particular findings or the pupils collaborating in their own small learning groups. More to this, the aspects of modeling, explanation and discussion are very important issues that have been highlighted in this theory which are all aspects that must be incorporated in a good teaching method for any effective learning to take place.

This is congruence of Piaget theory which holds that pupils develop at different stages and teaching methods should have varied base on pupil's development level. According to him conception, cognition and intelligence are both parts of biological systems which are stage-independent, that is, independent of a particular stage of development. Teaching methods and strategies should be used following such development.

Implications of findings to special education

The implication of the findings to knowledge will be seen by objective and base on the study, it brought out the Afrocentric literature on challenges teachers face in teaching children with dysgraphia and its impact on academic performance that have help close the gaps in Fako Division. Whereas most studies carried out are focused only on problems faced by pupils with dysgraphia and failed to talk about challenges face by teachers in teaching these pupils. As a consequence, this study is out to contribute to knowledge by bringing out challenges faced by teachers in teaching pupil with dysgraphia such as inadequate instructional materials, class size, inappropriate teaching methods and strategies which constitute teacher's factors or characteristics that can hinder academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia. This contribution would go a long way to inform the field of developmental psychology and special educators. Therefore, this study will contribute to knowledge by informing related discipline that academic performance of pupils with dysgraphia is not only but on their individual factors such as their personal problems but also on the challenges their teachers go through which all have an effect on their academic performance.

This study has therefore contributed to the understanding of some of the challenges teachers face in teaching children with dysgraphia and its impacts on academic performance in Fako division such as; inadequate instructional materials, large class size, inappropriate teaching methods and strategies. Analyses of the data collected in the study demonstrate that challenges teachers face in teaching children with dysgraphia have negative effect on their academic performance in Fako Division of the south west region of Cameroon.

Conclusion

From the findings, it can be seen that, teachers face challenges when teaching children with dysgraphia. This is in accordance with the general alternative hypothesis of the study which states that: the challenge teacher's face in teaching children with dysgraphia has a significant effect on academic performance. In Fako division of the South West region of Cameroon. The result corroborated the view of Ezuni (2004) whose results indicated that problems teachers face in teaching has negative

effects on pupil's achievement as inappropriate teaching methods, classroom size and physical facilities have significant effect on academic achievement of primary school pupils with dysgraphia. Okandi (2001) concluded that pupils from a school with adequate facilities, good teachers and favorable environment perform well than those from schools with fewer facilities, unqualified teacher and less enabling environment.

It can be concluded that, teaching material such as text books, libraries, globes, maps, charts and internet facilities are inadequate in some schools in the South West Region of Cameroon and are not well utilized which results to poor academic achievements in pupil with dysgraphia. Also primary school teachers in the South West Region of Cameroon are ineffective as they come to class with inadequate teaching aids, poor teaching strategies and overcrowded classrooms which influence pupils' academic performance negatively.

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