

**AKENTEN APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND  
ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT-KUMASI**

**EFFECTS OF SOCIO ECONOMICS CHALLENGES ON PUPILS'  
ATTENDANCE IN AYIETA JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, SANDEMA AT THE  
BILSA NORTH MUNICIPALITY**



**DECEMBER, 2022**

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MUNICIPALITY

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and Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,  
Akenten Appiah Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial  
Development-Kumasi, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of  
Master of Arts (Educational Leadership) degree**

DECEMBER, 2022

## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, PATRICK AYARIK AWENNAT, declare that this dissertation, with exception of quotations and references contained in published works, which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE:.....

DATE: .....

### SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work were supervised under the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME: DR. PHILIP OTI -AGYEN

SIGNATURE:.....

DATE: .....



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

God has been so great to me and so I thank him for his immeasurable grace and love. I express my heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Philip Oti-Agyen, my supervisor, for his self-giving, directions and commitment not to me alone but to the nation and the school.

I also show much gratitude to my family especially my mother, Akanlakum Felicia Alug-Badek) for their support, prayers and encouragement throughout the work. I say God bless you all.



## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my family especially my new born baby, Ayarik Mavin  
Ajamniwen



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	PAGE
TITLE PAGE	
DECLARATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
ABSTRACT	x
CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	3
1.3 Purpose of the study	4
1.4 Objectives of the Study	4
1.5 Research Questions	5
1.6 Significance of the Study	5
1.7 Delimitation of the Study	6
1.8 Limitations of the Study	6
1.9 Organization of the Study	6
1.10 Definition of terms	7
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.0 Introduction	8
2.1 The Concept of Socioeconomic Challenges	9



2.2 Measurement of socioeconomic challenges.	11
2.3 Dimension and Demonstration of Socioeconomic Challenges	11
2.4 Social Dimension, Vulnerability and Exclusion.	12
2.5 Educational Dimension To Socioeconomic Challenges	14
2.6 Causes of Socioeconomic Challenges	14
2.7 Comparing socioeconomic background of parents in relation to education.	18
2.8 Socioeconomic challenges that affect Education	21
2.9 How Socioeconomic Challenges affect Attendance	21
2.10 Theoretical Underpinings	27
<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>30</b>
3.0 Introduction	30
3.1 Research Design	30
3.2 Population of the Study	31
3.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size	31
3.4 Data Collection Instrument	32
3.5 Pre-Testing of the Instrument	32
3.6 Validity and Reliability	33
3.7 Data Collection Procedure	34
3.8 Data Analysis Plan	34
3.9 Ethical Consideration	35
<b>CHAPTER FOUR : RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	<b>36</b>
4.0 Introduction	36
Gender of Respondents	36



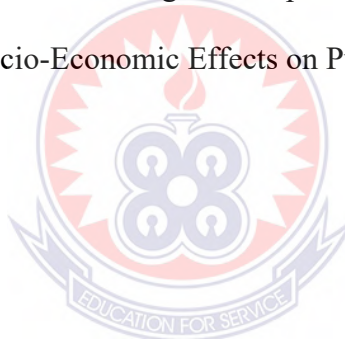
CHAPTER FIVE:SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND	
RECOMMENDATIONS	50
5.0 Introduction	50
5.1 Summary	50
5.1.1 Summary of Findings	51
5.2 Conclusions	51
5.3 Recommendations	52
5.4 Suggestions for Further Study	52
REFERENCES	53
QUESTIONAIRRE	57
SECTION A. PERSONAL INFORMATION	57
SECTION B. CAUSES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES OF PUPILS	
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE	58





## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
4.1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender.	36
4.2 distribution of respondents by Age	37
4.3 Educational status of respondents 4.3 distribution of respondents according to educational status	37
4.4 Distribution of Respondents by Occupation	37
4.5 Distribution of Respondents According to Household Size.	38
4.6 causes of socio-economic challenges confronting pupil's attendance to school.	40
4.7: Effects of Socio-Economic Challenges on Pupils Attendance	43
4.8 Measures to Reduce Socio-Economic Effects on Pupils Attendance to School.	45



## ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to examine the effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior High School, Sandema in the Builsa North Municipality in the Upper East Region of Ghana. The objectives of the study were to discuss the causes of socio-economic challenges confronting pupils, examine the effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance and to find out measures which could be adopted to reduce socio-economic challenges affecting pupils' attendance. A descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population was pupils and parents of Ayieta Junior High School at Builsa North Municipality. Simple random sampling was used to select 81 respondents, consisting of 10 parents and 71 pupils for the study. Structured questionnaire was used for the study. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages. Reliability test yielded Cronbach Alpha of 0.78. The study found that poverty and parental neglect are the major causes of socio-economic challenges that affect pupil's attendance. School feeding improvement and was the major measures suggested to mitigate the menace of socio-economic challenges impeding pupils' attendance to school. It is recommended based on the study that the Parent Association and the Ghana Education service should organize training workshops on various income generating ventures to enable parents to fulfill their financial obligations in their children's education to promote attendance to school.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Background of the Study**

Sociologists and other special scientists have long been concerned with social and economic inequalities that exist between countries and religions. Socioeconomic challenges have been recognized internationally as one of the major factors that affect the livelihood of human kind. It has become such a life threatening issue which needs to be dealt with to bridge the economic disparities that exist amongst the population (Ansari & Gottfried, 2018).

Socioeconomic is the social science that studies how economic activity affects and shaped by social processes. In general it analyzed how modern societies progress, stagnate or regress because of their local or regional economy or the global economy (Nieuwenhuis, 2018).

Socioeconomic challenges include hunger, unemployment, poor health, illiteracy, corruption, greed, insecurity among others that go a long way to affect the education of the child. The child is a human being between the stages of birth and puberty (Oyeleye & Ifelolowa, 2021). A child is a human being between the stages of birth and puberty or between the development period of infancy and puberty.

Again, UNICEF defined a child as any person under the age of 18 years. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) "children living in socioeconomic challenges are those who experience deprivation of the national, spiritual and emotional resources needed to survive, develop and thrive, leaving them unable to enjoy their rights, achieve their full potentials of society". The Child Fund International (CFI) definition is based on

description (lack of materialistic conditions and service) exclusion (denial of rights and safety) and vulnerability (when society cannot deal with threat to children) other charitable organizations also use this multi- dimensional environmental and emotional factors. These definitions suggest socioeconomic in multi-dimensional, relative to current and changing living condition and complex interactions of the body, mind and emotions are involved

The cycle of socioeconomic challenges are when a family remains in economic and social difficulties over successive generations. For this reason, reducing socioeconomic has been a focus of almost all through benefit schemes or reducing taxes and promoting family value as a way to break. This cycle improving the quality of education provided to the poor is seen by most as the best way to break this cycle. Improving the environment of the child grows up in, ensuring access to health, providing financial incentives are ways to break the cycle.

On the African continent, socioeconomic challenges are predominantly rural. More than seventy (70) percent of the continents poor people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for food and livelihood, yet development for agriculture is declaiming. In sub – Saharan Africa, more than 218 million people live in socioeconomic challenges (African Development Indicators, 2006). Report of UNDP (2003) indicated that in some deeply impoverished nation in sub – Saharan Africa, less than half of the children are in primary school, under twenty (20) percent go to secondary school, and more than forty (40) percent of women do not have access to basic education.

In addition according to African Economic outlook (2022) Russia-Ukraine war around 30 million people in African were pushed in to a lot of socioeconomic challenges in 2021

and about 22 million jobs were lost in the same year because of the pandemic. All these challenges in long round affect all institutions as well as families where children live.

Globally, socioeconomic challenges has become one of the most threatening phenomenon WHO (2002) indicated that hunger and malnutrition are the single gravest contributor to child mortality. Additionally, there are over 100 million street children worldwide as a result of socioeconomic challenges and increased risk of drug abuse is also associated with socioeconomic challenges WHO.

The poorest part of Ghana is the savannah regions of the north comprising the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Region (Sosu & Klein, 2021). Here chronic food insecurity is widespread and livelihoods are more vulnerable. Poor rural people have limited access to basic social service, safe water, roads that are accessible year round and electricity. Socioeconomic challenge is most severe among food crop farmers, who are mainly traditional substance farmers. The effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils attendance to school could be enormous and can lead to lifelong struggles, especially when young people do not receive effective and proper education. Therefore socioeconomic challenges have far reaching effects on the attendance of pupils' in Sandema, Builsa North Municipality.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Access to education especially quality education has improved in recent times especially given the constitutionally enshrined mandate of Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) in Ghana (Sosu & Klein, 2021). Nonetheless, there are certain challenges which confront access to education by most pupils particularly in Ghana.

According to Erin, Miller, Dunne and Moriarty (2022), learners' reaction and response to the provision of education are fundamental in enhancing their academic performance. Unfortunately in the Ayieta Junior High School, Sandema in the Builsa North Municipality in the Upper East Region of Ghana, pupils' response has been somewhat awkward and this is largely attributable to poor attendance to school. In the view Moyo (2017), socio-economic challenges such as parents' low income status and low levels of education, deplorable school infrastructure, exposure to violence and abusive teachers, hunger and social inequality have the tendency of driving pupils from school in search of alternatives for improved livelihoods hence, poor attendance.

Similar research work has been conducted in other areas. However no researcher has conducted such study in the Builsa North Municipality. It is against this background that the study seeks to unravel the effects of socio-economic challenges on pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior High School at Sandema in the Builsa North Municipality.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior High School, Sandema in the Builsa North Municipality in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

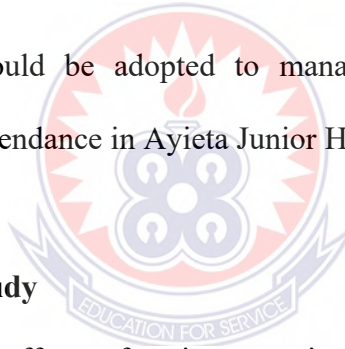
The specific objectives were to:

1. find the causes of socio-economic challenges confronting pupils at Ayieta Junior High School.

2. examine the effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance at Ayieta Junior High School.
3. find out measures that could be adopted to manage socio-economic challenges affecting pupils' attendance at Ayieta Junior High School.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. What are the causes of socioeconomic challenges of pupils' in Ayieta Junior High school at Sandema in the Builsa North Municipality?
2. How do socioeconomic challenges affect pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior School?
3. What measures could be adopted to manage the socioeconomic challenges affecting pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior High School?



### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study investigated the effects of socioeconomic challenges on their attendance. The relevance of this studies would be realized in the following pressingly areas;

This study will serve as an addition to the present knowledge and literature on the effect of socioeconomic challenges on pupil's attendance. Additionally, this research would also serve as a clue by future researchers especially students as a pedestal for their research work in the subject area. Further work could also be done using this as a reference.

Furthermore, this study will be useful source of reference to government and policy makers for policy decisions concerning the effects of socioeconomic challenges on

pupils' attendance. Lastly, it will also serve as data base for Non-Governmental organization (NGO's) and other interested bodies for advance human resources development of the nation.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

The study involved pupils and literate parents of Ayieta Junior High School. The Builsa North Municipality was used as the study area. The study covered the cases of socio-economic challenges confronting pupils at Ayieta Junior High School. Examine the effects of socio-economic challenges on pupils attendance at Ayieta Junior High School. Find out measures to that could be adopted to manage socio-economic challenges affecting pupils attendance at Ayieta Junior High School.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

The questionnaire designed might not be able to gather all the information needed by the researcher from the respondents. This might have affected the validity and full reliability of the researcher finding. Some of the informants were initially unwilling to answer the questionnaire with the reason being that their economic and social status will be exposure. It took a long time for the researcher to convince respondents to answer the questionnaire. This might have also affected the results of the research.

### **1.9 Organization of the Study**

The study is organized in five chapters which include the chapter one that contains the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, the research

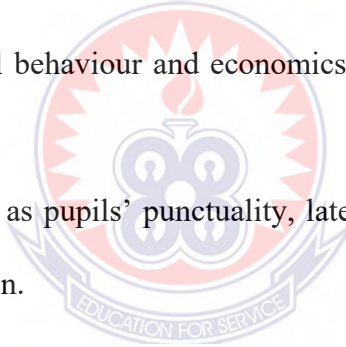


objectives, the research question, significance of the study, delimitation, limitation, and organization of the study and definitions of terms. Chapter two contains the literature review drawn from available reviews. Chapter three describes the methodology of the study. It includes the research design, population sample, sampling techniques, sources of data, data collection procedure, data analysis plan and ethical consideration. Chapter four includes the data presentation, analysis and discussion and chapter five entails the summary, findings, conclusion and recommendation and suggestions for further studies.

### **1.10 Definition of terms**

**Social economics:** Are a social science and a branch of economic that focuses on the relationship between social behaviour and economics. Social economics is also referred to as socioeconomics.

**Attendance:** is referred to as pupils' punctuality, lateness, and attrition at school which tend to affect their education.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This section of the research work aims at placing the study in a scholarly context by reviewing the main contribution made by researchers on the concept of socioeconomic challenges and education and the main connection between them. It uncovers some of the global views that people have shared particularly on the concept of socioeconomic challenges and the ideas expressed on the issues of socioeconomic challenges by some researchers through socioeconomic challenges case studies in the country. This seeks to put the problem in its right perspective.

The literature review was based on five main sections, the first section made up of definition of socioeconomic challenges and related concepts in the field of socioeconomic challenges.

The second section contained literature review on the causes of socioeconomic challenges in Ghana and world at large the third section contains literature on socioeconomic background of parents and the fourth section consisted of the impact of socioeconomic challenges on education and finally socioeconomic challenges on education and strategies. In the context of this study, punctuality, lateness, attrition and inadequate school feeding are all used as part of pupils' attendance.

## 2.1 The Concept of Socioeconomic Challenges

The concept of socioeconomic challenges has undergone a wide range of studies and research over the years (Bukodi & Goldthorpe, 2013). This has brought about a number of definitions explanations being carried for the concept. Socioeconomic challenges may be looked at primarily as a condition of hunger, poverty, unemployment, poor health, illiteracy, corruption, greed, insecurity among others. The oxford Advanced learners Dictionary define socioeconomic challenges as problems relating to social and economics such as unequal access to education World vision define socioeconomic challenges as lacking enough resource such as hunger, poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, poor health, insecurity among others.

Chmielewski (2019) defined socioeconomic challenges a condition in which a person or community lacks the financial resources and essential for a minimum standard of living. This goes without proper housing clean water healthy food and medical attention. The world Bank Organization describe socioeconomic challenges as socioeconomic challenges include hunger, poor health, greed, insecurity, unemployment and many others.

According to Pawlowska, (2020), it is argue that apart from other socioeconomic challenge the community of Ada encounter the residence suffered insecurity and unemployment.

Kallio, Kauppinen, and Erola (2016) equally espoused on socioeconomic challenges. According to him socioeconomic challenges is defined as the inability to commend sufficient resource is to satisfy a socially acceptable minimum standard of living (Kallio et al., 2016). A critical look at may's view of socioeconomic challenges indicate that he

agrees on income which May calls 'resources' as the main instrument for procuring the basic social needs. His definition of socioeconomic challenges is based on the means to acquire the basic needs of life.

Other researchers in to socioeconomic challenges such as perceive socioeconomic challenges based on the needs and ones of the poor (Mafokwane, 2017). Sosu and Schmidt (2017) described socioeconomic challenges as 'pain' characterized by 'continuous, ill health, arduous and often hazardous work for low income no power to influence change and high level of anxiety and stress (Sosu et al., 2017). The implication is that the adverse effect of lacking access to basic socioeconomic needs is a ceaseless pain to the poor. To be poor therefore implies a form of disempowerments (Nieuwenhuis, 2018).

In his investigations Marx (2018) points out that socioeconomic challenges is a condition that prevents people from realizing their potential. This condition manifests in terms of material deprivation lack of assets, isolation vulnerability lacks of decision making power and freedom of choice. This is as a result of the perception that poor and commonly such as having very few possessions which is reflected in their lack of clothing, housing and consumer durables.

Socioeconomic challenges is also associated with insecurity an absence of provision for survival in an emergency inadequate food security and intake and resultant poor nutritional status and poor health as well as poor education or illiteracy (Marx,2018) the various definitions of socioeconomic challenges given by researchers reveal that socioeconomic challenges as a concept refers to different forms of deprivation which can

be expressed in the access to basic needs and human capabilities to participate fully in society.

It is significant to note that socioeconomic challenges is a multidimensional phenomenon which cannot be pinned down to one definition it goes well beyond a simple lack of material consumption or resources to include the psychological pain of being poor, low achievement in education and health, and a sense of vulnerability to external events.

## **2.2 Measurement of socioeconomic challenges.**

Socioeconomic challenges has many faces, changing from place to place and across time, and has been described in many ways (Shaw et al.,2014). Most often, socioeconomic challenges is a situation that people want to escape, and hence socioeconomic challenges is a call to action for the vulnerable. The general mentality behind socioeconomic challenges measurement is that socioeconomic challenges exist when a group of people in a particular society cannot have access to quality education, health care, employment, security among others (American psychological association 2021). They cannot attain a “minimum” level of well- being. The minimum is at least partly dependent upon the prevailing standard of society. However, to know what helps to reduce socioeconomic challenges. What works and what does not, what changes over time, socioeconomic challenges has to be defined, measured, studied and even experienced.

## **2.3 Dimension and Demonstration of Socioeconomic Challenges**

Socioeconomic status, socioeconomic challenges, socioeconomic inequalities has been understood merely as unequal access to quality education, health care, employment.

Income / expenditure socioeconomic challenges traditionally, socioeconomic challenges has been understood merely as an inadequacy of income or consumption in stock terms (Oyeleye, & Ifelolowa, 2021). The financial approach is frequently rationalized such that income or consumption is pressured to represent the maximization of utility or approximate welfare (Oyeleye et al., 2021). Income is critically important, but broader definition of socioeconomic challenges goes well beyond the economic to also account for net assets (including social assets), security, independence and self- respect (Katamei & Omwono, 2015). How these dimensions inter-related provides some understanding of why solution devoted solely to maintaining income oftentimes fail, and in particular fail children who access to, and control over income is extremely marginal.

#### **2.4 Social Dimension, Vulnerability and Exclusion.**

The social dimension to socioeconomic challenges is highly institute cutting across issues relating to education, health, shelter and environment and in some cases political issues (Teh et al., 2018). However, the areas to the social dimension of socioeconomic challenges discussion are related to vulnerability and exclusion. Even though those have cognitive linkages to economic circumstances, the intensity of socioeconomic challenges of individuals leading to deprivations has been largely associated with the social dimension. Lack of inadequate access to food, quality education, improved health, security, unemployment; which increases individual's susceptibility to risk and shock. For instance, the Nieuwenhuis (2018) explains that because the lack of means and to manage risk and to cope with external shock, the first step in analyzing social risk (that is

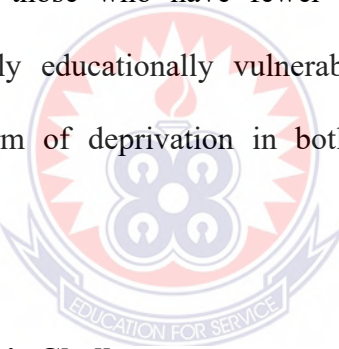
social dimension of socioeconomic challenges) is an assessment of the vulnerability of the lacking population.

According to Kibaara and Kabura (2015), vulnerability is defined as the state of a person or group that influences their capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of a natural hazard. Unfortunately, this definition neglects several other conditions that is a challenge in human welfare and are not natural disaster as the ones identified earlier on. The definition by the Kibaara et al., (2015) is comprehensive and focuses on the processes of and susceptibility to decline in wellbeing of individual's households and communities in the context of changing social cultural, economic and political environment. Consequently, vulnerability is the exposure of individuals and societies to risk, shocks and situations that inflict pain and undesirable impact on their welfare making them worse off than their original situation.

Closely associated to vulnerability in development nomenclature is exclusion. Mostly defined in the context of social dimension of socioeconomic challenges. It refers to the exemption of individual in decision that concern their development. Gershenson, Jackowitz, and Brannegan, (2017) notes exclusion as the situation in which an individual or group of people exempted from the participation of important activities of the society within which they live. Invariably lead to exclusion. This normally arises from the perpetuation institutional barriers and the hindrances of incentives that decrease the access of diverse individual and groups to development opportunities and limits their ability to effect changes in their social wellbeing making the subject an emerging critical component of development and socioeconomic challenges discussions.

## **2.5 Educational Dimension To Socioeconomic Challenges**

When socioeconomic challenges is addressed in multidimensional terms, it becomes apparent that lack education is a critical element of deprivation. For instance, education was one of the original three indicators in the Human Development Index (HDI) by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990. Additionally, the United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO,2010) defined those who have less than four years of schooling as educationally vulnerable to socioeconomic challenges, since this is deemed to be the minimum necessary to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills; and those who have fewer than two years of education are considered to be extremely educationally vulnerable. Indeed, lack of education is commonly cited, as a form of deprivation in both the basic needs and capability approaches to development.



## **2.6 Causes of Socioeconomic Challenges**

A lot of factors account for the high incidence of socioeconomic challenges both locally and globally. Low level of education and skills, lack of productive assets, insecurity, unemployment, health care corruption policy failure and inappropriate targeting of programs, conflicts and wars among others are the factors responsible for the socioeconomic challenges conditions among the Ghanaian populace and the world at large. Additionally to Fuhs, Nesbitt, and Jackson, (2018), many people in both the cities and rural areas of Ghana have allowed their valuable human resources potential to go waste. He emphasized that what the people can do is to drink, smoke, gather, gossip, and



out of envy, plan how to eliminate those who are helping to develop both their physical and social environment.

People who are sometimes capable of investing in their rural communities are afraid to do so for the fear of being killed (Fuhs et al, 2018). An observation can be drawn that the negative attitudes of the people such as laziness and envy are the root causes of socioeconomic challenges in Ghana.

Garcia and Weiss, (2018) also expressed a similar view that it is the deficient character of the vulnerable along with their deviant behaviour and resultant self - reinforcing environment that restrict their access to economic viability and success. Ansari and Gottfried (2018), also gave a view that Ghana's socioeconomic challenges is as result of corruption, both in government and in public position sector. People occupying official positions have to be bribed in order to carry out official duties which they have already been paying for the delivery of such duties all at the expense of the vulnerable Ghanaian. It has also been found that over investment and mismanagement in industry has left Ghana high indebted. It has recently gained help from the World Bank and IMF in the name of infrastructure development and COVID 19 pandemic, but in order to gain loans Ghana has had to comply with certain reforms, including certainty public spending (Ansari et al.,2018).

Kyei (2005) observed that socioeconomic challenges among women in the Northern part of Ghana are cause by lack of control and ownership of resources. He identified that such resources such as land, building, livestock, poultry, Bullock's and labour are owned and controlled by men.

Wives do not have the right to inherit their husband's properties. Awumbila (2004) also affirmed that women in Ghana experience greater socioeconomic challenges than men due to the fact that the women have limited opportunities, capabilities and empowerment in terms of access to and control over productive resources such as land and other property, labour, capital, human capital assets including education and healthy as well as social capital assets such as participation at various levels, legal right and protection. From the explanations Kyei (2005) and Awumbila (2004) had the same reasoning that women are more vulnerable to socioeconomic challenges than their male counterparts. All is because the women are being suppressed and denied the will power to make independent decision with regards to their livelihood.

Another factor identified by scholars as fueling socioeconomic challenges is unemployment. Chinyoka (2014) established that the high rates of unemployment is a major socio-economic challenge. And the weak connection to the labour force is the cause of socioeconomic challenges in the communities. He indicated that unemployment is mostly caused by lack of education and employable skills to meet employer need governments of developing countries often cannot afford to provide for good public schools especially in the rural areas. Whilst virtually all children industrialized countries have access to an education, only about 60 percent of children in sub - Saharan Africa even attend elementary school (UNICEF, 2004). From the view of Chinyoka (2014) without education one will find it difficult getting income generating work.

War breeds socioeconomic challenges as no other product of man can do within the African continent. According to Ansari, Hofkens, and Pianta, (2020), one in every five Africans live in a country prevail with aimed conflict. He observed that local warlords

seeking to expand their control to national armies clashing with their neighbors or their own citizenry truly the people can barely grow food enough to feed themselves. War destroys infrastructure and prevent a building of any beneficial works that may raise the people out of their condition (Ansari et al., 2020).

Engzell, Frey, and Verhagen, (2021) lamented that the great incidence of disease coupled with little or no health care also takes a toll on the populace and their ability to increase their efforts to rise out of an endemic socioeconomic challenges. According to the United Nations (2002) two million people die annually just from AIDS with another twenty - four million becoming infected with the HIV virus. Poor sanitation methods add two million deaths a year, mostly with their young, from malaria. The question one will ask is, how, that young generation is being at such high risk, what reproductive forces a community victimized by HIV / AIDS menace will hang on for survival. Also currently, the novel coronavirus (COVID 19) alone, which till date appears incurable, has already killed over 50,000 people daily and claimed more than 1.3 million lives in less than a year ( World meter,2020) and is still posing further threats to the world.

Globally, over population is one of the causes of socioeconomic challenges (Engzell et al.,2021). A country is level of socioeconomic challenges can depend on its mix of population density and agriculture productivity. Bangladesh for example has one of world's highest population densities, with 1,147 persons per square kilometer (UNO). A large majority of the people of Bangladesh engage in low productive manual farming which contributes to the country's extremely high level of socioeconomic challenges. From the explanation, it can be deduced that socioeconomic challenges situation get worse when the population outnumber the limited resources. One of the more entrenched

sources of socioeconomic challenges throughout the world is social inequality that stems from cultural ideas about the relative worth of different genders, race ethnic groups and social class. Ascribed inequality works by placing individuals in different social categories at birth, often based on religious, ethnic or racial characteristics. In South Africa, history Apartheid law defined a binary caste system that assigned different rights (or lack thereof) and social space to whites and blacks, using skin colour to automatically determine the opportunities available to individuals in each group (Bukodi et al., 2013). The literature on the causes of socioeconomic challenges indicates that people are not born poor but lack of personal innovations and equal access to resources could push them into socioeconomic challenges.

### **2.7 Comparing socioeconomic background of parents in relation to education.**

Family background is a key to a student's life and outside of school, is the most important influence on student learning and includes factors such as parental educational level. Parental employment type of occupation family income level, place of residence and ethnicity and religion (Cooper & Stewart, 2021). The home environment is a primary agent of socialization that influences a child's interest in school and aspirations for the future.

According to Erin, Miller, Dunne and Moriarty (2022), mothers who are more educated and have higher self-esteem have children who are high academic achievers. On the other hand, most uneducated mothers are always compromising the future of their school-going daughters by soliciting men for them. Gee (2018) expressed a similar concern that education may increase women's bargaining power within the household, giving them

more control over the family income again, increasing home investments in the child. It is important to note that educated parents place higher priority and value on education whilst parents who have not gone through formal education might not see the benefits of education. Another factor of parent's socioeconomic background is employment, Moyo (2017) outlined that parents who are gainfully employed either in private or public sector stand the chance of planning very well for their children educational needs. He indicated that parents who earn regular income like monthly salary can meaningfully contribute to the insurance of their children as well as their educational welfare fund. The and Otman, (2018) had a contrary view that parents within the formal sector who are self-employed can equally plan well towards their children's education. He argued that such parents only need to be enlightened on the diverse ways of investing in their children such as insurance schemes, cold welfare and educational endowment fund among others. It is obvious that parents who really self-employed especially in the agricultural sector will not have it easy with their children's education when the unpredictable weather fail them. Family income level is another socioeconomic background factor that has relationship with academic attainment of children. Sosu and Klein, (2021) affirms that children coming from home with higher level of possessions typically could easily have access to a wider variety of stimulus materials and better access to information sources such as the internet. Allen, Way, and Casillas, (2019) had a similar view that children from weather families are expected to have more items related to learning in their homes such as books, computers internet facilities among others. In a case where a child happens to have access to a computer both at home and at school, has the chance of achieving better academic results then a child who only uses a computer at school (Ramokone et al.,2022)

The issue of family income level is being challenged by many researchers. Research findings indicate that sometimes misplaced priorities and low value for education are to blame for poor enrollment of children in school as well as school dropouts. It is sad mentioning that an irresponsible behaviour of some parents such as drunkenness is a major factor that militates against educational ambitions of some children. In most rural areas in the three northern regions, parents use all that they accrue from their farm produce and livestock on expensive funerals at the expense of their children education.

Mainstream sociologists have found that single – parent households have a negative impact on the education of children. Allensworth, Balfanz, Rogers, and Demarzi, (2021) indicated that single – parent households, may have less school involvement and parent supervision. Studies have indicated that adolescents raised in communities with large numbers of single – parent households are at greater risk of high academic attrition and antisocial behaviour due to peer pressure. It is imperative to note that children under the care of both parents will definitely grow to become responsible and brainy because of adequate parental discipline and motivation. Geographical location or places of residence cannot be left out so far as parents socioeconomic background is concerned. Bukodi et al.,(2019) stated categorically that in urbanized parts of every country, it is seen that children have more chance to have education since there is always concentration of good schools with better tuition. One cannot lose sight of the fact that parents who reside in more affluent areas are more likely to have their children performing well at school than those from areas of deprivation. From example, children who live with their parents in the cities like Kumasi and Accra will have access to electricity to work on their

homework whilst their counterparts in remote villages and cottages strain their eyes on their books by kind courtesy of moonlight and lanterns.

## **2.8 Socioeconomic challenges that affect Education**

Education is a child's right and not privilege in Ghana. The development of education in Ghana since independence has been and continues to be guided by various education acts and programs. The most fundamental being the educational Act of 1961 which is the principal legislation on children's right to education the 1992 constitution of Ghana gives further impetus to the provision of education as a right for all Ghanaians. Education in this context is that form of instruction that occurs in formal institutional settings both as compulsory basic education as well as secondary and education. Education is the bedrock to one's success in life. It affects occupational success as well as upgrading of technical skills of individuals. Poverty is currently known to be the world's largest source of harm, causing many school dropouts, suffering and misery than any other social phenomenon (Erin et al., 2022). Poverty attack people especially parents not only materially but also normally, eats away their dignity and ability to cater for their children's education. Many children both nationally and internationally have been denied the right to education by their parents because of economic constraints

## **2.9 How Socioeconomic Challenges affect Attendance**

Education is a child's right and not privilege in Ghana. The development of education in Ghana since independence has been and continues to be guided by various education acts and programs. The most fundamental being the educational Act of 1961 which is the

principal legislation on children's right to education. The 1992 constitution of Ghana gives further impetus to the provision of education as a basic right for all Ghanaians. Education in this context is that form of instruction that occurs in formal institutional settings both as compulsory basic education as well as secondary and tertiary education. Education is the bedrock to one's success in life. It affects occupational success as well as upgrading of technical skills of individuals (Chmielewski, 2019). Socioeconomic challenges is currently known to be the world's largest source of harm; causing many school attendance dropouts, suffering and misery than any other social phenomenon. Socioeconomic challenges attack people especially parents not only materially but also normally, eats away their dignity and ability to cater for their children's education. Many children both nationally and internationally have been denied the right to education by their parents because of economic constraints. According to Gee(2018), primary school net enrolment declined from (72. 0) percent in 1988 to (68.2) percent in 1989 as result of parent's inability to bear the financial cost of their children's education. The benefits of education result in change in people behaviour as a consequence of the knowledge gained to improve the living standards of communities and contribute to the social and economic development of the nation at large. However, these benefits to a society are particularly large when female education improves meanwhile, a person's education is closely linked to his or her life chances, income and well-being. Therefore, it is important to have a clear understanding of what hinders one's educational attainment.

It found that poor nutrition affects the ability of children to learn. Studies have shown that stunted children are less likely to enroll in school, and if they enroll, are more likely to dropout (UNESCO EFA,2006). The EFA global monitoring report and states that more



than a quarter of children below five years of age in sub-Saharan African are underweight due to poor diet and malnutrition, making them more vulnerable to diseases and less able to concentrate at school. According to Patrinos (2007) there is ample evidence that early nutritional and health status as well as nutrition when children are already at school have strong beneficial effects on their ability to learn. Conversely, poorly fed children find it difficult to concentrate at school, which provides strong support for school feeding schemes in poor countries and communities.

Glewwe (2007) also expounds on the effect of socioeconomic challenges on education by stating that home circumstances are often not conducive to learning in many poor communities. He stressed that these include factors such as lack of lighting, spending much time on domestic chores, having no desk or table to work on, or absence of books in the house. Hong (2000) also explained that some households that may not be poor at a particular point in time are vulnerable to socioeconomic challenges due to economic shocks such as bad harvest unemployment or the death of a bread winner. Like socioeconomic challenges, vulnerability often also translates in the poor educational result and intermittent participation in school. It can be observed from Hong's submission that conditions are not permanent hence when preparing for the best, be ready to also for the worst. According to Morrison (2002), the financial cost of school is often high, making it difficult for poor parents to afford schooling for their wards. Such financial cost includes not only school fees, but also other direct cost such as cost of transport, school uniforms and books, personal equipment, and to provide in-kind service for the construction and maintenance of primary school. Young (1999) concluded that in addition to financial costs, there are also non – financial cost, such as the opportunity cost

of spending on children to school. He emphasized that rural areas in particular, many children may be involved in agricultural activities or domestic duties, so sending them to school involves an opportunity cost to the household.

Filmer (2001) raised a concern that reducing the costs associated with education including school fees, is likely to improve school attendance most among the poor. The World Bank (2004) also noted that poor are often the last to enroll in basic education. If educational quality is high, then poor people are more likely not attend than rich people because they cannot afford the facility fees. On the other hand, scholars argue that it may not necessary be the costs of schooling that will reduce the demand for education among the poor but the benefits of education especially in rural areas may be low or not yet well understood.

UNICEF (2004) found that in poor countries the lack of educational resources in schools sometimes make learning extremely difficult. In many of the poorest countries, the right combination of resources may also be quite important (World Bank, 2004). In a situation where there are no good textbooks or other classroom resources, teachers can not necessarily improve the quality of learning. Most developing countries find it difficulty to get good teachers to teach in rural areas because of poor infrastructure. In rich countries for example, good teachers often avoid poor schools because of the greater difficulty to teaching poor children Rosenberg (2008) established that improvised children do not have the same experience to later build their learning from as compare to their counterparts in rich homes. He put stress on that children living in socioeconomic challenges do not have the opportunity to go to the zoo, the children's museum, wild life

conservation, to note that even though many impoverished parents care deeply about their children's education, they are unable to do much because of economic constraints

Kleinman (2003) also stated categorically that not only does socioeconomic challenges affect children's well-being, but it impacts their education as well. He indicated that generally children from homes living under the socioeconomic challenges line have poorer performance in school. Such performance has also been linked as far back as cognitive and emotional development which is lower in socioeconomic challenges stricken children those children who live in homes whose income is above the socioeconomic challenges line. The question one will ask is what is it exactly that creates a rift between children from low income homes and those living above the socioeconomic challenges line. Generally, less income means less opportunity for educational activities and learning experiences. In this way children from low income background have less experience to draw upon when learning new concepts. As a result, it can also mean fewer chances to apply the newly acquired knowledge and in turn retention of this knowledge can be minimized (Minkler, 1999). Essentially, teachers should become aware of the need to implement new types of lessons such as "learn by doing" that can cater for all students and allow them build learning blocks to use in future.

According to social issues that affect the educational performance of children from poor homes is emotional trauma. Brophy (2000) argues that poor children suffer from negative peer group effects when they are isolated or do not reap the potential positive peer group effects when they are in schools with more advantaged peer because they often remain socially isolated from these peers. It is worthy nothing that emotional draining and

negative self – status can literally whip the motivation to learn out of children. Haberman (1995) suggests that with emotionally damaged children, the burden rests on teachers as well as on educational authorities to find ways to generate and maintain student interest and involvement on a consistent basis by making classrooms safe, accepting, interesting and engaging places.

In comparative analysis, Bernard (1995) outlined that children of poor background generally achieved at lower levels than their counterparts of middle and upper classes. The factors responsible for these disparities he mentioned are many and are related to the social environment in which poor children live and the education they receive in the school. Ciaccio (2000) necessitated that factors such as quality of children learning behaviours, home environment past experiences with education, and teacher attitudes are among the many influences on children's academic achievement and success of all children by viewing them as at promise rather than at risk and preparing them to reach their full potential. Raffo (2007) asserts that children from poor background and poor neighbourhoods are often poorly motivated to do well at school. He cited an instance where a child has forgone classes for a number of days to help the parents on the farm. Children at certain times too can be sent by their parents to market to engage in buying and selling for their daily bread at the expense of learning in the classroom. It is obvious that children who keep absenting themselves from school on the request of their parents always lag behind in the mainstream academically. According to Ghana news agency (2003), mothers are actually performing the functions of “pimps” by negotiating for their daughters in basic school to serve and sleep with young men, in exchange for money. The young men are mainly tertiary level students living in and around their communities at Cape Coast

municipality. In a sad note, some of these mothers have justified their act by blaming it on socioeconomic challenges and current difficult economic situation in the country. Basically, it is clear that socioeconomic challenges has negative impact on education children from poor families live in environments with social conditions over which they have little control. It is not also their choice that their parents may be unemployed or disabled. It was not their choice to be born in to socioeconomic challenges. They feel they have no control over the nature and quality of their lives (Brophy, 1998; Bandura, 2001).

### **2.10 Theoretical Underpinings**

Sociological and psychological theories suggest children from families with lower SES face several structural barriers that affect their developmental and educational outcomes (Kallio, Kauppinen, & Erola, 2016; Bukodi & Goldthorpe, 2013). These theories provide insight into how family SES can lead to increased risks of school absenteeism.

According to Chinyoka (2014), children's developmental outcomes are determined by their interactions with their environment. SES influences school absenteeism by shaping children's dispositions, resources, immediate and distal environments such as neighbourhoods, and how they interact with these environments (Gottfried & Gee, 2017).

Other theoretical perspectives attempt to explore the possible mediating pathways by which family economic circumstances determine educational outcomes, including school absences. These theories suggest that family income position may influence absenteeism through developmental, health, neighbourhood, family discord, parenting, and school alienation mechanisms.

With regard to developmental, health, and neighbourhood mechanisms, the ‘investment model’ suggests that economic hardship restricts lower SES families to invest in proper nutrition, health, housing, neighbourhood, and other inputs that improve a child’s well-being (Shaw & Shelleby, 2014). Poor health and well-being outcomes arising from a lack of financial resources may decrease children’s school attendance.

The role of family discord and parenting is detailed by the ‘family stress model’ (Shaw & Shelleby, 2014). In this model, familial economic pressures and the strain of having fewer resources available for day-to-day living will increase psychological distress among parents. Such stressors result in greater family conflict, separation, and unresponsive parenting styles, leading to inadequate monitoring of children’s school attendance. Family stress is also associated with punitive parenting, leading to childhood conduct problems (Sosu & Schmidt, 2017), a known risk antecedent of absenteeism.

Ramokone et al.,(2022) on ‘cultural capital theory’ provides insight on how schools may alienate children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. The cultural capital theory argues that schools are based on middle-class ideals and, therefore, particularly suit children from these backgrounds. Thus, children from disadvantaged social classes may feel alienated and disengaged from school practices, leading to lower school attendance.

A common thread in all theories is that SES determines circumstances in which children grow and develop. These circumstances play a significant role in shaping school behaviour, including attendance. However, they emphasise different factors (e.g., developmental, health, neighbourhood, family discord, parenting and school alienation) as the key mediator of the SES-absenteeism association.

Overall, the mechanisms by which SES is associated with school absenteeism are multifaceted and may depend on the operationalisation of SES and the nature of school absenteeism. The consequences of living in socioeconomic disadvantages such as poor health, behaviour problems, or exposure to crime are all likely to contribute to the association between SES and children's school attendance (Burdick-Will ,2019). While empirical evidence suggests these factors are associated with absenteeism, limited research on these mechanisms exist. As argued earlier, understanding how different SES dimensions are associated with school absenteeism will provide further insights into the dominant mediating pathways.



## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

The research methodology employed in undertaking this study is explained in this chapter. The research design, population, sampling technique and sample size, data collection procedures and the data analysis procedures are being described.

#### 3.1 Research Design

According to Adrian and Saunders (2011), research design is a significant part of research which basically must be the most appropriate to appropriately measure what is being measured and obtain the data that will lead to a valid conclusion.

The researcher adopted the descriptive survey design using the quantitative approach for the study. This method was found to be suitable because the method deals with questions concerning what exists with respect to variables or conditions in a situation (Adrian & Saunders, 2011). A descriptive survey design is appropriate when a researcher attempts to describe some aspects of a population by selecting unbiased samples who are asked to complete questionnaires, interviews and tests. Descriptive survey design has its advantages and disadvantages. An advantage of descriptive survey design is that it gives researchers a lot of information from various respondents. Also the data collected are easy to analyze. However, descriptive survey design has a shortcoming of how to retrieve all questionnaires distributed to respondents.



### **3.2 Population of the Study**

Population is defined as the entire group of persons living at a particular place from which a sample could be chosen and about which conclusion could be drawn and generalizations made (Kusi, 2012). Target population refers to the entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in generalizing the conclusions (Kusi, 2012). The target population comprised all pupils and parents in all basic schools at the Builsa North Municipality. Accessible population of pupils and parents of the selected school according to the municipality directorate of education was made up of 71 pupils and 10 parents. The assessable population consisted of 61 males and 20 females, Builsa North Municipal directorate (2022). Out of the assessable population, there were 71 pupils and 10 parents.

### **3.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size**

A sample size is a specific group of individuals from a population for data collection (Kusi, 2012). There are two types of sampling techniques namely the probability sampling which involves simple random, systematic, stratified and non-probability sampling comprising purposive, convenience etc. (Creswell, 2012). In order to get an appropriate sample size for the study, a list of all JHS three students and their literate parents in Ayieta JHS was obtained from the head teacher and parent association secretary respectively.

The lottery type of the simple random sampling technique was used to select 81 respondents consisting of 10 literate parents and 71 pupils of Ayieta Junior High School

for the study. According to Krecjie and Morgan (1970), in determining sample size in research, for a population of 101, the sample size should be 81.

### **3.4 Data Collection Instrument**

A research instrument is a specific mechanism or strategy, the researcher uses to collect, manipulate, or interpret data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The researcher used questionnaire to collect data for the study. White (2005) stated that questionnaires are instruments that are designed to collect data for decision making in research. The questionnaire consisted of four sections. A questionnaire is easy to administer to a large population. Questionnaires also require less time and money compared to other methods like such as focus group discussions and interviews. Respondents are limited to only the areas indicated in the questionnaires, and do not give room for self-expression.

Section A demanded responses on background information of respondents, section B dealt with causes of socio-economic challenges confronting pupils, section C sought respondent's views on effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance while section D covered measures to reduce socio-economic challenges affecting pupils' attendance. The questionnaire was mostly likert- typed scale. According to Sarankos (2005), likert scale allows response to be ranked and it is easy to construct.

### **3.5 Pre-Testing of the Instrument**

The purpose for pre-testing is to get the bugs out of the instrument so that the respondents in the study area will experience no difficulties in completing the questionnaire and also

enable one to have preliminary analysis to see whether the wording and format of questions is appropriate (Bell, 2008).

The questionnaire was pre-tested to determine its validity and reliability. Thirty questionnaires were administered to 30 respondents, selected randomly from the Weisi Junior High School in the Builsa South District which was not part of the study area but had similar characteristics. The purpose of the pilot-test was to enable the researcher to make the necessary changes to items which may be inappropriate and also determine the level of ambiguity of the questions for corrections. Ambiguous items were reframed while inappropriate items were deleted. The data was pre-tested using Cronbach Alpha which yielded 0.78. Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistency in its results or data after repeated trials. The questionnaire was administered on the same group of respondents twice in the pilot study as stated, with a two week interval between the first and the second test and the coefficient of reliability from the two tests correlated. The reliability test yielded Cronbach alpha of 0.78.

### **3.6 Validity and Reliability**

#### **Validity**

Validity is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. The researcher tested the face and content validity of the questionnaire. To achieve faced validity, the questionnaire was given to the supervisor to find out whether the items measure the intended purpose. Content validity was achieved when the supervisor found out whether the instrument adequately covered all the research questions and hypotheses.

The supervisor found out whether the items measure specific construct. The validity test enabled the researcher to redesigned and deleted items which were found to be unclear and misleading.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedure**

After approval of the research by the supervisor, an introduction letter was obtained from Head of Educational Department of the University. The researcher then paid a courtesy call to the Municipal Directorate of Education to inform him of the study. This was done to enable the researcher gain access to the schools. The head was contacted and the purpose of the study was explained. The researcher also established rapport with the students and parents to enable them feel at home in completing the questionnaire. The questionnaire was thereafter administered to the students and parents during break time and at an agreed date during parent association meeting respectively. The researcher was present to explain items which were unclear. The respondents were given one week to fill the questionnaire after which the questionnaire was collected.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Plan**

The data were cleaned with the aim of identifying mistakes and errors which may have been made and blank spaces which have not been filled. A codebook for the questionnaire was prepared to record the response. The data were then computed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software package version 22.0. The data collected were analyzed with simple descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequencies to answer all the research questions.

### **3.9 Ethical Consideration**

Ethics are sets of principles for good professional practice, which serve to advise and guide researchers as they conduct their work taking into account morality, integrity and the distinction between right and wrong (Ofori, 2020). The researchers avoided the falsification and distortion of data or the methods of data collection and plagiarizing others works (Asante, 2016). The researcher ensured the proper referencing all consulted literature and data. No data was falsified. Data were fully and correctly reported based on how the research was conducted. The researcher also prevented personal bias from influencing the results that were obtained from the study.

Respondents were further assured that information collected would strictly be used for academic purposes. The confidentiality of the respondents were assured to develop trust, promote their integrity.



## CHAPTER FOUR

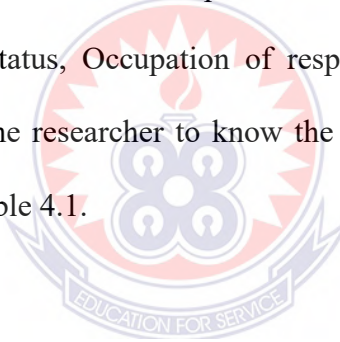
### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

The focus of the study was on the effects of socio-economic challenges on pupils' attendance at Ayieta Junior High School. This chapter presents the results of data collected together with discussions of results. The presentation of results is in tandem to the order of the specific objectives.

#### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents of the study comprising the gender, age, highest educational status, Occupation of respondents and Household size were surveyed. These assisted the researcher to know the nature of respondents used for the study. This is shown in Table 4.1.



#### Gender of Respondents

**Table: 4.1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender.**

Statement	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	61	75
	Female	20	25
<b>Total</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data (2022)

From the study findings in table 4.1, majority of the respondents were males represented by 75% (61) while the rest were Females represented by 25% (20). These findings depict

that male respondents were more in representation as compared to their female counterparts.

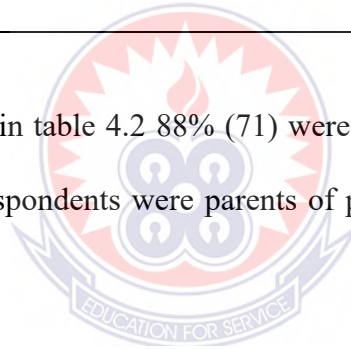
### Age group of respondents

**Table: 4.2 distribution of respondents by Age**

Statement	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age group	14-19 years	71	88
	41-45 years	8	10
	64+	2	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data (2022)

According to the findings in table 4.2 88% (71) were between 14-19 years in the school, 10% (8) and 2% (2) of respondents were parents of pupils between 41-45 years and 46 and above respectively.



**Table: 4.3 Educational status of respondents 4.3 distribution of respondents according to educational status.**

Statement	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Educational status of respondents	Pupils	71	88
	JHS/SHS	2	2
	Tech/Voc	3	4
	Tertiary	5	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data (2022)

Table 4.3 above showed that 71 representing 88% of respondents were pupils, 2 (2%) were also JHS/SHS graduate, 3 (4%) respondent's attained Tech/Voc and 5 (6%) were Tertiary graduates.

### Occupation of Respondents

**Table: 4.4 Distribution of Respondents by Occupation**

Statement	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Occupation of respondent	Pupils	71	88
	Petty trading	2	2
	Farming	3	4
	Public employee	5	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data (2022)

From table 4.4 above, 71 of the respondents were pupils representing 88%, 2(2%) were petty traders 3 (4%) were farmers and 5 respondents representing 6% were public employees.

### Household size

**Table 4.5 Distribution of Respondents According to Household Size.**

Statement	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Household size	Below 5	34	42
	5-10	42	52
	Above 10	5	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data (2022)



Table 4.5 showed that 34 of respondent's representing 42% household were below 5, 42 (52%) were 5 respondent's representing 6%.

### **Analysis of Main Data**

#### **Research Question1: What are the causes of socioeconomic challenges of pupils' in Ayieta Junior High school at Sandema in the Builsa North Municipality?**

The respondents were asked a number of questions relating to causes of socioeconomic challenges of pupils' in Ayieta Junior High school. Table 4.2 shows the result.



**Table 4.6 causes of socio-economic challenges confronting pupil's attendance to school.**

STATEMENTS	SA		A		FA		N		D		SA		TOTAL	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Death of parent	10	12	23	28	6	7	7	9	10	12	25	31	<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>
Divorce	3	4	16	20	4	5	28	35	23	28	7	9	<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>
Unemployment of guardian	2	3	26	32	8	10	14	17	17	21	14	17	<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>
Teenage pregnancy	19	24	28	35	2	3	10	12	11	14	11	14	<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>
Lack of funds	53	65	23	28	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	4	<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>
Parental neglect	47	58	27	33	0	0	0	0	2	2	5	6	<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>
Deplorable school infrastructure	40	49	10	12	1	1	2	2	7	9	21	26	<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>
Child labour	8	10	6	7	21	26	1	1	13	16	32	40	<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data (2022)

From Table 4.6, 25(31%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that death of parents is not a socio-economic cause affecting pupils' attendance at school, 23(28%) however agreed with the assertion, 10(12%) each disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively, 7(9%) were neutral while 6(7%) fairly agreed. The response shows majority of the respondents strongly disagreed that demise of a parent was a socio-economic cause challenging pupils' attendance at school.

Again, divorce as a socio-economic challenge affecting pupils' attendance showed that 28(35%) of the respondents were neutral, 23(29%) disagreed, 16(20%) agreed while 7(9%) strongly disagreed.

Additionally, 26(32%) agreed that unemployment of guardian was a socio-economic challenge impeding pupils' attendance, 17(21%) disagreed, 14(17%) each strongly disagreed and were neutral as regards the subject matter while 8(10%) and 2(3%) fairly agreed and strongly agreed respectively.

Moreover, 28(35%) of the respondents agreed that teenage pregnancy was a socio-economic challenge affecting pupils' attendance, 19(24%) strongly agreed, 11(14%) each strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively.

With respect to lack of funds as a cause of socio-economic challenge affecting pupils' attendance, 53(65%) strongly agreed to the assertion, 23(28%) also agreed, 3(4%) strongly disagreed while a little over 1(1%) were neutral and 1 (1%) disagree.

Furthermore, 47(58%) strongly agree and 27(33%) agreed and agreed that parental neglect is a socio-economic cause for pupils' absenteeism at school, even though 5(6%) strongly disagreed.

As regards, deplorable school infrastructure impeding pupils' attendance, 40(49%) strongly agree and 10(12%) agree to the statement, while 21(26%) strongly disagreed and 7(9%) only disagreed.

Finally, 32(40%) and 21(26%) strongly disagreed and fairly agreed respectively that child labor is a socio-economic challenge restricting pupils' attendance, 13(16%) and 8(10%) however disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

**Research Question 2: How do socioeconomic challenges affect pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior School?**

The respondents were asked a number of questions relating to extent socioeconomic challenges affect pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior School. Table 4.3 shows the result.



**Table 4.7: Effects of Socio-Economic Challenges on Pupils Attendance**

STATEMENTS	SA		A		FA		N		D		SA		TOTAL	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Socio-economic challenges that affect pupil's punctuality at school.	69	85	3	4	1	1	3	4	4	5	1	1	81	100
Socio-economic challenges that cause pupil's lateness to school	47	58	16	20	1	1	8	10	6	7	3	4	81	100
Pupils are reluctant to attend school due to inadequate school feeding.	12	15	49	60	9	11	5	6	2	2	4	5	81	100
There is high pupils attrition due to socio-economic challenges	51	63	14	17	7	9	1	1	4	5	4	5	81	100

Source: Field Data (2022)

The second objective sought to peruse the effects of socio-economic challenges on pupils' attendance at school.

The response shows that 69(85%) strongly agreed that it affects pupils' punctuality, 4(5%) disagreed, 3(4%) agreed and 3 (4%) were neutral while a little over 1(1%) strongly disagreed and fairly agreed respectively. Indeed, socio-economic challenges affect punctuality of pupils.

Secondly, 47(58%) and 16(20%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively that socio-economic challenges is the number one effect of lateness at school, 8(10%) were neutral while 6(7%) disagree and 3(4%) strongly disagree. The response shows that socio-economic challenges represent the effects of lateness to school by pupils.

Thirdly, 49(60%) agreed, 12(15%) strongly agreed and 9(11%) fairly agreed, that inadequate school feeding is a socio-economic challenge impeding pupils' attendance. However, 4(5%) and 2(2%) strongly disagreed and disagreed with the assertion respectively.

Lastly, 51(63%) strongly, 14(17%) agreed and 7(9%) fairly agreed each strongly agreed, agreed and fairly agreed that socio-economic challenges affect pupils' attrition/dropout from school. However, 4(5%) strongly disagreed and 4(5%) disagreed with that assertion.

**Research Question3: What measures could be adopted to reduce the socioeconomic challenges affecting pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior High School?**

The respondents were asked a number of questions relating to measures to reduce the socioeconomic challenges affecting pupils' attendance. Table 4.4 shows the result.

**Table: 4.8 Measures to Reduce Socio-Economic Effects on Pupils Attendance to School.**

STATEMENTS	SA		A		FA		N		D		SA		TOTAL	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Provision of free school uniform, textbooks and furniture.	10	12	30	37	6	7	7	9	8	10	20	25	81	100
School feeding	3	4	73	90	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	81	100
Improved infrastructure and library complex.	1	1	29	36	0	0	8	10	17	21	26	32	81	100
Improved means of transport to distant schools.	19	23	48	59	2	2	2	2	4	5	6	7	81	100
Monthly income to support families with low income	53	65	23	29	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	4	81	100
Agricultural extension service for farmers.	77	96	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	81	100
Enforce child labour law	26	32	10	12	1	1	2	2	7	9	35	43	81	100

Source: Field Data (2022)

The last objective sought to determine and recommend measures that could be taken to mitigate the effects of socio-economic challenges on pupils' attendance.

The first measure considered was provision of free uniforms, textbooks and furniture. The response gathered showed that, 30(37%) agreed, 20(25%) strongly disagreed and 10(12%) strongly agreed with that assertion. However, 8(10%) disagreed, 7(9%) neutral and 6(7%) fairly agreed.

As to whether school feeding could mitigate the socio-economic challenges on pupils' attendance, a whopping 73(90%) respondents agreed with that assertion while a little over 3(4%) strongly agreed and, 1(1%), fairly agreed, 1(1%) strongly disagreed, 1(1%) disagreed and 1(1%) remained neutral. This suggests that the school feeding program should be improved and taken seriously by stakeholders as it has what it takes to address the canker in Ayieta Junior High School in the Upper East Region.

Additionally, improved infrastructure and library complex as a measure showed that, 29(36%) agreed, and 26(32%) strongly disagreed respectively. However, 17(21%) disagree, 8(10%) remained neutral and 1(1%) strongly agreed. on the subject matter.

More so, improved transport to distant school as a measure to curb the menace showed that, 48(59%) agreed, 19(23%) strongly agreed and 6(7%) strongly disagreed, 4 (5%) disagree, (2 (2%) were neutral, 2 (2%) fairly agreed. This shows that provision of buses to selected Junior High Schools to convey pupils to and from work could improve pupils' attendance at school.

Furthermore, provision of monthly income support to families with low income as a measure to mitigate the menace showed that 53(65%) strongly agreed and 3(4%) strongly disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that this measure could improve on pupils'



attendance. However, 23(29%) agreed, and 1(1%) disagreed, 1(1%) remained neutral with the assertion. Perhaps, steps could be taken to augment the economic status of families with low incomes so as to assist pupils to go to school.

Again, 77(96%) strongly agreed that agricultural extension services to farmers would help these farmers to generate enough income from their farming activities and take care of their wards in school even though 2(2%) agreed and 1(1%) strongly disagreed and fairly agreed respectively with this assertion.

Lastly, 35(43%) strongly disagreed, 26(32%) strongly agreed and 10(12%) agreed, that enforcement of child labour laws would help ameliorate pupils' attendance at school. However, 7(9%) disagreed, 2(2%) were neutral, and 1(1%) fairly agreed on the subject matter.

The current study aimed to systematically peruse evidence on the relationship between socio-economic challenges and pupils' absenteeism at Ayieta Junior High School, Builsa North in the Upper East Region.

Overall, most findings on causes of socio-economic challenges confronting the pupils in Ayieta Junior High School showed that lack of funds scored 65% and parental neglect was 58% constituting the major causes. The strong evidence of socioeconomic differences in absenteeism among populations known to be at a higher risk of absenteeism (low-income students, those with a disability or at risk of irresponsible parenthood) also suggests an accumulation of multiple disadvantages in the educational trajectory of the most vulnerable children and this has been corroborated by several empirical findings (Kallio *et al.*, 2016; Erin *et al.*, 2022). Socioeconomic risks may, therefore, intersect with other disadvantages to influence school absenteeism. These

possible interaction effects should be taken into account in research, policy and practice interventions to address school absenteeism. Despite support for socioeconomic differences in absenteeism, almost half of empirical studies (47%) from high-income contexts found an association that can be considered as very small ‘positive’, tiny ‘positive’ or very small ‘negative.’ Although the reasons for these weak associations require further investigation, evidence on whether associations differ by socio-economic challenges (SEC) dimensions provides some insights. Other scholars have found that studies using parental education yield smaller effect sizes than studies using free or reduced-price lunch or composite SEC scores. This may suggest that sociocultural resources play a less decisive role in determining pupils’ school attendance than financial endowments. There was also greater evidence suggesting that SEC at the family rather than school level is associated with school absenteeism depicted by poverty, parental neglect. A tentative conclusion from our review is that family-level processes (Bourdieu, 1977; Bronfenbrenner, 1993; Mayer, 1997; Conger *et al.*, 2010) arising from low SES have more detrimental effects on absenteeism than school-level processes. A key implication is that interventions to reduce social disparities in school absenteeism need to include support that addresses family-level economic circumstances.

The second objective sought to find the effects of the socio-economic challenges on pupils’ attendance. The results showed that socio-economic challenges affect pupils’ and high attrition/dropout. Punctuality was 85% and attrition/dropout was 63%. Given that frequently absent students miss out on important learning experiences that influence their educational achievement (Oyeleye *et al.*, 2021; Gershenson *et al.*, 2018; Morrissey *et al.*, 2014), socioeconomic inequalities in school absenteeism likely play an important role in

socioeconomic disparities in educational achievement. This suggests a need for an explicit focus on addressing socioeconomic disparities in school attendance to close the achievement gap.

The third objective was on measures that could curb the effects of socio-economic challenges on pupils' attendance at Ayieta Junior High School. By far, school feeding and extension of agricultural services to farmers were those recommended by the respondents. Out of these 90% recommended school feeding and 96% recommended extension of agricultural services to farmers. Free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) was the most widely used SEC dimension by other scholars (Katamei et al., 2015; Mafokwane; Sosu et al., 2021). Consistent with the above scholars' findings, the study also used the school feeding program as one of the variables to curb SEC on pupils' attendance. However, this measure is commonly regarded as a poor operationalization of a family's economic conditions (The et al., 2018) because this intervention is offered by government directly to pupils, which has no direct impact on family livelihood. Most studies focused on measuring overall absenteeism (e.g., the number of half-days absent during a school year) or out-of-school suspension. Fewer studies focused on the association between family Socio-Economic Challenges and sickness-related absenteeism despite solid evidence on the link between family Socio-Economic Challenges and children's health (Moyo, 2017) and even more fewer studies exist on the link between Socio-Economic Challenges and pupils' family origin as in this present study. There was no clear-cut evidence that socioeconomic inequalities are stronger for one form of absenteeism than another. However, research directly comparing Socio-Economic Challenges effects across different reasons for absenteeism is sparse.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter delves on summary of findings of the study, conclusion and recommendations.

#### 5.1 Summary

The main purpose of the study was to examine the effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior High School, Sandema in the Builsa North Municipality in the Upper East Region of Ghana. The objectives of the study were to discuss the causes of socio-economic challenges confronting pupils at Ayieta Junior High School, examine the effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance at Ayieta Junior High School and to find out measures which could be adopted to reduce socio-economic challenges affecting pupils' attendance at Ayieta Junior High School.

The researcher employed descriptive survey design for the study. The target population was pupils and parents of Ayieta Junior High School of the Builsa North Municipality. The accessible population was 101. Simple random sampling was used to select 81 respondents, consisting of 10 parents and 71 pupils for the study. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. Reliability test yielded Cronbach Alpha of 0.78.

### **5.1.1 Summary of Findings**

On causes of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior High School, the study revealed that poverty and parental neglect are the major causes of socio-economic challenges confronting pupils at Ayieta JHS.

On the effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance at Ayieta Junior High School, the study revealed that socio-economic challenges affect pupils' punctuality at school, cause pupils' lateness to school, pupils are reluctant to attend school due to inadequate school feeding and high pupils' attrition.

The study also unearthed that school feeding improvement and agricultural extension to farmers were the major measures suggested to mitigate the menace of socio-economic challenges impeding pupils' attendance to school.

### **5.2 Conclusions**

The study revealed that the major causes of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior High School were poverty and parental neglect. It is therefore concluded that pupils from families with poor background and parental irresponsibility are likely to attend school irregularly.

The study revealed that notable among the effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance at Ayieta Junior High School were pupils' punctuality at school, pupils' lateness to school, pupils reluctance to attend school which should be addressed to promote pupils' education.

Significant among the measures to mitigate the menace of socio-economic challenges impeding pupils' attendance to school were school feeding improvement and agricultural extension to farmers. It is therefore concluded that the adoption of these measures would

go the extra mile in mitigating the menace of socio-economic challenges impeding pupils' attendance to school.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

1. It is recommended based on the study that the Parent Association (PA) in collaboration heads of school and other entrepreneurs should organize training workshops on various income generating ventures to enable parents to fulfill their financial obligations in their children's education to promote attendance to school.

2. Heads should educate parents to have interest in the education of their children and thereby endeavor to encourage their children to be regular and punctual to school at all times.

3. The Municipal Directorate of Education in collaboration with the Ghana Education Service should provide parents whose main occupation are farming with agricultural extension services to enable produce more for sale to cater for children in school. Pupils should also be provided with improved school feeding to promote school attendance.

### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Study**

The study was undertaken to examine the effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior High School, Sandema in the Builsa North Municipality in the Upper East Region of Ghana. Therefore, further study should be conducted to the effects of socioeconomic challenges on pupils' attendance in the remaining municipals and districts in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

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**AKENTEN APPIAH-MENKA UNIVERSITY OF SKILLS TRAINING AND  
ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Dear respondent,**

This questionnaire has been designed to solicit data on the topic effects of Socio-Economic Challenges on Pupils' Attendance in Ayeita Junior High School, Sandema in The Builsa North Municipality- Upper East Region, Ghana in partial fulfillment for the award of a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership.

Be rest assured that information obtained would be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you.

**SECTION A. PERSONAL INFORMATION**

1. Age (Years)

14 to 19 [  ] 41 to 45 [  ] 46 above [  ]

2. Sex:

Male [  ] Female [  ]

3. Educational level of respondents

Pupil [  ] JHS/SHS [  ] Technical/Vocational [  ] Tertiary [  ]

4. Respondents' occupation

Pupil [  ] Petty Trading [  ] Farming [  ] Public employee [  ]

5. Household size

Below 5 [  ] 5 to 10 [  ] Over 10 [  ]

**SECTION B. CAUSES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES OF PUPILS  
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

This section wants to find out the causes of socio-economic challenges of pupils in Ayieta Junior High School at Sandema in the Builsa North Municipal using a 5 likert scale (1 – Strongly Agree, 2 – Agree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Disagree, 5 – Strongly Disagree)

**Choose the appropriate option**

No	Causes	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	Death of Parents					
8	Divorce					
9	Unemployment of guardian					
10	Teenage pregnancy					
11	Lack of funds					
12	Parental neglect					
13	Deplorable school infrastructure					
14	Child labour					

**SECTION C: EFFECTS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES ON PUPILS' SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

**Choose the appropriate option**

No	Effects	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
15	Socio-economic challenges that affect pupils' punctuality at school					
16	Socio-economic challenges that cause pupils' lateness to school					
17	Pupils are reluctant to attend school due to inadequate school feeding					
18	There is high pupils' attrition due to socio-economic challenges					

**SECTION D: MEASURES TO REDUCE SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS ON SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

This section want to find out measures which could be adopted to reduce socio-economic effects on pupils' attendance in Ayieta Junior High School in Sandema in the Builsa North Municipality using a 5 likert scale (1 – strongly Agree, 2 – Agree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Disagree, 5 – Strongly Disagree)

Choose the appropriate option

No	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19	Provision of free uniforms, textbooks and furniture					
20	School feeding					
21	Improved infrastructure and library complex					
22	Improved means of transport to distant schools					
23	Monthly income support to families with low income					
24	Agricultural extension services for farmers					
25	Enforce child labour laws					

**THANK YOU**