

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**PARENTAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE
EKUMFI DISTRICT**



LYDIA GYEBI ARTHUR

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EKUMFI DISTRICT**

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**A thesis in the Department of Social Studies Education,
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Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
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JANUARY, 2022

DECLARATION

Student's declaration

I, Lydia Gyebi Arthur, do hereby declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own 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 in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Mrs. Esther Yeboah Danso-Wiredu

Signature.....

Date.....

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents who instilled the quest for higher heights of the educational field in me.



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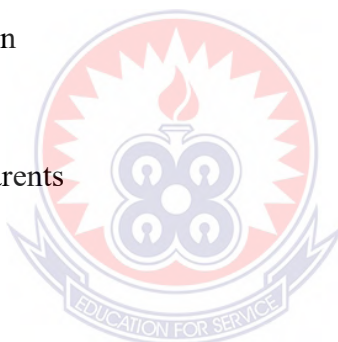
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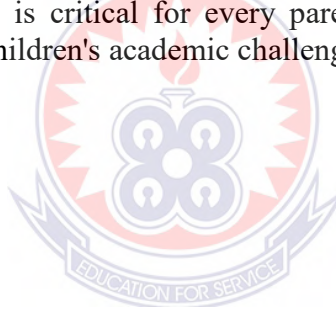
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ABSTRACT

The study sought to provide empirical evidence on students' academic performance from the perspective of parental socio-economic status in order to provide insight to address the complex and pervasive problem of poor academic performance of school children. The purpose of this study was to determine how parental socio-economic status influences students' academic performance in Junior High Schools in the Ekumfi District in the Central Region. The study adopted the convergent parallel design based on the mixed-methods approach (which is qualitative biased). Through the use of purposive and stratified random sampling techniques, 140 participants made of students, teachers and parents were selected as samples for the study. The researcher used questionnaire, interview schedule and documents as instruments for data collection. The findings revealed that most parents in the Ekumfi District had larger families, low educational background and low income, which affected the educational performance of students. The study concludes that the lower the level of education and income of parents; the lower the academic performance of children in basic schools. The study also concludes that, the larger the family size, the lower the academic performance of children in basic schools. Based on these, the study recommends, among other things, that, in order to increase children's performance in basic schools, it is critical that policymakers and stakeholders fortify adult education as a pre-requisite for high academic performance of basic school children. The study also recommends that, it is critical for every parent to be in serious contact with teachers regarding their children's academic challenges.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This is an introductory chapter of the thesis on parental socio-economic status and academic performance among junior high school students in the Ekumfi District. It began by first looking at the background to the study. It then discusses the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and questions that guided the study and significance of the study. An attempt was also made to explain some key terms used in this study.

1.2 Background to the Study

Due to the growing need in the world to achieve quality education as spelt out in the sustainable development goal 4, policy makers, educators, and concerned citizens across the world have joined forces to address this complex and pervasive problem of poor academic performance of students that seems to threaten the educational goals of countries worldwide. The literature has established an important correlation between the socioeconomic status of parents and the learning environment available to their children. It is widely believed that the social and economic status of parents can contribute significantly to student success/failure in education (Li & Qui, 2018).

Families from the low socio-economic status group are less likely to have economic resources to support their children while families from high socio-economic status group are more likely to have economic resources or time available to help their children attain good academic records (Li & Qui, 2018).

Findings have shown the contribution of student factor, school factor and home environment to students' achievements in various disciplines (Umoinyang, 1999; Umoinyang & Okpala, 2001; Odinko, 2002; Falaye, 2006). Socio-economic status of parents is one of them. Socio-economic status is an economic and sociological combined measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social positions in relation to others based on income, education and occupation. Santrock (2004) defines it as the grouping of people with similar occupational, educational and economic characteristics. It is the measure of the influence that the social environment has on individuals, families, communities, and schools.

In many ways, socio-economic status is related to the concept of social class. In line with the above, Woolfolk (2007) explains socio-economic status as the relative standing in society based on income, power, background and prestige. Basically, socio-economic status can be classified into the following categories: high socio-economic status, middle-income socio-economic status and low-income socio-economic status. The socio-economic status of a child is most commonly determined by the parents' educational level, occupational status, and income levels (Jeynes, 2012).

It is argued that families with high socio-economic status often have more success in preparing their young children for school because they typically have access to a wide range of resources to promote and support young children's development. They are able to provide their young children with high-quality child care, books, and toys to encourage children in various learning activities at home (Okwan, 2014). Also, they get easy access to information regarding their children's health, as well as social,

emotional, and cognitive developments. In addition, families with high socio-economic status often seek out information to help them better prepare their young children for school (Sparkes, 1999).

For years, educators have argued on the issues of what determines the academic success of all students. Marks et al. (2001) are of the view that a higher level of confidence among students in their own ability, a school environment conducive for learning, and higher parental aspirations for the students' education contribute to lifting students' academic achievement. Eweniyi (2005) also argues that a child's internal state (intelligence, state of health, motivation, anxiety etc.) and his/her environment are factors capable of influencing the academic performance of the child.

In general, educational outcomes have been shown to be influenced by family's socio-economic status in many different and complex ways (Osunloye, 2008; Eamon, 2005; Ushie et al., 2012). According to Eccles and Daviskean (2005), the socio-economic status of a parent goes a long way to mould a child's personality morally, academically, economically, socially, spiritually or otherwise.

In America, the academic achievement gap produces an interminable sense of national consternation regarding the disparity between the performance of children from diverse socio-economic/racial ethnic groups with their more affluent and white counterparts (Dotterer et al., 2012). While there have been many educational reform strategies over the decades from war on poverty in the 1960s, the 'No Child Left Behind (NCLB)' in 2001 or 'Blue Print for Education Reform' in 2008, the academic achievement gap remains visible throughout the public education system.

A study of American school children postulates that only 36% of parents from the lowest-income quintile read books daily, while the comparable figure from the highest-income quintile is 62% parents who read books every day (Cooley, 2013). Parents with higher socio-economic status are in a better position to improve the academic activities of their children as compared to parents with low socio-economic status (Cowen, 2011). Studies also highlight the fact that enrollment rates in schools from low-income groups are significantly lower than the children coming from families with higher socio-economic status (Pallardi, as cited in Soharwardi et al., 2020).

The problem of poor academic achievement is one plaguing most countries both developing and developed of which Ghana is no exception. In educational institutions, success is mostly measured by academic performance; as a result of this, if a student meets the standards set by the nation, the society, stakeholders and the institution itself, then that student is automatically declared academically good.

In Ghana, academic performance of students at the basic level of education has been of great concern to stakeholders and policy makers in the country. Many in Ghana share the perception that academic achievement is falling (Degue, 2012; Okyerefo et al., 2011). In particular, this perception becomes heightened each year with the release of the annual Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) results. BECE is the national standardized examination for pupils who have completed junior high school (JHS) (i.e., Grade 9).

Many of those who contend that academic achievement is falling have also speculated that the expanded enrollment in the basic education level has come at the cost of the quality of basic education. As noted by Lewin and Akyeampong (2009), "...rapid

expansion in enrollments has degraded quality” (p.143). Similarly, the United Nation’s 2014 MDG report asserted that Ghana’s expanded access to education has steadily weakened the quality of education, and linked the decline in educational quality and student achievement to larger class sizes, the growing number of new schools, and the government’s heavy reliance on poorly trained and unqualified teachers (UNECA, 2014). According to the TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) 2003 report, as cited in Anamuah-Mensah et al. (2004), compared to other African countries that took part in the examination, the performance of Ghana was one of the lowest. They argued that the Ghanaian students’ inability to reach the higher benchmarks calls for the need to assist students to build a sound grounding in the mastery of basic knowledge and skills needed to solve more cognitively demanding problems

Other experts and educational scholars contend that the perception of falling performance is false and, not based on data. For instance, Francis Kofi Amedahe, a professor in educational measurement and statistics at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), has contended that “...the issue of falling educational standards in Ghana is a perception rather than a reality” (Ghana News Agency, 2014; April 13). Given conflicting view points on the academic performance trajectory of Ghana, Ansong, et al., (2015) contend that there are important empirical questions that warrant attention. To them, the most pressing unanswered questions include: (a) What are the factual trajectories of academic performance standards at the basic education level? (b) Are the academic performance trajectories generally consistent across Ghana’s administrative districts, and are there salient spatial variations in the direction and rate of change in academic performance?

According to the Parent Teacher Association and School Management Committee Handbook published by the Ghana Education Service (2001), provision of children's educational needs by parents helps in the following diverse ways: it helps pupils to read and write, it encourages pupils to come to school regularly, it makes learning interesting and easier, it improves teaching and learning outcomes, it enhances pupils' retention rate, it makes pupils happy and confident in school.

It is argued that parents can monitor children's performance through visiting them on regular basis in school, observing classes, discussing the children's performance with the teacher, follow up on their children's performance at school, checking their children's exercise books and study their termly reports, discussing children's school work with them on regular basis, observing their children's interaction with others, attending school functions, meeting their children's friends and visiting the teacher occasionally at school (GES/PTA/SMC Handbook, 2001).

Many educators think that low socio-economic status creates a negative effect on academic performance. Adams (1996) mentioned that the basic needs of certain students are not being met, thus, not allowing the students to physically or mentally be able to perform in school. For example, if students are not properly fed or given proper hygiene care, they cannot be expected to perform successfully in their academics. These environmental deficiencies are thought by educators to have a negative effect on the students' image and result in a lowering of self-esteem. This lack of confidence infringes on the success a student may have in the academic environment (American Institutes for Research, 2005).

The falling academic standards of students in the basic school may be attributed to the hardship faced by parents who only live by 'hand-to-mouth' on regular basis.

Government of Ghana knowing about this hardship of some parents, especially in rural areas, has over the years implemented remarkable policies to reduce this challenge. Some of these policies include, free basic education, school feeding programme and free uniform. However, parents with low socio-economic status argue that parents with higher socio-economic status are able to provide their children with the necessary financial support and home resources for individual learning while they struggle to meet the needs of their children (Garcia & Weiss, 2017). Therefore, many schools with a high number of students from low socio-economic status feel that meeting the state requirements on test scores is unrealistic (Ellis, 2008) and that education in Ghana is not equitable.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The provision of the emotional, physical and educational need of students helps to put them in a stable mind in pursuing their education career paths. When parents provide these needs to their children, it increases their motivation to perform well in the educational setting. Recent studies have revealed that one of the major problems facing Ghana's education system is that there are a growing number of children who experience difficulties in learning at the basic school levels. Such children are at risk of dropping out of school before the completion of basic 6 and JSS (Akyeampong et al., 2007; Kuyini & Abosi, 2011).

In Ghana, efforts to tackle the effects of socio-economic status of parents and academic performance among students are mostly rooted in policy programmes meant to alleviate the burden of parents from low socio-economic status. Those acts and frameworks include the 1961 Education act, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy, the Government of Ghana's

Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2003-2015, the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy Framework of 2005, Persons with Disability Act (PDA) 715 of 2006, and Education Act (778) of 2007 (Agbenyega, 2007; Anthony, 2009; Casely-Hayford et al., 2011). Yet, research keep stressing on the strong relationship between parents' socio-economic status and students' academic performance.

At the Ekumfi District where the researcher lives, the researcher observed that even though policy frameworks have been in place and that many P.T.A meetings have been held in the district, some students come to school without stationery for their academic work, others have their uniforms torn beyond beauty, while others come to school without eating. Also, the BECE results continue to dwindle in the district. Reports in Ghana have shown that generally, students' academic performance at the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) level has been deteriorating (Ministry of Education, 2013), and the Ekumfi District is no exception. In 2012, 57% passed and 43% failed. Performance however took a nosedive in 2013 where 34% passed while 66% failed. In 2014, 73% passed while 27% failed. Performance again improved in 2015 as 68% passed while 32% failed. The information provided shows that the average performance pass from 2012 to 2015 is 58% which indicated that 42% of the students on the average failed each year (Bentil et al., 2018).

Moreover, districts League Table 2019 Education Ranking ranked Ekumfi District as a low performing district in the both 2018 and 2019 BECE results. The BECE Pass Rate is measured based on the percentages of pupils who passed core subjects, including English, mathematics, science and social studies. The average of the pass rates of the four core subjects was calculated at the district level. This indicator demonstrates the educational achievement level of students, who took the

examinations, reflecting the quality of teaching at schools in a district. It is against this backdrop that this study is carried out to provide empirical evidence on the effect between socio-economic status and students' academic performance in the Ekumfi District.

In the researcher's little study to establish the level of study in this area of work, it was observed that there has been extensive literature (Afful, 2014; Arthur, 2005; Eccles & Daviskean, 2005; Juma, 2016; Osei-Owusu et al. 2018) on socio-economic status of parents and academic performance with parental education, parental occupation and parental income as most common indexes used however, there seems to be little knowledge in literature about how family size influence academic performance of students. This study is therefore designed to bridge the existing gap on this.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine how parental socio-economic status influences students' academic performance in JHS schools in the Ekumfi District in the Central Region.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The following research objectives were developed to guide the study:

1. Examine how parental educational background influences the academic performance of JHS students in the Ekumfi District.
2. Analyse how parental income influences JHS students' academic performance in the Ekumfi District.
3. Assess how family size influences the academic performance of JHS students in the Ekumfi District.

1.6 Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to guide the study:

1. How does parental educational background influence the academic performance of JHS students in the Ekumfi District?
2. How does parental income influence the academic performance of JHS students in the Ekumfi District?
3. In what way does family size influence the academic performance of JHS students in the Ekumfi District?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The outcomes of this study are beneficial in the following ways;

Firstly, the study is significant because of the information it would disseminate to educators, parents, administrators and policymakers, who play a central role in students' academic achievement. The findings from this study would serve to guide their understanding regarding the combined impact of these three predictors on academic achievement. Parents are informed on the need to care for their children in order to achieve success in school. The study provided information to policymakers to make the required modifications and implementation to both educational policy and practice. This will facilitate enhanced academic achievement as well as promote stronger links between the home and the school in the educational interest of the student.

Secondly, the results from the study inform government on the need to empower parents to be economically stable. The researcher believes that this will help tackle the issue of poor academic performance in basic schools. Thirdly, parents will be informed on the relationship between their level of education and the academic

performance of their children in order to institute personal measures to help improve the academic performance of their children.

Moreover, teachers are provided with information on how to boost the academic performance of their students irrespective of the failure of some parents. It also added to existing knowledge by acting as literature review for future academics who would be interested in looking into related topics for further debate.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Socioeconomic Status: It refers to prestige-based measures of socio-economic position as determined by rankings in a social hierarchy.

Academic Performance: the extent to which a student has attained their short or long-term educational goals.

Student: one under the close supervision of a teacher, either because of youth or of specialization in some branch of study. This term was used interchangeably with the term “Children” in the study.

Cultural Capital: A set of resources that inhere in family relations and in community social organisation that is useful for the cognitive and social development of the child or young person

1.9 Delimitation

The study was limited to four Basic Schools in the Ekumfi District of the Central Region of Ghana. That is, Narkwa Methodist Basic School, Akwakrom D/A Basic School, Dunkwa Abontsen D/A primary and JHS and Ekotsi D/A primary and JHS. Though there are several factors that influence the academic performance of students,

the researcher limited the study to parents' socio-economic factors including; parents educational background, parental income, and family size.

1.10 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five (5) chapters. Chapter one contains the introduction which dilates on the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation, organization of the study and definition of terms. Chapter two reviews related literature which include theoretical framework and the review on major themes highlighted in the research questions.

Chapter three takes a look at the methodology of the study which comprises research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling techniques and procedure for collection of data, transparency and transferability of instruments and the techniques used in analyzing the data and limitations of the study. Chapter four presents the results and discussion of the findings. Chapter five focuses on the summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter of the study reviewed relevant literature regarding the topic under study. Scholarly works, research journals, books and other authorities have been consulted to unearth relevant information about the influence of socio-economic status of parents on academic performance of pupils. The review first covered key themes raised in the research questions followed by theoretical framework that underpin the study: concept of socio-economic status, concept of academic performance, historical development of socio-economic status of parents and student's academic performance, parental level of education and academic performance, parental level of income and academic performance, family size and academic performance, theoretical framework: Cultural capital theory and Behaviourism learning theory.

2.2 Concept of Socio-Economic Status (SES)

Socio-economic Status (SES) is a term that comprises two variables: the social status and economic status. Social status refers to one's position within the social stratum while economic status refers to the monetary value a person is in possession of. SES was measured with same indicators by different sociologists, educationists and psychologists. According to Parson et al., (2001), socio-economic status is a term used to distinguish between people's relative position in the society in terms of family income, political power, educational background and occupational prestige. SES is also defined by Saifi and Mehmood (2011) as a combined measure of an individual or family's economic and social position relative to others based on income, education and occupation.

Santrock (2004) defines it as the grouping of people with similar occupational, educational and economic characteristics. It is the measure of the influence that the social environment has on individuals, families, communities, and schools. In many ways, socio-economic status is related to the concept of social class. Based on this analogy, Woolfolk (2007) explains socio-economic status as the relative standing in society based on income, power, background and prestige. This definition suggests that socioeconomic status refers to an individual's state of class in society with a measure of economic power which determines whether that individual is prestigious or not. Basically, socio-economic status can be classified into the following categories: high socio-economic status, middle socio-economic status and low socio-economic status. The socio-economic status of a child is most commonly determined by the parents' educational level, occupational status, and income levels (Jeynes, 2012).

A recent wave of literature has established an important link between the socioeconomic status of a family and the learning environment available to children. It is widely believed that the social and economic statuses of parents can contribute significantly to students' success at educational institutes. Li and Qui (2018) opined that families with relatively high socio-economic status will strive to secure quality educational opportunities for their children, such as those provided by key schools and markets in the system, which in turn will affect their academic achievements. The key schools, which have excellent teachers and students, not only have a direct impact on their differences in academic achievement, but also affect their learning attitudes and behaviours through teachers and peers, thereby affecting their academic achievement and further educational opportunities. Families from the low socio-

economic status group are less likely to have economic resources or time available to provide due academic support to their children.

However, parents from the low socioeconomic status groups may be powerless to meet the expense on resources such as books, computers, or tutors to produce this helpful literacy environment (Orr, 2003). The implication is that parents who are both economically advantaged and educated will create a support system for their children to excel in education. This support system includes buying of relevant educational materials, helping their children in their school works such as homework.

2.3 Concept of Academic Performance

Academic performance has been defined and explained by several authors. According to Narad and Abdullah (2016), academic performance is the knowledge gained which is assessed by marks by a teacher and/or educational goals set by students and teachers to be achieved over a specific period of time. They added that these goals are measured by using continuous assessment or examinations results. Annie, Howard and Midred (as cited in Arhad et al., 2015, p. 156) also indicated that academic performance measures education outcome. They stressed that it shows and measures the extent to which an educational institution, teachers and students have achieved their educational goals.

Similarly, Yusuf et al., (2016) opined that academic performance is a measurable and observable behaviour of a student within a specific period. He added that it consists of scores obtained by a student in an assessment such as class exercise, class test, mid-semester, mock examination, and end of semester examination. Again, Kyoshiba (2009) emphasized that academic performance of students is defined by a student's performance in an examination, tests, and in a course work. The definitions above

suggest that academic performance is a measured outcome cumulative scores of class text, exercises and exams at the end of the semester or term.

Student performance is most commonly defined by report cards and grades, enrolment in advanced classes, attendance and staying in school, and improved behaviour (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Academic performance was once thought to be the most important outcome of formal educational experiences and while there is little doubt as to the vital role such achievements play in student life and later (Kell et al., 2013), researchers and policymakers are ever increasingly turning to social and emotional factors, as well as the relationships among them, as indicators of student well-being and psychological development (Chernyshenko et al., 2018). Chernyshenko et al. (2018), for instance, stated emotional regulation (e.g. stress resistance, optimism), task performance (e.g. motivation, persistence, self-control) and compound skills (e.g. metacognition, self-efficacy) as the social and emotional factors influencing academic performance. This implies that what goes into students' academic performance goes beyond looking at only scores. It has multiple factors influencing it.

Academic performance is integrated also into the work of Eakman et al. (2019), where the focus is on the complexities of the emotional and social lives of returned veterans and service personnel. In a comprehensive study, learning climate support, post-traumatic stress, depression, self-efficacy and academic problems are linked to performance showing, among other findings, that self-efficacy, less academic problems and autonomy supporting learning environments are positively related to performance.

2.4 Historical Development of Socio-Economic Status of Parents and Students'

Academic Performance

Socioeconomic status (SES), an index of one's overall social status or prestige in society, is one of the most widely studied constructs in the social sciences. It is usually measured alongside education, occupational status, and income (Conger & Donnellan, 2007). Over the past decades, the relationship between SES and child development has been well documented (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; Hackman et al., 2010; Aizer & Currie, 2014). Compared to children and adolescents growing up in families with high SES, those growing up in families with low SES demonstrated an increased health risk (Chen et al., 2002), higher rates of anxiety, depression, and conduct disorders (Wadsworth & Achenbach, 2005). Numerous studies also associated SES with the IQ level and academic achievement of children and adolescents (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development) (NICDH, 2005, White et al., 1993). The following is a trace of studies done on socioeconomic status of parents and academic performance of students.

2.4.1 Socio-economic status of parents and student's academic performance

before 2000

According to Gooding (2001), during the late 1960's, state, federal, and local governments made many efforts to offset the effects of economic and social disadvantages of students entering the public education system. The purpose of these programmes was to prepare preschool children of lower socioeconomic backgrounds for the social and scholastic experiences that they will encounter. Gooding (2001) stated that other programmes were designed to help already at-risk students who fall in the category of low-SES and who are struggling in schools that lack the educational resources to help these students with special needs. The underlining scope of these

programmes was to equip, educate, and transform these students beyond their poverty level to productive, working adults.

As early as 1966, the well-known Coleman Report revealed that family SES explained most variances in academic achievement (Coleman et al., 1966). A study done by Durojaiye (1976) revealed that children from poor homes performed badly in school because their parents could not provide them with the required texts and other necessary facilities that fostered learning at home and school; children from poor homes were often subjected to malnutrition problems and rarely afforded a balanced diet. Meanwhile, Ezewu (1983) submits that parents who take an interest in the education of their children go through their children's books to assess their performance. Literature in America in the 1980's concludes that minority of parents are to blame for their children's poor performance. Parents are supposed to be responsible for helping to educate their children. Instead, their children are not motivated and dedicated enough to make the system work for them (Dunn, 1987).

Banks (1991) found that the socio-economic status of the family influenced the academic achievement of a child. The findings also indicated that extreme poverty exerted a negative influence on school achievement. A study by Itsuokor (1991) indicated that children from educated homes tend to score higher than those from less educated homes on tests of intelligence and reading comprehension. In like manner, children of professionals, teachers and civil servants tend to score higher than children of traders and unskilled workers on such tests. The above phenomenon could be explained that educated parents know the relevance of educating their children while uneducated parents even if they saw the need to educate their children, might not be in capacity to assist them.

Duncan et al., (1992) studied children from professional workers, traders and shop owners, clerical and manual workers. Subjects were in three categories. The first group had 300 people under the high socio-economic status level. The second had 400 under low socio-economic level and the third comprised 160 people who were classified by the researchers as unemployed. The researchers analysed the opinion of the children from each group and discovered that each child expressed three forms of opinion which were categorised as the source of authority, its mode of expression and its efficiency. The result of the study showed that children from high socio-economic status performed significantly better than their counterparts in the low socio-economic status class.

In a similar study with 198 pupils in Scottish primary schools, Jennings (1995) concluded that children from a low socioeconomic background learned to read with greater difficulty than those from a high socio-economic class. In contrast to low-income families, Mines (1992) found that families of high achieving minority students provided a strong family support system for their students. This supports often is displayed during informal conversations related to everyday events, family decision-making policies, monitoring and supervising free time, parental explanation and counseling, and helping the children establish and reach long term objectives.

Slavin's (1994) study clearly demonstrated the impact of social class on academic achievement. Students from various social strata achieved quite similarly during the school year. After summer vacation, children from poorer families lost much of their achievements. The author argued that the children from poor families were not exposed to a wide variety of learning experiences inside and outside their homes during the vacation.

Graetz (1995) conducted a study on the influence of socio-economic status of parents on students' academic performance and realised that socio-economic status has a great impact on students' academic performance. He also found out that socio-economic status was the main source of educational imbalance among students. He concluded that students' academic success rest strongly on parents' socioeconomic standard. Harnish et al., (1995) studied the development of the scale of socioeconomic background and developed a tool to assess the social and economic environment that is in line with the situation in India at that time.

Adepoju (1996) discovered that, malnutrition which is associated with the low socio-economic status affected school activities. The author asserted that balanced food and feeding habits helped the brain and an underfed child was always thinking about food even in the classroom. It was concluded that this affected the child's concentration on the lesson going on in the class. Munoz et al., (1999) analyzed the impact of socioeconomic conditions on students' success in rural areas in the East.

Ochuema and Esu (1999) studied the influence of home environment on pupils' performances in English language in primary schools in Akamkpa Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. It was hypothesised that family size, socio-economic status and parental educational attainment would have no significant influence on pupil performance. A sixteen-item questionnaire and a teacher-made test were administered to 200 randomly selected primary six pupils. Using the independent t-test and an analysis of variance, it was found that family size, socio-economic status and parented educational attainment significantly influenced academic performance of primary school pupils in Akamkpa Local Government Area.

2.4.2 Socio-economic status of parents and students' academic performance in the 2000's

Esu (2000) contends that poor diet can retard a child's growth or rate of development thereby affecting his or her academic achievement. Apepende (2000) avers that in modern times, one's socio-economic status tells the type of attitude the parents will have towards educating their children. That is, parents of high socio-economic status value education greatly and as such sponsor children's education while children of low socio-economic status are made to engage in petty trading in order to earn income with which to pay fees and buy textbooks. Such children are likely to exhibit poor performance unlike their counterparts from high socio-economic status class. In addition, Ngwu (2000) posits that when parents are economically depressed, basic necessities of life, including school needs, will be lacking. Children from such homes become aggressive with their peers in school, delinquency sets in and poor academic performances are exhibited.

Etim (2000) avers that, parents will facilitate teaching and learning by complementing the teacher's work of supervising the child's schoolwork after school hours. This will not be feasible if the socio-economic level of the parents cannot afford them the provision of books and other learning materials for their children, or if the parents are illiterate and belong to the low socio-economic status class where they see no relevance in academic interaction between parents and children. The author points out that high achievers in school are usually children of parents who show lots of interest in their schoolwork and concludes that where parents play active roles in commending success and condemning failure, positive achievement motivation is generated in the children. This is corroborated by Nwachukwu (2000) who submits that children from high socioeconomic families tend to perform relatively higher than their counterparts

from low socio-economic status because they have many things that enhance academic achievements at their disposal unlike their less privileged counterparts. Considine and Zappala (2002) noticed that where the parents have social, educational or economical advantage definitely strengthens higher level of success in students' academic achievement in future. They realised that these parents make available sufficient psychological and emotional shore up to their children by providing good educational and learning environment that produce confidence and the improvement of skills needed for success.

Livaditis et al.(2003) analyze students' status and academic performance and examined the impact of students' socio-economic status on school performance in Greece. Data were obtained from a sample of students enrolled in the University of Macedonia Economic and Social Studies for two consecutive academic years, 1998 and 1999. Kakuru (2003) and Kasente (2003) looked at the phenomenon from gender perspective. They indicated that at higher levels most girls that access secondary education tends to come from middle and above wealth quintile families. The children themselves hardly make these decisions but rather it is their parents, guardians and relatives. Other studies found investments in children to be related to household income. For example, Bjorkman (2005) depicted the correlation between district income and girls' and boys' enrolment as follows: For low levels of income very few girls attended school and there is a large gap between boys' and girls' enrolment. The differential treatment of children's education was explained by the returns to education, and the share of the children's income transferred to his or her parents.

Sirin (2005) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis of 58 studies. For a sample from the United States, Sirin confirmed a medium to strong relation between SES and

achievement with an average effect size of 0.27 (95% CI: 0.28-0.29). Bugembe et al. (2005) found that in urban areas, most poor families can hardly afford the cost of water, resulting in children from poor families being sent on long treks in search of water, often having to stand in long queues and consequently being late or absent from school. Taras and Potts-Datema (2005) analyze the impact of socioeconomic conditions on student performance and explored the various factors that influence the outcome based on the social and economic conditions of the society.

Akanle (2007) identified parental income in his work to be a cogent factor upon which the academic/vocational successes of secondary school students lie. He found parental income not to be sufficient to sustain the academic and personal social life of the student in sub rural school areas. This to a large extent affects the psychological balance or homeostatic balance in the class room, which causes low concentration, low perception, frustration, sickness and emotional disability in academic performance of the students. Therefore, when a child is deprived of the essential needs, he may be found to perform poorly in his school work. A study published by the American Psychological Association in December 2008 also revealed that children of parents with high economic status tend to express more "disengagement" behaviours than their less fortunate peers (APA, 2009). Child welfare at home is a determinant of child retention and educational attainment. Uwaifo (2008) analyzed the impact of parents' socioeconomic status on student performance in some Nigerian children and found that parents' financial status and education improved the ability of their children toward school performance.

According to Fan (2008), parents who are rich provide adequately for the physical and educational needs of their children. Children from such families have access to radio,

newspapers and magazines, television, toys, libraries and other materials that stimulate learning: a desideratum for effective learning of social studies. Bolliger and Wasilik (2009) explored some factors that influence students' performance in higher education institutions. A study by Alisa and Gregg (2010) found that the gap in attainment between children from the poorest and richest backgrounds grew particularly fast during the primary school years. By age eleven, only around three-quarters of children from the poorest fifth of families reached the expected level at Key Stage 2, compared with 97 percent of children from the richest fifth. Poorer children who performed well in Key Stage tests at age seven were more likely to fall behind by age eleven, and poorer children who performed badly at age seven were less likely to improve their ranking compared with children from better-off backgrounds – an important factor behind the widening gap. Memon et al., (2010) analyzed the influence of parents' socioeconomic status on the performance of Karachi college students. The purpose of this study was to make recommendations based on the results of improving the educational environment.

Farooq et al., (2011) analyzed the factors that affect students' quality of education. The purpose of this study was to analyze the impact of social status, parental status, and career on student achievement quality. Ali et al. (2013) analyzed the impact of parents' education and socioeconomic status on college students' academic performance. Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013) explained the role of socioeconomic background in the self-concept and educational success of Nigerian youth and proved the impact of students' socio-economic status on the self-conceptual and educational performance of high school students in Anamba, Nigeria. In this study, economic and social background, students' self-concept and school performance were used as variables to evaluate the school performance of students.

Osorio et al., (2013) analyzed the impact of the social and educational background of Nigerian parents on the education of their children and provided parents with advice on how to overcome personal and financial challenges and how to support their children's education. Variables related to socioeconomic status, education level, and children's education were used in this study. Chandra and Azimuddin (2013) studied the impact of Lucknow's socioeconomic status on the educational outcomes of high school students and found how the different types of students' social and economic conditions affect the children's educational outcomes.

Singh and Singh (2014) analyzed the effects of parents' social status and family environment on students' learning habits and educational performance. Kapinga (2014) analyzed the impact of parents' socioeconomic status on the performance of secondary education in Tanzania. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of parents' socioeconomic status on the performance of high school students. Balami (2015) studied the relationship between socioeconomic background and academic performance of public middle school students through a pre-learning strategy.

Liu et al., (2019) conducted a meta-analysis based on 215,649 students from 78 independent samples. The sample from Mainland China demonstrated a moderate relation between SES and academic achievement ($r = 0.243$). However, the mechanism underlying the relationship between SES and child development remains unclear. Another study done by Li et al., (2020) designed to explore the possible mediating role of self-concept in the relationship between SES and academic achievement among junior high school students in China. They found a moderate relation between SES and academic achievement. Their finding is aligned with that of

Liu et al. (2019), which reported that the overall relationship between Chinese students' SES and academic achievement was moderate.

Soharwardi et al., (2020) tested the impact of some socio-economic factors such as family background, father education, mother education, number of children interested in education, facilities provided by the government for children's education and decision about a child's future on the academic record of students. The findings of the study suggest that the income of father and education of both father and mother have a positive impact on the academic performance of the students. Mother education, however, has a greater impact on the academic outcomes of the students as compared to father education. Moreover, the strong family background and education facilities provided by the government also enhanced the performance of students.

2.5 Parental Level of Education and Academic Performance

Parents' level of education may have influence on students' academic performance; however, for parents to positively reinforce their children to perform better, parents need to have the means and be aware of the need for education so that adequate support in terms of material, moral and financial can be given to their wards (Bakari, 1997). This would enable those set high goals for themselves and pursue them through a variety of means. Studies by Grisemer et al. (1994) and Okantey (2008) reported that parents' level of education is a good predictor of academic performance of students. Studies on academic performance consistently have shown that parents' level of education is important in predicting children's academic performance (Haveman & Wolfe, 1995; Smith et al., 1997). Similarly, Padberg (1991) reported that parents' educational background has a positive effect on students' academic performance. Fontaine (1996) also indicated that educational attainment of parents is

a good predictor of students' academic performance. Studies have shown that parents with higher educational level could motivate the intellectual potentials within children that may lead to perform better in school (Owoeye, 2008).

Parents' level of education refers to scholastic ability of parents; mother and father or loco parents, which could play an important role in determining a child's intellectual performance or ability to demonstrate a changed behaviour. It is believed that parents' educational level may be the main source of influence that determines a child's academic achievement (Plomin et al., 1990). This is confirmed by studies done by Benbow and Arjmand (1990) and Haveman and Wolfe (1995) which indicated that parents with higher educational level could motivate the intellectual potential within their children that may lead them to perform better in school and in return further their education. For example, parents' educational level may foster higher parents' involvement in adolescents' school achievement, which in turn may influence high school completion (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Patrikakou, 1997).

Durisic and Bunijevac (2017) noted that, there are three basic ways that parents can volunteer in education. First, they may volunteer in the school or classroom by helping teachers and administrators, as tutors or assistants. Second, they may volunteer for the school; for instance, fundraising for an event or promoting a school in the community. Finally, they may volunteer as a member of an audience, attending school programmes or performances. Educated parents were also found to be able to make constructive decisions, such as how much time to spend with their children, give their income and may decide on how much to give to their children's education (Haveman & Wolfe, 1995).

Jacquelyn (2005 cited in Khan et al., 2015) have pointed out the relationship of parents' education level to their children's academic achievements. Parents' educational expectations have significant effects on junior students' academic performances (White et al., 1993). Social capital theory emphasizes the participation of parents in education and children's learning behaviours and achievement; parents with higher social economic status usually participate in their children's learning activities more intensively, pay more attention to communication with teachers, manage the children's school absence and other risky behaviours, and improve the children's academic performance (Coleman, 1988).

Empirical studies showed that parental educational participation, such as discussing school things with children, checking their homework, and participating in school activities, could improve children's academic performances (Pong et al., 2005). Families with higher social economic status can make use of their advantages to gain access to better education opportunities for their children, to enhance their possibilities of obtaining higher education (Li, 2006; Liu, 2008; Zhao & Hong, 2012).

Research shows that the parental socio-economic status can affect their children's schooling quality significantly. The higher the social economic status of a family, the better schools their children attend (Wen, 2006; Chen & Fang, 2007; Li, 2008; Wu, 2013b). Krashen (2003) says that students whose parents are well educated get higher positions than those whose parents are not educated. Educated parents help their children in school work activities. In families where parents experience difficulties in reading and writing, there is a danger that low literacy is passed on to the next generation (Cooter, 2006). Cooter (2006) and Lynch (2009) put forward that the importance of literacy development stretches far beyond children's school

achievements. Well-developed literacy ability is an important condition for children's development in other intellectual and social areas (Patall et al., 2008).

It is believed that literacy difficulties could lead to all sorts of problems in social, economic and community contexts, such as high dropout rates, juvenile delinquency and welfare costs. According to Cooter (2006), a number of mechanisms which could be responsible for intergenerational illiteracy; are lack of strong language examples, little child-parent interaction and lack of quality print materials like books and newspapers. Asikhia (2010) posits family educational background and socio-economic status correlates the academic performance of students; that these two are lumped together because they are related and one may rightly say that they are married and hence should not be divorced.

Mothers who are more educated and have higher self-esteem have children who receive higher test scores (Baharudin & Luster, 1998; Eamon, 2005). Moreover, mothers who delay childbearing has been shown to provide cognitively stimulating and a supportive environment at home which has a positive effect on school performance. The additional support and attention lead to better school performance (Eamon, 2005).

Ajila and Olutola (2000) are of the view that the state of the home affects the children since the parents are the first socializing agents in a child's life. This is because the family background and context of a child affect his/her reaction to life situations and his/her level of performance despite the fact that the school is responsible for the experiences and plays tremendous roles in building the personality of the child and making the child what he/she is. They further explained that better-educated parents can contribute to their children's learning through their day-to-day interactions with

their children and involving themselves in their children's school work. Mugisha (1991) who did a study on primary school pupils in Kampala (Uganda) concluded that the more educated the parents are, the better children's performance at school.

2.6 Parental Level of Income and Academic Performance

Family income connotes the state at which a family receives money over a certain period of time. Income shocks do not only affect investment in children's education but also children's performance. A recent report by WaqasRafiq et al., (2013) noted that children are more likely to be courageous and as such do well at school where parents that are more active in the process with adequate care, tutelage and active participation of parents in the child's educational activities like monitoring of homework, participation in extracurricular activities, parent-teacher association, and other school related activities.

Among the several parental factors that have been linked to their children's academic achievements at school is the parent's level of income. According to Mayer, a casual observation is that the children of affluent parents are more likely to succeed in life than the children of poor parents probably because the rich parents spend more than poor parents on their children and these "investments" lead to better outcomes for their children (Mayer, 2010). If the situation is correct, the author also suggested that government can improve the life chances of poor children by providing families with the means to make the investments or by providing the investments directly in the form of schooling, health care, and other human capital inputs. It is not out of place to imagine that parental income can have possible effects on the academic achievement of children in school (Machebe & Ifelunni, 2014).

When parents are financially capacitated, and also give moral support to the children by guiding their reading at home, the children perform better than their counterparts in school. It has been argued that the most accurate predictor of students' achievement is the extent to which the family is involved in the child's education, and not the family's level of income (Henderson & Berla, 1994). However, Machebe et al. (2017) maintained that, it is not clear if the situation is the same across developed and developing economies in the world.

When families are constrained by fewer resources children's learning is consequently affected. According to Bjorkman (2005), a negative income shock has ripple effects on the female student's performance; only brighter girls reach grade seven because of less resources within the household, and or alternatively, have to spend more time on domestic work as compared to boys which causes girls to perform worse on test as compared to boys. A related study conducted by Sentamu in Mukono District (2003) on the influence of family income on pupils' performance at school revealed that family income was the determinant of the kind of a school a child attends.

Ojeka (2011) asserts that the economic hardship facing parents makes it difficult for them to cater for themselves and their families. The situation has led to a lot of children engaging in income generating activities with the aim of supplementing their parents' financial resources much to the neglect of their own education leading to poor academic performance. It is believed that low parental income negatively affects academic achievements since it prevents access to vital resources and creates additional stress at home (Jeynes, 2012; Eamon, 2005). The economic hardship that are caused by low socio-economic status leads to disruption in parenting, an

increasing amount of family conflicts, and an increased likelihood of depression in parents' households (Eamon, 2005).

Hijazi and others' 2006 study explored factors affecting college students' performance, focusing on private colleges in Pakistan. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 300 students randomly selected. Simple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis. Their findings show mixed results. They believed that the relationship between students' performance and student family income is positive because money can buy the children all the comforts that they need to concentrate on their studies but interestingly the result also shows that students belonging to more prosperous families do not give proper attention to studies, thus affluence cannot make a student necessarily serious about his/her studies. They recommended more research to explain this phenomenon (Hijazi & Raza-Naqvi, 2006).

In a related study, Memon et al. (2010) examined the impact of parental socio-economic status on students' educational achievements at Secondary Schools of District Malir, Karachi. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 240 students using purposive sampling technique. Statistical tables were used for data analysis. A significant relationship was found between family income and academic performance of students in matriculation examination. They also found a significant relationship between parents' occupational status and academic performance of the students at matriculation examination. They concluded that students whose family income was higher performed well in matriculation examination as compared to those students who belonged to low-income families (Memon et al., 2010).

Similarly, Raychaudhuri et al. (2010) examined factors affecting students' academic performance: a case study in Agartala Municipal Council area. Family income was

one of the basic objectives of their study. Primary data was collected through random sample survey from students in the government and government aided schools and their households. They found that academic performance of students depends on a number of socio-economic factors. They concluded that students' economic status affects their performance and the risk of becoming a dropout.

Again, Yousefi et al. (2010) examined the effect of family income on test-anxiety and academic achievement. Their paper focused on 400 Iranian high school students. Statistical analysis of ANOVA was employed. The findings showed that family income significantly affected academic achievement of students. It was recommended that in enhancing academic achievement in school setting, support strategies such as improving family income among families by government must be focused on. To decrease the rate of influence of family income on depression and academic achievement among students, the government should organize practical programmes to help families and also students in the areas of food, money and the other supports (Yousefi et al., 2010).

2.7 Family Size and Academic Performance

Family size has been found to play an important role in students' academic performance. Raj and Krishna (1980) carried out a study to determine the relationship between academic performance and family size. The sample consisted of 300 pupils (149 boys and 151 girls) studying in standard IX of 8 secondary schools in Trivendrum city. The results revealed that the correlation between academic performance and family size was negative and significant. The size of the family in which a child grows affects his/her intellectual development; this is because in a large-size family, a child may not be given the required attention especially in his/her

academics as the family will have more persons to cater for. Issues such as home works, payment of school fees and attending Parent-Teacher Association meetings may not be convenient for the parents as they have to cater for many children, while children are well catered for and perform better in small-size families.

According to Chenz and Liu (2014), family size has a measurable effect on academic outcomes. They further explained that a family's overall mental maturity level, undivided resources, as well as heightened parental responsiveness and care will all assist children in small-size families in their schooling. The decreasing benefits of family resources on academic performance are rather experienced by children of large family-sizes. Their parents are normally illiterates with low income, lower educational expectations and less time to spent with children on their homework, leading to lower grades (Chenz & Liu, 2014).

Existence studies on family size and academic performance show an inverse relationship, explanations for this relationship are not straight forward. A number of arguments suggest that siblings from larger families are found to do worse in academics than children from smaller families (National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, 2016). The implication is that parents of many children lack quality time with their children for nurturing and guidance in education. Value added quality time is hard to set aside to oversee the academic aspect of the children.

On the other hand, parents with two to three kids can afford the time to develop their children's academic capabilities because their time is only shared with a smaller number of children (Gouxet & Maurin, 2005). The economics of the family suggests that family size can have an important effect on children's educational attainment, and that there is a tradeoff between child quantity and quality according to Becker and

Lewis (1999), where “child quality” is proxied by educational outcome. Family size has effects on quality of life. These include health, nutrition, educational attainment of children, social status of families as well as their ability to adequately cater for the needs of their families. A family size of five including parents is considered sizeable. Such a family is able to cater for the needs of its members.

Sizeable family is likely to enjoy the comfort of life with the choice to afford and enjoy identifiable luxuries of life (Gouxet & Maurin, 2005). For example, small family may enjoy higher Socio-Economic Status (SES) and invest more in education of its children. On the contrary, a large family size has its own implications on the people concerned. Among them are poor health, low levels of education, low-income status, unemployment, pressure on natural resources due to over exploitation, poor childcare and nutrition (Hanushek, 2001).

Recent research by Conley and Glauber (2006) suggested that children in large families receive small educational investments and show poor educational attainment. Besides, findings on effects of siblings on educational attainment for developing and developed nations suggested that on the average, children in larger families receive less schooling, do not perform well academically and are less well-nourished (Maralani, 2008). Smaller families are able to make good investment in their children. Nevertheless, parents who invest heavily in their children (child quality) have smaller families (child quantity).

In Ghana, large family size has been identified to have negative effects on children’s educational attainment. A study done by Arthur (2006) in Sunyani Municipality recommended that family planning education should be actively pursued by relevant organizations including the National Population Council, Non-Governmental

Organizations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organization (CBOs). This would be required to discourage people from having large family sizes. Arthur (2005) argued that a smaller family size may be privy to better level of education, incomes, health and economic backing. On the other hand, a higher family size will ultimately lead to low levels of education, income, health, welfare and economic status.

The literature explored indicates that for parents to invest in their children's education as well as have quality time for their guidance there is the need to adopt family size that is less burdensome. This attitude will ensure children are in their right mind set and well-being to school. Parents, in recent times, are typically preoccupied with the interferences and difficulties of daily life. Burdened by low-income, large family size, some parents are unable to attend school activities or participate in the schooling of their children on a regular basis. Baeck (2010) as well as Lee and Bowen (2006) cite cultural norms, insufficient financial resources, and lack of educational attainment as barriers to parental involvement in school. Davis (1996) stressed that many parents suffer from low self-esteem and others did not experience success in school themselves and therefore lack the knowledge and confidence to help their children. This makes parents who did not experience success in school view it as unattractive.

2.8 Theoretical Framework: The Cultural Capital Theory

The cultural capital theory of Bourdieu (1986) states that, education leads to social reproduction and creation of a stratified society through honouring the cultural capital of the elite class. Bourdieu's concern in relation to cultural capital was with its continual transmission and accumulation in ways that perpetuate social inequalities. Bourdieu explains school success by the amount and type of cultural capital inherited from the family milieu rather than by measures of individual talent or achievement.

For him, ability is socially constructed and is the result of individuals having access to large amounts of cultural capital. The theory seeks to explain the link between social class of origin and social class of destination in terms of the impact of cultural capital on educational attainment. Below are the components of Bourdieu's cultural capital theory:

2.8.1 Cultural reproduction of academic attainment

The theory emphasizes inequalities in the amounts of capital individuals have or are able to obtain. This encompasses the set of resources that inhere in family relations and in community social organisation that are useful for the cognitive and social development of the child or young person (Coleman, 1988). It also includes the attention given to the child within the home, as well as networks and norms within the school and in the wider community. Bourdieu (1986) further explains that one should not ignore the role of material resources, which can have an impact on educational outcomes in several ways on grounds that well-off parents can afford to invest more in their children's education and other educational resources such as a computer, a room of one's own study which are costly. They may also have access to better schools and additional tuition for their children. Other researchers supported the ideology of the theory and had argued that resources can have indirect impacts on the quality of children's environments. They further explain that poverty leads to stress which may affect parenting (Whitty, 2002; Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 1997; Mortimore & Whitty, 2000).

2.8.2 Means of cultural transmission

The transmission of educational attainment through cultural capital takes many forms, and is not restricted to participation in cultural consumption. Distinguishing between these different mechanisms, aids in analyzing their impact on educational outcomes.

Cultural participation: According to Bourdieu, cultural participation is crucial to the reproduction of educational and occupational advantage. Empirically, participation in beaux arts or public cultural activities is not strongly associated with educational attainment, but reading behaviour appears important. It is likely that reading behaviour both reflects a child's reading ability and further develops this ability.

Active transmission of skills and knowledge: Parents deliberately teach their children, reading to them in the early years, and, later on, coaching them in school subjects. Not all parents are equally aware that these forms of help are expected by the school. In addition, parents' ability to help effectively will be partly determined by their own academic abilities.

Passive transmission of skills and knowledge: Children inevitably pick up styles of speech and vocabulary, through talking to their parents, and hearing their parents talk to each other and to others in their social cycle. Hearing parents discuss particular topics will also expose them to ideas, information, and forms of argument. These forms of passive cultural transmission are likely to be crucial in a child's development of language and cultural knowledge. The active and passive transmission of skills and knowledge from parents to children are important and very strong correlation between parents and their children's tested skills and knowledge exist. In particular, given that language is transmitted in the home, and some children are exposed to a much larger

range of vocabulary at home than in the school, there is an expectation for a strong link between parents' and children's vocabularies.

Attitudes, beliefs and behaviours: Parents instill attitudes regarding work and education consciously or unconsciously in their children. It is often suggested that middle-class parents instilling their children a particular strong work-ethics and may instill a sense of efficacy in their children encouraging them to view themselves as academically able (Saunders, 1995). Such attitudes and beliefs may be transmitted actively through conscious efforts to promote them or passively as children pick up the beliefs and habits of their parents more or less unconsciously (Bourdieu, 1977).

Social Styles: Schools do not exclusively reward academic ability', but can also reward certain social styles and behaviours, including children and their parents' styles of interaction with the school (Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Lareau, 2000; Lareau & Weininger, 2003). It is not clear to what extent parental styles of interaction with the school may actually affect outcomes for students. Regarding students' styles and behaviours within school, Farkas et al. (1990) found that work habits have an impact on tested coursework mastery and independent impact on grades awarded by teachers. This aims to capture some of the main ways in which "cultural capital" affects children's educational chances and individuals' occupational chances.

Arbitrariness, the Curriculum and Assessment: Working-class attempts to appropriate higher class culture and disdain within the higher education system. The purpose therefore is to include certain academic values to exclude certain students from academic success (Bourdieu, 1967). Bourdieu further explains that whatever abilities the education system decides to reward, the privileged classes would be advantaged in developing those abilities in their children. In a class society, regardless

of the academic standards applied, upper and middle-class families would have greater resources at their disposal to achieve those standards. But this does not imply that all the abilities rewarded are arbitrary.

Highly educated people have been shown to be 'cultural omnivores' (Bryson, 1996; Longhurst & Savage, 1996; Peterson, 1997; Peterson & Kern, 1996), while people with lower levels of education draw from a narrower cultural palate. Cultural capital should be seen as including certain forms of skill and knowledge which are rewarded in the education system (Sullivan, 2001; Lareau & Weininger, 2003). Thus, it is crucial to discuss which forms of knowledge and skill can be seen as representing “cultural capital” as explained by Bourdieu and to be specific about the mechanisms through which parents may promote academic success in their children. Focusing on the issue of the link between class, cultural knowledge and educational attainment, it seems reasonable to designate those forms of knowledge and skill that are transmitted within the home and rewarded within the school as “cultural capital” Bourdieu argues it is clear that parents with high levels of academic ability, broadly defined, transmit this to their children in various ways.

The academic ability he was referring to entails the forms of intellectual skills or knowledge which is rewarded in academic assessments within schools and other educational institutions. Of course, considerations other than a student’s intellectual performance can affect the grades or other rewards given by the school. Nevertheless, academic ability is seen as distinct from these other characteristics and behaviours which may be rewarded in the school.

Bourdieu broke down the concept of academic ability, rewarded by the school, and the role of parents' cultural resources in transmitting this ability into forms since there are various skills and may not be the same for all forms of academic ability.

Language: Bourdieu could hardly place greater stress on the importance of linguistic sophistication. He explained that obviously in the literary disciplines but more subtle in the sciences, the ability to manipulate academic language remains the principal factor in success in examinations (Bourdieu, 1994). Bourdieu may exaggerate the importance of the manipulation of academic language in science examinations, but it is an undeniable fact that students, who have a grasp of formal language, rather than being restricted to informal language, are at an enormous advantage in the education system. This recalls Bernstein's (1973) distinction between the 'restricted code' which is accessible to both the working and the middle class, and which is characterised by a low level of vocabulary and limited syntactic variety, and the 'elaborated code' which belongs to the educated classes, which has a flexibility which facilitates the expression of analytical and abstract ideas and arguments.

Information Processing: The ability to collect and interpret relevant information on a given question is distinct from, but strongly related to language skills.

Knowledge: Successful students have a grasp of the 'rules of the game' regarding what is rewarded within academic assessments. Bourdieu suggests that the vaguer these criteria are, and the less explicit they are made, the more disadvantaged students who are not from the 'cultured classes' will be. Students from the 'cultured classes' are those best prepared to adapt themselves to a system of diffuse and implicit requirements (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979).

Problem Solving and Logical Reasoning: The theory explains that problem solving and logical reasoning are often seen as real or pure intelligence. They reflect genetic endowment, as opposed to knowledge and linguistic fluency, which are generally regarded as being learned. There is no test that will solely capture genetic differences without picking up environmental ones (Fischer et al., 1996).

In summary, Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital opposes the wisdom that attributes academic success or failure to natural aptitudes, such as intelligence and giftedness. He explains that "Ability" is itself the product of an investment of time and cultural capital. Generally, parents provide their children with cultural capital by transmitting the attitudes and knowledge needed to succeed in the current educational system. As such, children from higher socio-economic status have an advantage over other children that give them better educational success and consequently higher status in society. The tendency therefore is that, children of the elite are more likely to become members of the elite class than the children from poor socio-economic status.

Bourdieu's cultural capital theory is applicable to this study because the theory dwells on the foundation that one should not ignore the role of material resources and family's cultural investment, which can have an impact on educational outcomes of children in several ways and since the study centered on having a clear understanding of what improves or hinders the educational attainments of the young members (children) of the society the theory needs to be tested in relation to the setting of the study. The choice of this theory aims at analyzing the existing situation of children's academic performance at the Ekumfi District and the various mechanisms such as cultural reproduction of academic attainment and the means of cultural transmission. The resulting scenario of children's effort to achieve academic success was analysed

using this theory. The advantage of using this theory is that it offers diverse understanding of the complexities of educational attainment of school children. It analyses these different mechanisms, aids in analyzing their impact on educational outcomes.

2.9 Behaviourism Learning Theory

Behaviourism Learning Theory is the idea that how a student behaviour is based on their interaction with their environment. It suggests that behaviours are influenced and learned from external forces rather than internal forces. Psychologists have been developing the idea of behaviourism since the 19th century. Behavioural learning theory is the basis for psychology that can be observed and quantified. Behaviourists believed that we can never know what is going on “inside people’s heads” and that it is inappropriate to try to guess or speculate at what cannot be empirically observed. Instead, they believed that we should watch for observable changes in behaviour to find out what people were learning.

Positive reinforcement is a popular element of behaviourism—classical conditioning observed in Pavlov’s dog experiments suggests that behaviours are directly motivated by the reward that can be obtained. Teachers in a classroom can utilize positive reinforcement to help students better learn a concept. Students who receive positive reinforcement are more likely to retain information moving forward, a direct result of the behaviourism theory. This implies that when a student receives a good recommendation about a good behaviour put up, the child will continue to exhibit acts of excellence in response to the positive stimuli (Western Governors University, 2020).

Behaviourism is key for educators because it impacts on how students react and behave in the classroom, and suggests that teachers can directly influence how their students behave. It also helps teachers understand that a student's home environment and lifestyle can be impacting their behaviour, helping them see it objectively and work to assist with improvement (Western Governors University, 2020). This theory has been adopted because it embraces the role of teachers in improving the academic performance of students. It takes into account teachers' context of teaching including the positive enforcement they use in motivating students to learn.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework refers to the tool in research that aims at enabling the researcher develop awareness and understanding of the situation under scrutiny and to communicate it to the reader (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). A well-formed conceptual framework enables the researcher show how the basic concepts and constructs interact with each other in the actual setting and experiences within which the research study is conducted. This study developed a conceptual framework that addresses the interaction and relationship between the socio-economic status of parents and students' academic performance. As shown in Figure 1 below:

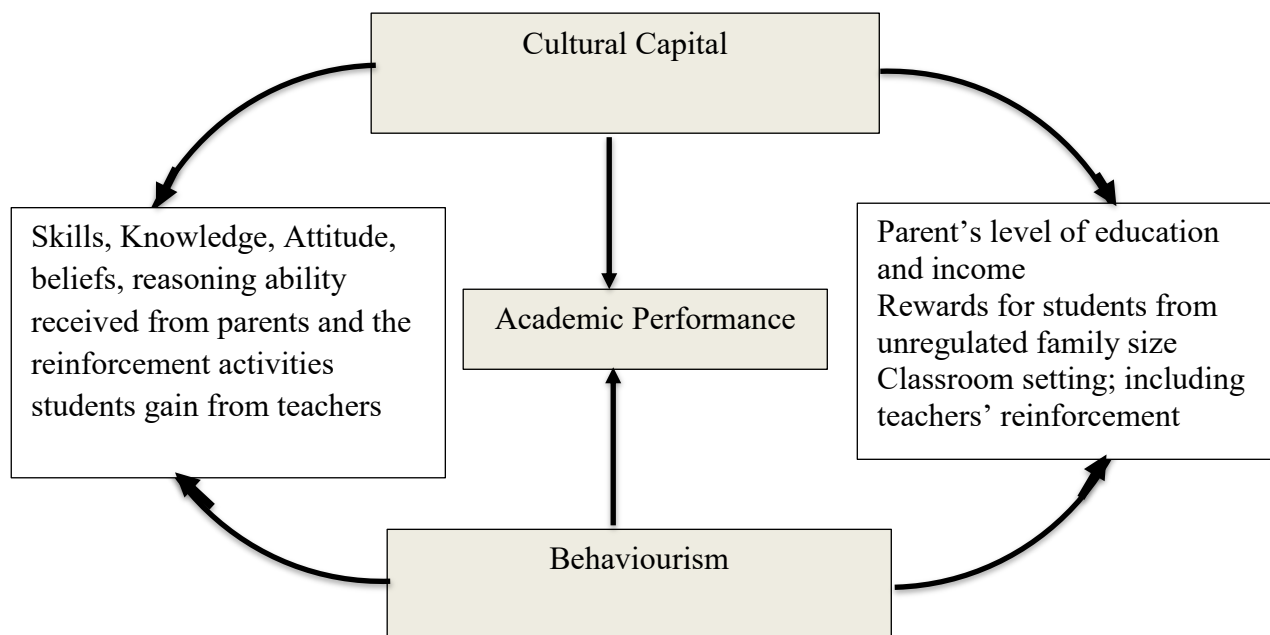


Figure 2.1: A conceptual framework

Source: Authour's Conception

Students' academic performance depends very much on the interplay between the amount of cultural capital children receive from parents and the reinforcement activities students gain from teachers. The model explains that, students' academic ability correlates with, and is rewarded by their parent's level of education and income which amount to the cultural capital available to them. The model also indicates that, the environment particularly, the classroom setting; including teachers' reinforcement, correlates with, and is rewarding to students from unregulated families in displaying appropriate leaning behaviours. Therefore, children from families of low parental level of education, low income and unregulated family size can only succeed in school when they merit from the combined forces of cultural capital and teachers' reinforcement practices in order to achieve expected academic performance.

The model explains that, the ability of parents to discuss school things with children, checking children's homework, participating in school activities coupled with the

ability of parents to provide material and financial support especially with a small family size will work to help students perform well in their academic endeavours. On the contrary, where the parents are not educated, family size is large and parents do not have the ability to support children both materially and financially, children from such families are likely to perform below standards set by school authorities.

I contend that, parents' ability to provide large cultural capital to their children as well as teachers ability to learn how to use positive reinforcement via in-service courses such as workshops and seminars will help school children achieve excellence in their academic endeavour.

In conclusion, teachers should use adaptable teaching approaches, techniques, and strategies that can adjust to students with a wide range of personalities, particularly those from disadvantaged socio-economic status. The framework's viewpoints suggest that, the quantity of cultural capital children acquire from their households is interconnected to teacher reinforcement and flexible interactions with children from poor socioeconomic statuses.

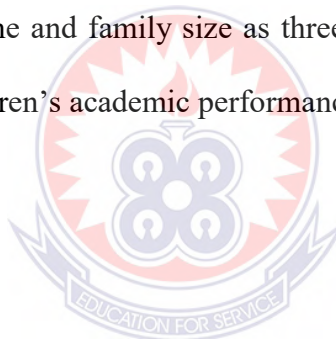
2.11 Summary of Literature and the Study Gap

Many studies have examined the factors that influence academic performance of students in basic and secondary schools with the purpose of augmenting learning at all stages and reducing school drop-out rates. It has, thus, been realized that children of parents of low socio-economic status are restricted in many ways. These parents may not be able to identify the educational needs of their children let alone provide them.

One may like to ask how parents who have not had formal education can be sure that they are giving their children the right educational foundation to forge ahead for good

academic performance. It is an undeniable fact that parental involvement in school activities, to a large extent, put finishing touches to what the school gives to the child and serves as a stepping stone for higher academic jumps.

Literature revealed that most studies on socio-economic status and academic performance of children were conducted outside Ghana, and even the few done in Ghana (Osei-Owusu et al., 2018) treated the parents' education, occupation and parents' involvement as different entities as against children's academic performance. Moreover, there seems to be few studies done in Ghana from the perspective of family size as an index of socioeconomic status and academic performance. This study therefore bridges the gap in the literature by combining parental level of education, parental income and family size as three entities into one index as socio-economic as against children's academic performance.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter primarily focuses on how the study was conducted in order to achieve its purpose. The chapter discusses the description of the study area, philosophical paradigm, research approach, research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques as well as data collection instruments. The chapter further delves into the validity and reliability of quantitative data collection instrument, trustworthiness of qualitative data collection instruments, data analysis, ethical considerations and limitation of the study.

3.2 Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted in the Ekumfi District in the Central Region of Ghana. According 2010 Population and Housing Census analytical report on Ekumfi District, the Ekumfi District is one of the twenty administrative districts in the Central Region. It was established by a Legislative Instrument (L.I. 2170, 2012). It was carved out of the erstwhile Mfantseman Municipality as a result of its rapidly growing population which hampered its administration. As a means of ensuring effective administration and holistic development, Ekumfi became a district and was inaugurated in June, 2012 with Essarkyir as its capital. The Ekumfi District is located along the Atlantic Coastline of the Central Region of Ghana. The district is bounded to the West by the Mfantseman Municipality, to the North by the Ajumako - Enyan – Essiam District, to the East by the Gomoa West District and to the South by the Gulf of Guinea. It occupies a total land area of

276.65 square kilometres or 0.12 percent of Ghana's land area, making it the fifth smallest among the twenty districts in the Central Region.

3.2.1 Population size, structure and composition

The population of Ekumfi District, according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, is 52,231 representing 2.4 percent of the region's total population. Males constitute 46.1 percent and females represent 53.8 percent. About ninety percent of the population (89.4%) is rural (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2014). The district has a sex ratio of 85.7. The population of the district is youthful (42.3%) depicting a broad base population pyramid which tapers off with a small number of elderly persons (8.5%). The total age dependency ratio for the district is 103.0, the age dependency ratio for males is higher (111.3) than that of females (96.3) (GSS, 2014).

3.2.2 Household size, composition and structure

The district has a household population of 51,033 with a total number of 12,631 households (GSS, 2014). The average household size in the district is 4.1 persons per household. Children constitute the largest proportion of the household structure accounting for 41.5 percent. Spouses form about 8.8 percent. Nuclear households (head, spouse(s) and children) constitute 28.0 percent of the total number of households in the district (GSS, 2014).

3.2.3 Economic activity status

According to GSS (2014) about 68.2 percent of the populations aged 15 years and older are economically active while 31.8 per cent are economically not active. Of the economically active population, 96.3 percent are employed while 3.7 percent are unemployed. For those who are economically not active, larger proportions are students (44.5%), 21.6 percent perform household duties and 8.0 percent are disabled

or too sick to work. Six out of ten unemployed (59.4%) are seeking work for the first time (GSS, 2014). Of the employed population, about 52.3 percent are engaged as skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers, 17.5 percent in service and sales, 16.6 percent in craft and related trade, and 6.1 percent are engaged as managers, professionals, and technicians (GSS, 2014).

3.3 Philosophical Paradigm

The study was conducted within the context of the pragmatic philosophical paradigm. Paradigm is used in research to mean worldview. Creswell (2014) perceives philosophical paradigm as a general philosophical orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher brings to a study. Guba and Lincoln (1994) also see research paradigms as worldviews or belief systems that guide researchers' action or an investigation. Thus, philosophical paradigms are the research worldviews or a set of beliefs that a researcher holds which informs his or her research practices.

Creswell (2014) provides some hint on the nature of pragmatic research and contends that pragmatic researchers look at "what" and "how" to research based on intended consequences. According to him, pragmatic research worldview is problem-centered and it focuses on the consequences of actions. This applies to mixed methods research, in that inquirers draw liberally from both quantitative and qualitative assumptions when they engage in research.

Since the pragmatic paradigm looks at problems from the perspective of consequences of actions, it was needful to employ this paradigm to evaluate the consequences of actions taken by stakeholders on the issue of academic performance as a way of making recommendations to mitigate the problem. Since pragmatic inquirers draw liberally from mixed methods assumptions, this also informed the

researcher to fuse the quantitative and qualitative research approaches for a holistic study.

3.4 Research Approach

The approach adopted for this study was the mixed- methods approach (which is qualitative biased). Creswell (2014) postulated that research approaches are plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation. Mixed-method research approach involves the collection and “mixing” or integration of both quantitative and qualitative data in a study (Creswell, 2014). Thus, the mixed methods approach in research entails gathering, analyzing and fusing both quantitative and qualitative data from respondents or participants for an in-depth investigation into a phenomenon. Therefore, considering the nature of the issue under study, that is, parental socio-economic status and academic performance among junior high school pupils, it was needful employing mixed- methods to get in-depth information including the feelings of respondent.

3.5 Research Design

The study adopted the convergent parallel design based on the mixed-methods approach (which is qualitative biased) to find answers to the research questions posed. Burns and Grove (2005) opined that a research design is the overall plan for obtaining answers to research questions. Similarly, Adzahlie-Mensah et al. (2017) posited that research design refers to the overall strategy that a researcher chooses to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way thereby ensuring the researcher will effectively address the research problem. They further stated that

research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data.

According to Creswell (2014), convergent parallel design is a form of mixed-methods design in which the researcher converges or merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. He added that, in this design the investigator typically collects both forms of data at roughly the same time and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results, contradictions or incongruent findings are explained or further probed. Estes et al., (2019) also postulated that the convergent parallel design is best suited to the pragmatic philosophical paradigm and enable researchers to obtain different but complementary data on the same research topic. The convergent parallel design helped in providing much insight into the study due to the flexibility to use multiple data collection instruments including questionnaire, interview guide and documents.

3.6 Population of the Study

The target population of the study comprise all Junior High School students, parents and teachers within the Ekumfi District. The accessible population comprise of parents, teachers and JHS students in the four (4) Basic Schools; Narkwa Methodist Basic School, Akwakrom D/A Basic School, Dunkwa Abontsen D/A primary and JHS and Ekotsi D/A primary and JHS.

3.7 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Kusi (2012) explained a sample as a sub-group of the entire population studied. Adzahlie-Mensah et al. (2017) also intimated that research sample is the members of the study population from whom data is collected. Thus, a sample is simply a

representative of a study population. Hence, sampling techniques imply the processes involved in selecting a sub-group of a population to be studied.

In order to get a representative sample out of a total of 171 J.H.S students, Slovin's formula was used to calculate the sample size. Slovin's formula allows a researcher to sample the population with a desired degree of accuracy (Stephanie, 2013). With regard to the level of accuracy, a confidence level of 95% as suggested by Kothari (2004) was adopted.

The sample size of students used was calculated as follows using the Slovin's formula:

$$n = N/1 + Ne^2$$

n= sample size

N= Total population

e= Error tolerance

The target population size of the research was 171 students.

Sampling error of 5%, and then the sample size will be:

$$n = 171/1+171(0.05*0.05)$$

$$n = 171/ 1+171*0.0025$$

$$n = 171/1+0.4275$$

$$n = 171/1.4275$$

$$n = 119.7$$

$$n = 120$$

From the above calculation, a total of 120 students were used as sample for the study.

Estes et al. (2019) contend that a sample size of at least 100 is recommended to conduct a test of statistical significance. In addition to the above, the researcher

sampled 12 parents and 8 teachers from data saturation view point, thus the numbers were achieved after the researcher reached saturation point. In all, 140 participants were selected as samples for the study.

Sidhu (2003) defines sampling as the process of selecting a representative unit from a population. For the purpose of this study, two sampling techniques were employed to select respondents namely; stratified sampling, which is a probability sampling technique and purposive sampling which is non-probability sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique, according to Patton (2002), is a sampling technique in which the researcher relies on his or her own judgment when choosing members of population to participate in the study. The researcher purposely sampled all JHS 3 classes in each of the schools sampled. Stratified sampling involves dividing population into homogeneous strata and then taking random sample in each stratum (Jamil, 2018). Thus, student respondents were taken from two different strata. Stratum A (low grade schools), stratum B (middle grade schools). The random sampling was used to select 4 schools from the strata. Thereafter, the lottery method was used to get 30 students' respondents for the study. The researcher wrote "Yes" or "No" on pieces of paper which was then folded and mixed up. Students who selected "Yes" were used as samples for the study. The major reason for adopting the stratified random sampling technique was that it gives the respondents equal chances to be included in the study. According to Frankael and Wallen (2009), if the sample size is large this method is the best way to devise to obtain a sample representative of the population of interest. Table 3.1 indicates the sample size as used for the study.

Table 3.1: Summary of sample size

Unit of Sampling	Sample
Narkwa Methodist Basic School	30
Akwakrom D/A Basic School	30
Dunkwa Abontsen D/A primary and JHS	30
Ekotsi D/A primary and JHS	30
Parents	12
Teachers	8
Total	140

Source: Author's Field survey (2021)

3.8 Data Collection Instruments

The researcher used three research instruments for the study. These include questionnaire, interview guide and documentary analysis.

3.8.1 Questionnaire

The researcher used self-administered questionnaire to collect data from JHS 3 students. The respective self-administered questionnaire started with a main title followed by sections. Section A consisted of part 1 and part 2. Part 1 considered the background information of students; part 2 consisted of items about the dependent variable (academic performance). Section B was designed to obtain data on the academic performance of students, C, D and E were on independent variables in the study (parents' education level, parents' income level and family size). The questionnaire was preferred because of the number of respondents, costs and the nature of the topic, which had to do with both quantitative and qualitative data (Kothari, 2004). Self-administered questionnaire was preferred because it is easy to fill by participants. The use of self-administered questionnaire kept the respondents on the subject; it was objective, fairly easy to make frequency counts and was the easiest

means of reaching respondents and obtaining desired information in a limited time available.

3.8.2 Interview guide

A total of 12 parents and 8 teachers were interviewed to provide information on the influence of socio-economic status factors on the academic performance of students in the four (4) basic schools selected in Ekumfi District. The kind of interview done was the face-to-face interviews which were conducted on different occasions. Interview is a valuable data collection tool. It allows researchers to facilitate a guided non-threatening conversation through the use of a flexible set of topic-specific questions (Yin, 2009). The questions used in the interview schedule of the study were open-ended in nature. This granted the interviewees the freedom to decide how they will answer the questions, both in relation to the words they use and the length of response they give (Babbie & Mouton, 2005; Denscombe, 2002).

According to Cohen et al. (2003), asking open-ended questions tend to result in less structured responses being collected than when closed questions are used. The flexible nature of interviews also allows researchers to respond to important, but unanticipated points or issues that arise during an interview or the wider research process itself. Amin (2005) also contends that an interview schedule allows pursuance of in-depth information around a topic and is useful with regard to follow-ups on certain respondents and to further investigate their responses and serve the purpose of triangulation. Data gathered from the interview schedule were obtained by the researcher using an audio recorder, pen and a book.

3.8.3 Documentary analysis

This method was employed as a primary source of data whereby official assessment records of pupils were used and were analysed along with data from the questionnaire and the interview schedule. The documents were on End of term examinations and school attendance which were obtained from the class teachers of the schools involved in the study. According to Yin (2003) as stated in Moshi (2007) documents are used to support and supplement evidence from other sources.

The gathering of the documents, during the data collection phase of the study aided in the research validity through triangulations, as the documentary evidence corroborated and enhanced the evidence that the researcher had collected from the questionnaire and the interview schedule. Another reason why the researcher used documentary analysis was to verify the authenticity of the responses provided by the pupils on their academic performance based on their ratings. The documentary analysis was basically limited to the data related to the pupils' school attendance and academic performance which were essential to the study.

3.9 Validity and Reliability of Quantitative Data Collection Instrument

According to Patton (2002), an instrument is valid if it measures what it is intended to measure and accurately achieves the purpose for which it was designed. Validity therefore involves the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of inferences made by the researcher on the basis of the data collected. The content validity of the questionnaire items was enhanced by drafting questions to find answers to the research questions posed in the introductory chapter. This was first evaluated by a colleague and further subjected to scrutiny by the supervisor of the work before being administered to the respondents. Some of the items were modified and the few that

looked ambiguous were dropped. Wang (2006) intimated that reliability provides information on whether the instrument is collecting data in a consistent way. In the quest to find out how reliable the questionnaire items were, a pre-test reliability mission was undertaken by piloting the questionnaire to respondents in the Ekumfi District from 9th June to 11th June, 2021. Based on the number of the questionnaire items administered, a Cronbach alpha internal reliability score of 0.78 was obtained using the SPSS version 26 software. Hence, this was considered much acceptable because, according to Frankel and Wallen (2000), reliability should be at least 0.70 and preferably higher. After the pilot exercise, all the necessary changes were made before the actual field data collection begun.

3.10 Trustworthiness of Qualitative Data Collection Instruments

The trustworthiness of the qualitative field data obtained was also ensured by the researcher. In this regard, the confirmability of the qualitative data obtained for the study was guaranteed by making sure that the researcher's bias did not skew the opinions shared by the participants who were interviewed as a fabricated narrative during the transcription phase. Hence, the opinions shared by the participants on the study were reported verbatim and were reflected in the analysis of data, findings and discussions. Put differently, to ensure the confirmability of the qualitative data, the researcher's analysis of the participants' standpoints was reflective of the participants' views expressed. In addition, the credibility of the interview data obtained from the study was enhanced by aligning the interview guide items with the critical issues contained in the questionnaire. This aided the researcher to obtain insightful information from the participants interviewed by addressing the lapses in the questionnaire.

3.11 Method of Data Analysis

Analysis of quantitative data was done by the use of descriptive statistics. First, the demographic data of the respondents was tabulated in frequencies for individual item and reported by percentages. Section B and C was analysed using descriptive statistics involving frequencies and percentages for each item.

The data that were gathered from the interview (that is section D and E) through the audiotape were transcribed. The researcher read through all the transcribed information and noted the themes that were running through the various transcribed materials and patterns of experiences were listed. Concerning the documentary analysis, the researcher wrote what he observed, analysed and expanded into notes.

The data that were obtained from the documentary analysis were also considered under the patterns of experiences that were identified through the questionnaire and the interview schedules.

The qualitative data were also transcribed and presented under emergent themes and used where applicable to buttress the quantitative data. This was done by ensuring that recurring themes or patterns from the participants' views were grouped under similar headings. From the aforementioned, both the quantitative data gathered from the respondents and the qualitative data obtained from the key informants' results were analysed through side-by-side comparison to either confirm or disconfirm the results obtained for a detailed understanding about the nature of the problem investigated in the study area.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

In this study, the key ethical concerns addressed were issues of informed consent, access, confidentiality and anonymity, Halai (2006) opined that there are laid down

principles and guidelines for conducting studies in an ethically appropriate manner which require researchers to obtain approval from gatekeepers and from the participants. To this end, the study was guided by research code of ethics such as access, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents during data collection.

Regarding access, the researcher initially requested for permission or an introductory letter from the Department of Social Studies Education, University of Education, Winneba on 7th June, 2021 before proceeding to the field for data collection. Subsequently, permission was also sought from the head teachers of the schools involved regarding my intention to collect data from the students and teachers. Aside this, the informed consent of the students, teachers and parents were sought during data collection. This involved giving them information about the purpose of the study, how it would be carried out, the nature of their involvement, the duration for engagement, the kind of data to be collected from them and how it would be used and reported. On this premise, the respondents were able to make a decision whether to voluntarily participate in the study or not.

To guarantee the ethic of confidentiality during the field data collection, I made sure that all identifiable personal information such as names and addresses obtained from students, teachers and parents respondents involved in the study were deleted from the final report. Also, after audio recordings had been obtained from the participants interviewed, the audio files were saved as password-protected files on the researcher's laptop which prevented intruders from getting access to either read or edit the transcribed data. Moreover, coding was done to protect the anonymity of the informants who were interviewed. Furthermore, secondary information from books,

journals, newspapers and online thesis which provided relevant literature on the study was duly acknowledged to avoid plagiarism.

3.13 Limitation

The major challenge encountered in the study was the inability of some teachers to cooperate during data collection. The research had to put in some strategies to overcome this problem. Moreover, the researcher had to rely on information services of the schools to overcome the difficulty in collection data from students. Another challenge was the difficulty in getting parents for interview and moving between the schools. This is because the schools were far apart from each other.

In addition, doing the research in only one district involving four schools was a limitation this is because, it does not portray the entire situation in the district. Furthermore, secondary data from the study was not enough, the information covered only one term performance of students.

Lastly, the purposely sampling used poses limitation because others were not given the opportunity to express themselves.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. Data from the field is presented and discussed in this chapter. It has two sections. Section A presents the demographic characteristics of respondents. This comprised data on the sex of the respondents, age and number of students involved in the study, as per section A of the questionnaire. Background data is presented to provide readers a general view of the participants of the study. Section B also presents the findings based on the three research questions raised.

4.2 Section A: Demographic Data of Respondents

Background Information of Students

This section of the chapter focuses on the background of students' respondents. The background information collected includes; gender and age. These background data are represented in table 4.1 and 4.2.

Table 4.1: Gender of students

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	66	55
Female	54	45
Total	120	100

Source: Field Data, July 2021

Table 4.1 shows gender distribution of the respondents for the study. The table implies that more male students were involved in the study than female students.

Education is a universal human right. According to Nwangwu (1976), Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December, 1949 stipulated that: Everyone has the right to education. This shall be free at least in the elementary and primary stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory while technical and professional education shall be made generally available. Also, according to article 25 of the 1992 constitution of Ghana, all persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities and with a view to achieving the full realisation of that right and that basic education shall be free, compulsory and available to all. Thus, in Ghana, with the policy framework of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), both boys and girls alike find themselves in primary schools. However, events take different course making female retention low at the junior high schools. Gender disparity set in as most females do not find themselves in the junior high school level due to certain factors including teenage pregnancy. It is thus not surprising to find more males than females involved in the study. This was confirmed by Ankalibazuk (2017) that as girls move from the primary school level to the junior high school level in the Ghana, most of them drop out of school.

Table 4.2: Age of students' respondents

Age of Students	Frequency	Percentage (%)
12-14	8	6.7
15-17	98	81.6
18yrs and above	14	11.7
Total	120	100

Source: Field Data, July 2021

Table 4.2 shows age distribution of the respondents for the study. The national education system in Ghana is divided into the following levels of education: primary education, as defined by the country, begins at age six and has duration of six years. The entry age of lower secondary education (Junior high school) is twelve years, and it lasts three years (UNESCO, 2012). Therefore, by average, a child should be fifteen years by JHS 3. Based on this, one could say that the respondents' ages truly represent JHS students since the majority of them fall within the age range of 15-17 representing 98.0%. Therefore, it could be said that the respondents were appropriate for the study.

Table 4.3: Number of students and schools involved

School Name	Number of students	Percentage
Dunkwa/Abontsin D/A Basic	30	25
Akwakrom D/A Basic	30	25
Narkwa Methodist Basic	30	25
Ekumfi Ekotsi D/A Basic	30	25
Total	120	100

Source: Field Data, July 2021

From the table, 30 students representing 25% each were involved in the study from four schools within the Ekumfi District namely: Dunkwa/Abontsin D/A Basic, Akwakrom D/A Basic, Narkwa Methodist Basic and Ekumfi Ekotsi D/A Basic. The number of students were realized from using slovin's formula for sample size determination.

Table 4.4: Number of teachers involved in the study

School Name	Number of Teachers	Percentage
Dunkwa/Abontsin D/A Basic	2	25
Akwakrom D/A Basic	2	25
Narkwa Methodist Basic	2	25
Ekumfi Ekotsi D/A Basic	2	25
Total	8	100

Source: Field Data, July 2021

From the table, eight teachers representing 25% each were involved in the study from four schools within the Ekumfi District namely: Dunkwa/Abontsin D/A Basic, Akwakrom D/A Basic, Narkwa Methodist Basic and Ekumfi Ekotsi D/A Basic. The teachers involved in the study were teachers who teaches JHS 3 classes used. Among these teachers were form masters assigned to the classes who had better knowledge and relations with the parents of the students involved in the study.

4.3 Influence of Parental Educational Background on Academic Performance of JHS students in the Ekumfi District

Table 4.5: Educational level of parents

Level of Education	Father		Mother	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
None	5	41.7	5	41.7
Primary	0	0	4	33.3
JHS	4	33.3	2	16.7
SHS/Middle/Tec/Voc	3	25	0	0
Tertiary	0	0	1	8.3
Total	12	100	12	100

Source: Field data, July 2021

Table 4.5 sought to find out formal educational levels of parents. The results revealed that, only 3(25%) of male parents have completed SHS/Middle/Tec/Voc education, The results showed that, the majority of male parents received pre-tertiary education. On the other hand, the results revealed that, only one of the female parents received tertiary education. This showed that, the majority of the female parents received pre-tertiary education. Comparatively, fathers are more educated than mothers. Meanwhile if mothers who are more educated it will give more rooms for children to be positively influence since mothers are more involved with children than fathers. The resulting benefit will be that, children will have higher self-esteem and receive higher test scores. This is so because mothers per their nature given talent train their children with cognitive abilities and emotional support via the art of communication. Thus, the cultural capital mothers provide their children lead to better school performance. Studies by Soharwardi et al. (2020) show that father and mother education have a positive and significant impact on the academic performance of the students. One year increase in a father's year of schooling is associated with a 14% increase in the GPA of the students, on the other hand, a year increase in mother's education leads to a 34% increase in student's average performance (Soharwardi et al, 2020). Their finding shows that mother education has a stronger influence on the performance of students than the education of father. Thus, mother education is more vital for children's performance in academics.

Interview with some parents indicated most of them are JHS leavers. It was indicated that their inability to attain higher education really affect the academic help they offer their children. Most respondents indicated that they are not well educated and therefore, their partners who are somewhat educated help their children academically.

Others explained their assistance to their wards in different ways. Excerpts from the parents are shown below:

“I am just JHS leaver, so when my children bring work from the school to the house, I am unable to assist them with their homework. What I know is what I help them with. In situations where I cannot help them, I seek the assistance of my neighbours” Ekow [A parent of Kofi a JHS 3 student of Narkwa Methodist Basic School who performs bad].

“I did not go far with education. I drop out of school at JHS 2. But I am usually concerned about my child’s education. For example, when he comes home, I usually ask him if they have given him homework or not, then I help him to do them if he allows me. Sometimes, he refuses my help that he will do it by himself”. Aba [A parent of Kwesi a JHS 3 student of Dunkwa Abontsen D/A primary and JHS whose performance is below average].

Some of the teachers interviewed also confirmed what the parents said. Excerpts from the teachers are shown below:

“Uhhmm... what I will say is that, most of them weren’t able to complete the second cycle institution so they completed the lower primary level. Yes. That dominates. Most of them are not enthusiastic about their children’s education” (Kobina, a teacher with 12 years experience teaching in Ekotsi D/A primary and JHS for 2 years holding Diploma in Basic Education).

“Per their level of education, what I have observed is that majority of them didn’t complete JHS. Most of them do not see the relevance of their children’s education. This is what I have observed. I am saying this because most of them complain when it comes to responding to mandatory fees they have to sort out” Daniel [A teacher with eight years experience in teaching, teaching for 4 years in Dunkwa Abontsen D/A primary and JHS and holding a Bachelor degree in Basic Education].

Data from the study implies that both male and female parents in the study area lack higher education. Most of them did not receive senior high education indicating that their perceptions about the education of their wards are likely not to be of a higher aspiration. Normally, parents who do not go far in education are not concerned about their wards having higher education. This is because, some inculcate their fears into

their children as a result of the experiences they met over the years. There are reports that parents who do not receive higher education contribute to low performance of children (West, 2007; Marks et al., 2001). The results imply that if school children are to have higher aspirations, their parents must be professionals who view education as relevant in producing human capital for the betterment of society. However, less educated parents may produce intergenerational illiteracy. West (2007) posited, that less educated parents could contribute to lower achievement levels of their children by the nature of their own education or experiences. Nannyonjo (2007) makes some analysis to prove that students whose parents had some level of education tend to perform better academically. He compared the performance of students whose parents did not finish primary school and those whose finished senior four or senior six or university and found that the latter performed considerably better.

Existing literature in this field suggests that the children's initial reading capability is largely associated with the home literacy surroundings, the number of books owned and parent suffering (Barbarin & Aikens, 2015).

4.4 Parental level of Education, Student Positions, Attendance and Contribution in Lessons

To ascertain whether parental academic performance has direct bearing on students' academic performance, other factors were looked at. These include students' position in class, class attendance, and contributions in class. These are shown in table 4.6 below:

Table 4.6: Student positions, attendance and contribution in lessons

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Position		
1 st -5 th	17	14.2
6 th -10 th	21	17.5
11 th -15 th	20	16.7
16 th -20 th	16	13.3
21 st -25 th	9	7.5
26 th -30 th	37	30.8
Total	120	100
Attendance		
Everyday	113	94.2
Once a week	1	0.8
Twice a week	0	0
3 times a week	4	3.3
4 times a week	2	1.7
Total	120	100
Contribution in Class		
Very often	44	36.7
Often	61	50.8
Not often	13	10.8
Not at all	2	1.7
Total	120	100

Source: Field data, July 2021

Table 4.6 indicates students' position in class. Taking 15th position as the threshold for good performance, minority of the students' (48.4%) performed well while majority of the students (51.6%) did not get good grades hence had poor positions. Thus, with the low parental level of education, parents are not involved in the education of their children. Meanwhile, parents who are more involved with their children's schooling become knowledgeable about school goals and procedures (Hill & Taylor, 2004).

Interview with parents generally revealed that illiterate parents and parents with primary and JHS had their children getting poor positions, that is positions above 15th while parents who had Senior secondary had their children performing above average with better positions from 1st and 15th.

Some excerpts from parents are shown below:

“I had primary education. Even that one too I couldn’t finish it. This was because we had financial problems those days when was in school. My child’s performance is bad sometimes but who can I blame? If I know more about school things, I will be helping her”
Ekua [A parent in Narkwa who had a child performing below average]

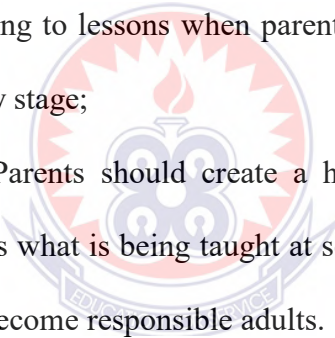
Even though I didn’t go to tertiary, I guide and help my children when they need my help. I think it is because I took my secondary education serious. They are performing very well in school. [A literate parent in Dunkwa Abontsen whose ward performs excellently].

Thus, parents who are illiterate or less educated lack the capacity to inculcate in their children the appropriate attitudes and effective learning strategies to succeed in school. Lareau (2000) noted that parents who are educated communicate the importance of education to children and help children learn strategies to enhance their perceptions of competence and control over achievement outcomes.

Again, the table indicates how students in the study attend school. The result revealed that, 113(94.2%) out of 120 students go to school every day, 2(1.7%) attend school four times a week, 4(3.3%) attend school three times a week. Only 1(0.8%) student attend school once a week but none of the students was found to attend school twice a week. It is quite surprising majority of students attend school regularly but could not perform above average. This could be attributed to the low parental level of education. Less educated parents are normally less mindful about their roles in improving performance of children as they are less endowed with educational related

cultural capital. However, this deviation from the norm could be as a result of some push and pull factors including the school feeding programme which parents want their children to be part of as well as the national free SHS policy parents would like their children to benefit from in the near future. This result could also be attributed to education enlightenment provided by teachers and headteachers to parents during their PTA meetings including positive enforcement provided to students during class lessons. Therefore, these trigger desire in students to attend school regularly.

Moreover, table 4.6 describes students' contribution during lessons. The result showed that, 1.7% of the students do not contribute during lessons at all. According to Adewumi et al., (2012), academic performance improves by getting good positions in class as well as contributing to lessons when parents play the following role in their children's learning at early stage;

- 
- (i) Act as teachers: Parents should create a home environment that promotes learning, reinforces what is being taught at school and develops the life skills. Children need to become responsible adults.
 - (ii) As supporters: Parents should contribute their knowledge and skills to the school, enriching the curriculum, and providing extra services and support to students.
 - (iii) As advocates: Parents should help children negotiate the system and receive fair treatment and work to make the system more responsive to all families.
 - (iv) As decision maker: Parents serve as an advisory council, curriculum committees and management teams, participating in joint problem solving at every level.

Interview with parents revealed that students who do not contribute in class had parents who are illiterate. Such students were found to be timid and shy upon little interaction with them. However, students who contribute in class had their parents' literate. Students of such parents were found to be assertive and confidence.

Some excerpts from parents are shown below:

My child told me he doesn't contribute in class when I confronted him. Hmm... the same thing he has been doing when our visitors come to ask him questions. He keeps mute and bend his head. [An illiterate parent who had a child performing below average]

For my daughter, she can talk and talk without feeling shy. One of her teachers told me she has been answering questions very well. [A literate parent whose ward performs excellently].

The above implies that parents who lack education do not have enough cultural capital transmitted to their children including teaching them how to read, communicating to them the skills of problem solving, how to make meaning of text. As a result, students lack the ability to express themselves whereas parents who are literate inculcate reading habits, assertive skills as well as other skills to be effective in class.

Interview with teachers indicated that they motivate students and give them positive enforcement because they noted that some students come to school thrice a week. Others do not contribute in class and get good positions. They added that they try as much as possible to create learnable environment for students to freely exhibit learned skills and behaviours.

Some excerpts from teachers are shown below:

When we see that some of our students are performing below average, we motivate them to ensure that they keep up with their colleagues.

[Kobina, a teacher with 12 years experience teaching in Ekotsi D/A primary and JHS for 2 years holding Diploma in Basic Education].

Some of them come to school three times a week. So, when you notice that as a teacher you have to reach their parents on that. Some of them have problems from the house so when they come to school, we create a sound learning environment for them. Daniel [A teacher with eight years experience in teaching, teaching for 4 years in Dunkwa Abontsen D/A primary and JHS and holding a Bachelor degree in Basic Education].

Positive reinforcement is one of the teacher's most valuable behaviour management tools. The implication is that teachers who use reward systems in their classes encourages the learning habit of children from less empowered homes to learn assiduously. Thus, positive reinforcement is an interesting technique at the hand of the experienced teacher to transform the behaviour of students. Li and Qiu (2018) opined that, teachers have a direct impact on their students' academic performance and also affect their learning attitudes and behaviors, thereby affecting their academic performance and further educational opportunities.

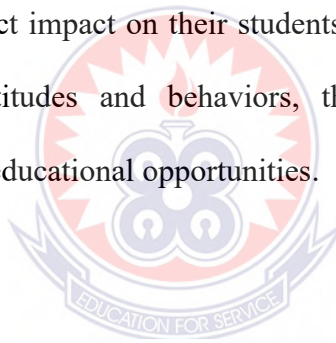


Table 4.7: Parental level of education, provision of help and resources

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Do you get all resources requested from your parents for your schooling?		
Yes	79	65.8
No	41	34.2
Total	120	100
If 'No' how do you acquire such resources?		
Menial Jobs	18	15
Assistance from friends	8	6.7
Assistance from siblings	10	8.3
Personal savings	5	4.2
Total	41	34.2
Who helps you do your assignment?		
Parents	10	8.3
Siblings	45	37.5
Uncle/Aunt	1	0.8
Friend	59	49.2
Myself	5	4.2
Total	120	100

Source: Field data, July 2021

In Table 4.7, the researcher sought to find out whether students get all resources requested from parents/guardian for schooling. The result showed that, 79(65.8%) majority of students receive all the requested resources from parents/guardian for schooling. Rugutt and Chemosit (2005) opine that learning resources makes students effective in class.

Again, the table 4.7 depicts how students who do not get access to resources requested from parents/guardian are able to access them for schooling. The result revealed that, 18(15%) access their educational resources from doing menial jobs. Such school children are usually found on farmlands and hawking on the street and do not dedicate

enough time to their studies. It is therefore relevant for parents to ensure that health, safety and home conditions of school children are provided to ensure children's progressive learning.

In addition, the researcher sought to find out who helps students do their assignments. The result revealed that, majority 59(49.2%) of the students do their assignments with the help of friends. Thus, majority of parents were not involved in assignments given by teachers to their wards as a result of their illiteracy. When parents are educated, they gain a more positive attitude towards the school and teachers, being more assertive in assisting their children with homework. In addition, they render support for their children's schools and its programmes in the community and become effectively engaged citizens. However, children from parents who are that less engaged in the process of their children's schooling are usually less capable for active societal engagement. With adequate parental home mentorship and involvement in the child's educational activities like monitoring of homework, participation in extracurricular activities, parent-teacher association, and other school related activities, the child is more likely to be courageous and as such do well at school. This is because, parents in this present study were found to be less educated. Earlier reports indicate that the extent and form of parental involvement are strongly influenced by family social class and maternal level of education (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

Interview results revealed that majority of parents in the study support their children financially by providing resources they need. Some respondents shared the following:

"I help my child by paying his educational needs. I do pay exam fees too. However, because he is not serious, I find it difficult paying full amount. It looks as if I am not seeing value for the money I am spending. I am tired." Afua [A less educated parent in Narkwa whose ward performs poorly]

I discuss my child's performance with their teachers so that I know how much effort I can make to ensure he also becomes someone important in the future". Patience [A literate parent in Dunkwa Abontsen whose ward performs excellently].

"I personally teach my children Fante to perform better in school. But when it comes to other subjects, I am handicapped" Kwame [A less educated parent in Ekotsi whose ward performs below average].

However, most of them lamented that their wards are playful. They spend time with their friends without studying. This is what some respondents shared:

"Mmm... the problem is that my children are not serious with studies. Instead of them sitting at one place and learn, they rather hang-out with friends all the time" Maame Esi [A less educated parent in Akwakrom whose ward performs below average].

"I think that the problem is coming from the children themselves. My child for instance likes playing too much". Kweku [An illiterate parent at Ekotsi whose child performs poorly].

As a result of this, parents were asked about what they can do as parents to improve on the academic performance of their children. Some respondents said:

"I think advising my children can help them a lot, I normally use my experience, that is my inability to go further with my education to advise them. Also, I continuously remind them to learn. I offer prayers on their behalf so that they can be somebodies important in the future" A parent in Narkwa

"I study my child to see if he is learning or not. I think as parents we need to visit our children's teachers in school and inquire about their performance in school" [A parent in Akwakrom].

"They support them financially, though they are not having enough, they find ways and means to finance everything their children are demanding for their school. So, in terms of parents responding to providing for the needs of their children, it is somewhat encouraging. Just that it becomes burdensome for them as they are trying to do their best" [A teacher in Dunkwa Abontsen D/A primary and JHS].

Low level parental education as revealed above poses threat to the next generation.

This threat can only be overcome if parental education is improved to make parents' participation, such as discussing school things with children, checking their

homework, and participating in school activities realized, leading to improved students' academic performances. Parental level of education is a principal factor when it comes to students' academic performance. Akhtar et al., (2020) noted that teachers felt comfortable when parents make an unscheduled visit to their classroom. Interaction with parents will be the key of good performance. It will give parents a chance to observe things commencing a teacher's point of view and it will permit teachers frankly talk-about with students' parents how they would like to be participated (Wright, 2009). Parents can communicate with teachers to know what books to buy. Parent-teacher relationship can be enhanced through the teacher-parent relationship. Since teachers work closely with parents on the school matters, the teacher-parent relationship is critical to pupils' success and school development in general (Kayombo, 2017).

Table 4.8: Students' habit of watching TV

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Do you watch TV a lot?		
Yes	31	25.8
No	89	74.1
Total	120	100
If 'Yes' are your parents/guardian worried about it?		
Yes	28	23.3
No	3	2.5
Total	31	25.8
How have their comments changed your academic performance?		
Better	16	13.3
Normal	10	8.3
Worst	2	1.7
Total	28	23.3

Source: Field data, July 2021

Table 4.8 shows the number of students who watch TV a lot. These students who watch TV a lot may not dedicate much time in studying their books especially if they are not being monitored by their parents. One key aspect of parental involvement is the parents' ability to monitor child activities such as their time and choice of programmes on television, regulate playing time after school, supervise child to do homework. These factors are believed to influence the child's studies after school. Cho and Campbel (2004) also explained that a parent monitoring activities include the following; the ability of parents to regulate the child's exposure to media content especially to television and computer games, set time for child to study and complete their homework after school hours, to regulate the time children spend playing after school, ability of the parents to guide the academic progress by helping students to select subjects, and lastly the ability of parents to monitor the return of their children from school. It is a fact when children spend so much time on activities such as playing computer games, watching TV and do not study at home that the negative effects of such activities outweigh the positives and to such effect. Parents are supposed to take it upon themselves to monitor the activities of children. Studies from Ghana sadly, have shown that most parents do not show interest in their children's school (Casely-Hayford, 2000). These parents, due to the quest to make up for their family, spend most of their day outside the homes and hence have little input in the monitoring of their children.

Again, children who watched TV a lot were asked if their parents or guardian were worried about their habit of watching TV excessively. The results revealed that, 28(23.3%) of students' parents/guardian were worried about their children interest in watching TV excessively, 3(2.5%) of such children said their parents/guardian did not worry about their habit of watching TV a lot. Moreover, the researcher further probed

into children who admitted their parents or guardians were worried about their habit of watching TV a lot. This was to find out how their parents/guardian's comments changed students' academic performance. The result from the table showed that, 16(13.3%) out of 120 students reported better academic performance as result of their parents/guardian comments. In Ghana, the few studies conducted so far have mentioned the lack of interest of parents in the education of their children. In a study conducted in Ashanti Region, Pryor and Ampah (2003a, 2003b) posited that most parents were apathetic to the schooling of their children. Parents lacked interest in education and as such did not bother to get involved in the learning activities of their children. It is therefore, clearly seen that less educated parents per their past experiences contributed to low levels of educational performance of their children. Nyarko (2007, cited Gyamfi & Pobbi, 2016, p, 33) further reiterates that the standard of education in Ghana has assumed a downtrend in recent times. The study reports that in Ghana, not much parental involvement is encountered at the school level.

Interview with parents revealed that they have little monitoring when it comes to regulating their children's habit of watching TV. It was also revealed that their children involved in playing games after school.

Some excerpts from parents are shown below:

I don't tell them to limit the way they watch TV in this house. Besides, they told me they have been learning from watching TV. [A parent whose child performs above average]

My child is more interested in playing games than learning. I don't know what he has been learning from that. The first thing he does after he comes back form school is to be playing games. He is always with the phone. When I complain about it, he will tell me he learns English with it. [A parent whose child performs poorly]

The results are in line with research done in Ghana by Gyamfi and Pobbi (2016) when parental monitoring was measured using seven monitoring activities including: setting Tv time for child, limiting playing time, monitoring homework, selecting TV programme for child, setting time for children to come back from school, setting study time for children and selecting subjects for children. The factor analysis technique was conducted on the measurement items of the parental monitoring construct. The study found that parent involvement in all monitoring activities of their children toward academic work was low.

4.5 Influence of Parental Income on the Academic Performance of JHS Students in the Ekumfi District

In order to unearth the issues related to academic performance of students vis-à-vis the income level of parents, parental occupation and income level were looked at since the kind of occupation parents engage in determines their income level. These are shown in table 4.9 - 4.10.

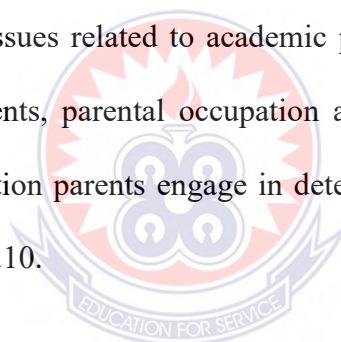


Table 4.9: Parental occupation

Occupation	Father		Mother	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	65	54.2	28	23.3
Craft and related trade workers	12	10	0	0
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	22	18.3	0	0
Service and sales workers	13	10.8	87	72.5
Professionals	4	3.3	3	2.5
Unemployed	4	3.3	2	1.7
Total	120	100 (99.9)	120	100

Source: Field Data, July 2021

Table 4.9 sought to find out what work does students' fathers and mothers do. The numerous responses from the study were viewed from the categorization of International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) – an international classification under the responsibility of the International Labour Organization (ILO) for organising jobs into a clearly defined set of groups according to the tasks and duties undertaken in the job. The result revealed that, only 4(3.3%) out of 120 students' fathers are professionals (teachers, NADMO officers etc) Again, responses from students concerning their mothers' occupation revealed that only 3(2.5%) out of 120 students indicated that their mothers are professionals. Data from the study indicate that most of the parents are agricultural or forestry or fishery workers. This includes parents who are farmers, fishermen and fishmongers. Most of these works are not done on large scale and therefore do not yield much income for them. Thus, these parents have low occupational status. Juma (2016) concluded that there is a significant positive correlation between parents' occupation and students' academic performance. Afful (2014) contends that parents with higher occupational status and educational attainment may also have higher aspirations and expectations for their children's occupation and education, which in turn can influence their commitment to learning. Below are views expressed by respondents on their occupation:

“I make pastries on a small-scale basis. It is not something people buy in large quantities from me. I rather hawk on the street to earn some income for myself and family” Ekua [A parent in Narkwa whose income is low and had a child performing below average]

“I sell clothes to earn a living. Truthfully speaking, I do not have any problem with the income I get because it is enough to sustain my child and I” Comfort [A parent in Akwakrom whose income is high and had a child performing better].

Other respondents indicated that they are cobblers, weavers, blacksmiths, TV repairers while others engage in farming and being involved in catering services.

According to a study conducted by Okwan (2014), children of parents who belong to the “skilled” type of occupation such as teaching, nursing, banking and the likes proved to perform better academically than their peers whose parents’ occupations were “unskilled” such as petty trading, subsistent farming and day-labourers at building sites, wood and cocoa loading sites. Thus, students whose parents are in good formal employment exhibit higher academic attainments than those whose parents practice nomadic, peasantry related work or are unemployed.

Table 4.10: Income level

Income level of family	Frequency	Percentage
High Income Family	7	5.8
Middle Income Family	31	25.8
Low Income Family	82	68.3
Total	120	100% (99%)

Source: Field Data, July 2021

Table 4.10 shows the income level description of family that students belong to. The result showed that only 7(5.8%) of the students belonged to families that earn high income and 31(25.8%) belonged to families of middle-income earners, 82(68.3%) while fall within low-income families. Thus, majority of students hail from low-income families indicating that children from these families may suffer from lack of provision of adequate material resources. A study conducted by Sum and Fogg (1991) found that poor students are ranked lower in performance than students from upper-income family. Similarly, low-income students’ scores lower marks than upper-income students’ scores (Rowan et al., 2004) and students from low- income families consistently score marks below average (Bergeson, 2006). Again, children from persistently poor families score lower than children from relatively rich homes (Smith

et al., 1997). To find out more about family's income level parents were made to respond to questionnaires in order to unearth more about the income levels of the families from which their children originate and to make suitable deductions. The outcome is shown in table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11: Income level of parents

Income level	Frequency	Percentage
GhC 500 or less	6	50
GhC 501-1000	3	2
GhC 1001-1500	0	0
GhC 1501-2000	0	0
GhC 2001-2500	1	8.3
GhC 2501 or more	2	16.7
Total	12	100%

Source: Field Data, July 2021

Table 4.11 shows income level of parents. The income level of parents in the study was very low. This implies that most of the families in the study earn just little above minimum wage. This income level is not adequate for family's needs, not to talk of the educational needs of their children. Children from families earning low income; GhC 500 or less often has challenges meeting the needs of their children. Parental educational background, profession and occupation affect their financial status. Among the several parental factors that have been linked to their children's academic achievements at school is the parent's level of income. Family income is one major factor that affects their children's educational level, competitive ability and performance (Rothstein, 2004). According to Mayer (2010), a casual observation is that the children of affluent parents are more likely to succeed in life than the children of poor parents probably because the rich parents spend more than poor parents on their children and these "investments" lead to better outcomes for their children.

Studies by Soharwardi et al. (2020) showed that father income has also a positive and significant impact on the academic performance of the students. Fathers with higher incomes are found to have a higher performance of their children. Moreover, the perception and desire of parents about their children's future have a positive impact on their child's performance. Their finding suggests that if parents keep higher aims for their child's career, the child is expected to put more effort into his studies and bring better grades. The child's personal interest in education has also affected his performance positively. In addition, if the student is more concerned about his future, he is expected to bring better results. His own future career perception has a positive impact on his academic performance.

Interview with parents on their perception regarding their income level indicated that the income they get is not encouraging. Thus, saving to meet the educational needs of their children becomes difficult for them. This is revealed below:

“As I said earlier, the income I get is enough. I even have a child who is undergoing nursing training. I support all of them with the income I get from my business”. [A tertiary level educated parent in Dunkwa Abontsen whose monthly income is above GhC 2000.00 and had a child who performs well].

“I find it difficult in helping them with providing their needs. Now every financial issue is on me. Their father does not support them” [A parent whose monthly income is a little above GhC 500.00 and has a child in JHS performing poorly]

“Generally, I would say the level of income of the parents is very low. Most of them indulge in farming. After harvesting foodstuffs, they send it to the market’ [A teacher].

“Ok, the community is a farming community where majority of them dwell on selling of produce from their farm. So, based on that I think their income falls below GhC 500.00” [Another teacher]”

Most parents are not able to meet the educational needs of their children because the income they get is meagre. Studies revealed that low parental income negatively affects academic achievements since it prevents access to vital resources and creates additional stress at home (Jeynes, 2002). The findings imply that for children's academic performance to be improved, it must be shared responsibility of both parents. A study done by Adzido et al., (2016) concludes that financial status of families/parents and the students' academic performance must be a shared responsibility for the purpose of mutual benefits in the future.

Engaging Students in income generating activities

Most parents in the interview indicated that they do engage their children in the income generating activities they do. This is what some respondents said:

“Yes, my children help me sometimes. If I am not able to go hawking, one of them does that on my behalf. But because I am aware they are schooling; I do not overdo that” [A parent whose monthly income is a little above GhC600.00 and had a child who performs poorly].

“I engage my child to help me. However, he refuses to help me in so many things. I have a shop I need his help with but he just steals and ran away”. [A parent whose monthly income is a little above GhC800.00 and had a child who performs poorly].

“The elder one helps in selling stuffs from the market when I am unable to”. [A parent whose is just a little above GhC500.00 but had a child performing very well].

Other respondents indicated that their children help them on the farm especially when it comes to cultivating crops, weeding and harvesting. Majority of the parents, especially in rural areas, are too poor to pay for school compulsory contributions for their children due to their inability to meet expenses for their children's studying materials, clothing, and food to sustain their children in school. In addition, the children of poor parents are highly likely to miss school due to lack of school

essentials and could perform dismally in their academics. Students who engage in income generating activities are likely to perform poor in school. Wambui (2013) reported that children working for long hours especially the night before had poor concentration in classes the following day because of lack sleep and even fell asleep in class. Also, Kimhenge (2013) established that when such pupils were given homework, they often failed to finish it due to their engagement in income generating activities.

4.6 Influence of Family Size on the Academic Performance of JHS Students in the Ekumfi District?

In this study, academic performance of students was also looked at from the perspective of family size. The results are revealed below.

Table 4.12: Family size

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Do you have siblings		
Yes	116	96.6
No	4	3.3
Total	120	100
Number of Siblings		
1-5	75	62.5
6-10	38	31.7
11-15	2	1.7
16-20	0	0
20 and above	1	0.8
Total	116	100

Source: Field Data, July 2021

Table 4.12 shows the size of family's student respondents belong to. Majority of students agreed that they had siblings. Again, the table shows the number of siblings children selected as participants had. It was revealed that they had large number of

siblings. This implies that if the parents of these children are not well to do, they will have problems providing for the educational needs of their children such as buying reading materials and money for up-keep. The situation would be worse if such parents do not hold high aspirations for their children's future as they would be unwilling to exert efforts to ensure that their children's goals are achieved. Indeed, evidence from research showed that educational aspirations are associated with the ways in which parents shape children's activities, time, and learning environment (Murphey, 1992).

Interview with parents revealed that the number of children couples does matter. It becomes worse when one partner refuses to perform his or her responsibility. The respondents with many children shared their views that their children are many but they do their best to support their children's education with the little they have though it poses problems to them as they are not able to live a comfortable life. Parents expressed their views that larger number hinder them to help their children perform well in school, majority indicated that the higher number posed problems for them. They added that sometimes buying learning materials, giving their children money for their personally up-keep becomes a problem. Here are what some parents and teachers had to say:

“Yes, I do have a problem because majority of their educational needs are on me. At first, their father does not support them financially but now God has touched his heart. Even with that, I won't say that we don't have any problem regarding their schooling. So, I think having a small family will help parents to be supportive of their children to perform better in school”

[A parent with 6 children one of whom is a JHS 3 student and performs below poorly].

“No, my children are many but I do not have problem with helping them with their education. All I need from them is to be serious with their studies” [A parent with 8 children whose children performs marvelously].

“I have a lot of children and this makes things difficult for me. But I will blame it on their father. He is always running away from his duties. He does not care at all. He refuses to take care of our children” [A parent with five children whose children performs below average].

“I think the number of children parents have affects their children’s schooling. Because most of them, when the school is demanding anything, they have to pay, they will be pleading that if their children are three or more, they should reduce the cost for them. So, the number of the kids they are having affect them [A teacher].

All the teachers interviewed attested to the fact that the higher the number of children a parent has the bigger the problem they encounter regarding their children’s schooling and performance. Teachers indicated that they provide assistance to their students so that they can have sound mind for their studies. These assistances include but not limited to providing them with extra classes and buying school items for some students out of their own generosity.

The findings largely imply that parents found it difficult taking care of their children because they have problem with the number of children they have. This was because most of the respondents indicated that their children are many. They lamented that their partners shirk their responsibilities even though they were still couples. This finding resonates with the findings of a study done by Arthur (2005) in Ghana. Arthur argued that a smaller family size may be privy to better level of education, incomes, health and economic backing. Thus, it was seen that larger families produced situations where parents were handicapped to meet the needs of their children. However, there were exceptions where parents had many children but had children performing excellent. This could be attributed to the fact that these parents were

actively involved in the education of the children including participating in activities organized at school parent-teacher meetings, volunteer activities, and seminars for parents. Parents and families have a major impact on the success of the process of education and upbringing of children. Therefore, involvement of parents is related to the performance of their wards.

4.7 Implications of Cultural Capital Theory and Behaviourism Learning Theory to the Study

These two theories, Cultural Capital Theory and Behaviourism Learning Theory, are intricately entwined and suggest that parents' knowledge and teachers' enforcement play significant roles in the process through which cultural capital contributes to differences in academic performance of children. Cultural capital theory suggests that some parents, particularly those from the middle and upper-middle classes, possess cultural advantages that their children carry with them into school. Conversely, parents from outside these privileged classes lack the cultural advantages and thus, their children enter school at a disadvantage.

In spite of the different theoretical perspectives, most research pays attention to the paths and mechanisms of how the socio-economic status of a family affects the children's academic achievements. Cultural capital theory pays more attention to the role of parents' educational level and participation on children's academic performance, and the perspective of school quality and argues that the socio-economic status of a family affects children's academic performance and chance of continuing schooling through affecting school qualities (Li & Qiu, 2018).

Children in this study did not have access to large amounts of cultural capital from their families such as good parental education, good income as well as a balance

family size, they as a result, lack the needed momentum to perform well in school. However, some students, though a thing of uncommon as espoused in the study, enjoy the help of teachers in and out the classroom setting. This implies that teachers need to continue to provide reinforcement to students in the classroom to create balance.

Essentially, the influences of any type of factors should co-exist. All family economic resources, family environment and school qualities and teachers' abilities are important. The issue is that both the effect of parents' level of education, income and family size and in general home environment coupled with teachers' reinforcement practices (school environment) are crucial to the development of school children.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the study. It also presents the summary of the major findings, conclusions, recommendations and areas for further studies. The primary objective of the study was to determine how parental socio-economic status influences students' academic performance in JHS schools in the Ekumfi District in the Central Region. The study concentrated on socio-economic indexes such as parental level of education, parental income and family size. These were studied vis-à-vis students' academic performance. The following are the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The study began with a background to by establishing a correlation that exist between the socio-economic status of parents and the learning environment available to their children. The problem which solicited for the study was highlighted. Questions for which this study sought to find answers to were stated as follows:

- How does parental educational background influence the academic performance of JHS students in the Ekumfi District?
- How does parental income influence the academic performance of JHS students in the Ekumfi District?
- In what way does family size influence the academic performance of JHS students in the Ekumfi District?

The research questions were followed by the study's significance, delimitations and definitions of key terms used in the study. How the study was organized was also stated. Following that, a review of related literature on the study was conducted. It reviewed some of the major views expressed by various authorities that have conducted similar researches in the area of the socio-economic status of parents and students' academic performance.

The study was conducted within the context of the pragmatic philosophical paradigm using the convergent parallel design based on the mixed-methods approach to find answers to the research questions posed. The target population of the study comprises all Junior High School students, parents and teachers within the district. The accessible population comprises twelve parents, eight teachers and 120 JHS students. Quantitative data generated were analyzed using descriptive statistics in which percentages and frequencies were used. Qualitative data were used to buttress the quantitative data. Having analysed the data and presented the findings on the three research questions in the preceding paragraphs, researcher was able to come out with the following as the major findings of the study in relation to the objectives and research questions as follows:

5.2.1 Parental level of education and students' academic performance

The study revealed that most of the parents of the pupils in the basic school in the district had low educational background. Both male and female parents in the study area lack higher education. Most of them are not enthusiastic about their children's education. But they found it difficult helping their children with their home works because of their inability to do so. They however, try to provide their children with the resources they need. Comparatively, the percentage of fathers who had high

education was far greater than that of the mothers. This may be ascribed to the idea in the past that education of the girl-child was needless since their duty in the society was just to remain in the kitchen, marry and reproduce.

5.2.2 Parental level of income and students' academic performance

The results of the study revealed that children belong to the low-income type of family. Most of the families in the study in the Ekumfi District earn just little above minimum wage. An income level that is not adequate for family's needs, not to talk of the educational needs of their children. Meanwhile, family income is one major factor that may affect how children perform in the school environment.

5.2.3 Family size and students' academic performance

The findings revealed that majority of parents in the Ekumfi District face difficulties having large number of children. This posed problems providing for the educational needs of their children such as buying reading materials and money for up-keep. Findings also showed that some partners shirked responsibilities making the situation worse for school children.

Moreover, findings showed that teachers attested that mandatory demands for schools in the district had left parents to plead that if their children are three or more, considerations should be made to reduce cost for their affordability. Teachers out of their own benevolence provided some students with buying school items, organizing free extra classes outside of normal contact hours to help students with weak academic performance. The findings revealed that teachers created conducive environment for students and used positive reinforcement to model their learned behaviour.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings made so far from the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

That family size is a cardinal socio-economic factor that should not be left out when dealing with children's academic performance in basic schools.

It was concluded that, the lower the level of education of parents; the lower the academic performance of children in basic schools. This implies that higher parental educational status results in a higher academic performance of children whereas lower educational status of parents has the tendency of influencing negatively the academic performance of children. The ability of students to attend school regularly and contribute well in class do not necessarily guarantee good positions in class since the influence of parental level of education in the study was not strong enough.

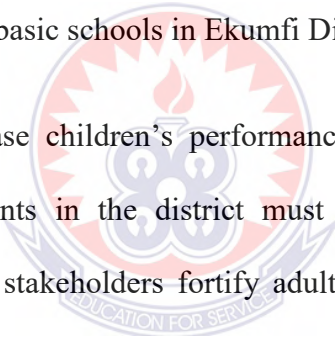
The study further concluded that, the lower the level of income of parents; the lower the academic performance of children in basic schools. This implies that higher parental income status may result in a higher academic performance of children whereas lower income status of parents has the tendency of influencing negatively the academic performance of children. Thus, low parental income was not a determinant of good academic performance in basic schools.

Another conclusion was that, the larger the family size; the lower the academic performance of children in basic schools. This implies that larger family sizes create more pressure on parents in meeting the demands of their children hence leads to poor academic performance. Thus, higher family size eventually leads to low levels of education and income. The study contributed effectively to the advancement of

knowledge in the field of education. It has been proved empirically that low parental level of education, low income and unregulated family size can retard students' academic performance. This is because, there is clear evidence that good parental level of education, good measure of income and a regulated family size can motivate students to learn. The study also contributed to theory by indicating that parents' ability to provide large cultural capital to their children as well as teachers ability learn how to use positive reinforcement via in-service courses such as workshops and seminars will help school children achieve excellence in their academic endeavour.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are essential for the betterment of children's academic performance in basic schools in Ekumfi District:

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- (i) In order to increase children's performance in basic schools, the level of education of parents in the district must be improved. It is critical that policymakers and stakeholders fortify adult education as a pre-requisite for high academic achievement in basic school children.
 - (ii) Government strategies and programmes to improve education should be developed. Public policy should be geared towards quality education rather than merely making it progressively free. Quality education and free education are two different entities.
 - (iii) It is critical for every parent to be in serious contact with teachers to regarding their children's academic challenges.
 - (iv) Teachers who out of their benevolence help students and use positive reinforcement in the teaching and learning environment to promote academic attainment should be encouraged through special government initiatives.

Seminars for teacher's continuous development including how to use positive reinforcement to the best advantage of basic school children should be made mandatory.

- (v) Students from poor socio-economic status should have special attention given to them by NGOs in order to provide a firm support for students whose weak socioeconomic background has denied them these necessities.
- (vi) Parents should enhance their child's degree of control and care, and show more interest and concern in their children's academic work by establishing a favourable environment for studying, giving study materials, and assisting their children in their studies.
- (vii) Government must initiate policy on the limited number of children couples should have. This will ensure that children's educational needs are well provided for school success.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Studies

This study was limited to the Ekumfi District in the Central Region. Despite the large samples used for the study, it is critical for more research to be done from the perspective of gender, peer influence and school environment.

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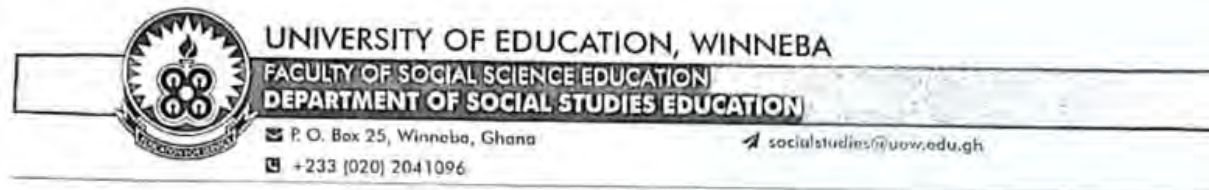
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Letter of Introduction



7th June, 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: MRS. GYEBI LYDIA ARTHUR (200021663)

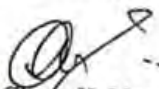
We write to introduce Mrs. Gyebi Lydia Arthur to your outfit to assist her conduct her research. Mrs. Gyebi Lydia Arthur is pursuing a Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) in Social Studies Education in the Department of Social Studies Education of the University of Education, Winneba.

As part of the requirements for the award of M. Phil in Social Studies Education, she is undertaking a research on the topic "*Parental Socio-economic Status and Academic Performance among Junior High School Pupils in the Ekumfi District*".

We would be very grateful if she could be offered any assistance she may need to enable her achieve the purpose of her study.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,


Mr. Cletas K. Ngaaso
Ag. Head of Department

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire for Students

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

QUESTIONNAIRE ON PARENTAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN THE EKUMFI DISTRICT

My name is Lydia Gyebi Arthur. I am a master of Philosophy (Social Studies) student at the University of Education, Winneba. I am conducting research on parental socio-economic statuses and academic performance of students. The purpose of this study is to investigate parental socio-economic status and academic performance among Junior High School pupils in the Ekumfi District. You have been selected to participate in the study by completing the questionnaire. You are kindly requested to fill the questionnaire with all sincerity. Please, tick [] one appropriate answer for each question. All your responses will be kept confidential and for academic purpose only. Thank you

Section A: Part 1. Background Information

1. Sex: 1. Male [] 2. Female []
2. Age: 10-11 years [] 12-14 years [] 15 -17 years [] 18 years and above []
3. Name of school:
.....

4. Which of the following best describe your family?

High Income Family [] Middle Income Family [] Low Income Family []

5. What work does your father do?

.....

6. What work does your mother do?

.....

Part 2: Academic Performance

7. How do you attend school?

Everyday [] once a week [] twice a week [] 3 times a week [] 4 times a week

8. How will you describe your contribution during lessons?

Very often [] Often [] Not often [] Not at all []

9. What is your position in class?

.....

10. Who helps you to do your assignment? Parents [] Siblings []

Uncle or Aunt [] Friend [] Myself []

11. Does your parents/guardian ask about your performance? Yes [] No []

[]

12. Do you watch TV a lot? Yes [] No []

13. If Yes, are your parents/guardian worried about it? Yes [] No []

14. How have their comments changed your academic performance?

Better [] Normal [] Worst []

15. Do you get all resources requested from your parents for your schooling? Yes

[] No []

16. If no, how do you acquire such resources?

.....

.....

.....

.....

17. Do you have other siblings? Yes [] No []

18. If yes how many?



APPENDIX C

Questionnaire for Parents

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

QUESTIONNAIRE ON PARENTAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS
IN THE EKUMFI DISTRICT

My name is Lydia Gyebi Arthur. I am a master of Philosophy (Social Studies) student at the University of Education, Winneba. I am conducting research on the effects of parental socio-economic statuses and academic performance of students. The purpose of this study is to investigate parental socio-economic status and academic performance among Junior High School pupils in the Ekumfi District. You have been selected to participate in the study by completing the questionnaire. You are kindly requested to fill the questionnaire with all sincerity. Please, tick one appropriate answer for each question. All your responses will be kept confidential and for academic purpose only. Thank you

Background Information

What is your age group? 1. Under 30 [] 2. 31-40 [] 3. 41-50 [] 4. 51 and above []

Section B. Parents Level of Formal Education

1. a. Father: None [] Primary [] JHS [] SHS/Middle/Tech/Voc [] Tertiary []
- b. Mother: None [] Primary [] JHS [] SHS/Middle/Tech/Voc [] Tertiary []

Section C. Parental Level of Income

2. What do you do for your living?

.....

3. What is the approximate income level of your family unit?

4. Gh 500 or less [] Gh 501- 1000 [] Gh 1001-1500 [] Gh
1501-2000 [] Gh 2001-2500 [] Gh 25001 or more []

Section D. Family Size

5. How many children are in your nuclear family? 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 or more

6. How many of your children are in school? 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] All []

7. How many children are you looking after who are not your real children?

1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 or more []



APPENDIX D

Interview Guide Questions for Parents

Level of parental education

In your own view how does your level of education influence the performance of your children at school?

.....

What do you think are some of the major problems that hinder your children's academic performance in basic schools?

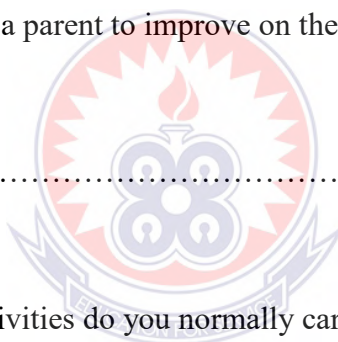
.....

.....

What more can you do as a parent to improve on the academic performance of your children?

.....

Level of family Income



What major economic activities do you normally carry out?

Describe your family income.....

Do(es) your child(ren) engage in any income-generating activity to support himself/herself or the family? If yes, what does he/she do?

.....

How do you support the education of your children?

Family size

Do you think the size of family affect the academic performance of children at school?

If Yes, why? If No, Why?

APPENDIX E

Interview Guide for Teachers

Section A: Background information

1. Your age

.....

2. Educational Qualification:

.....

3. Number of years you have served as a teacher:

.....

4. Years of service in the current school:

.....

Section B.1: Level of education of parents

5. What is your view about the level of education of the majority of the parents of the children selected as respondents in your class?

Section B.2: Level of family income

6. What is your opinion about the level of income of the majority of the parents of the children selected as respondents in your class?

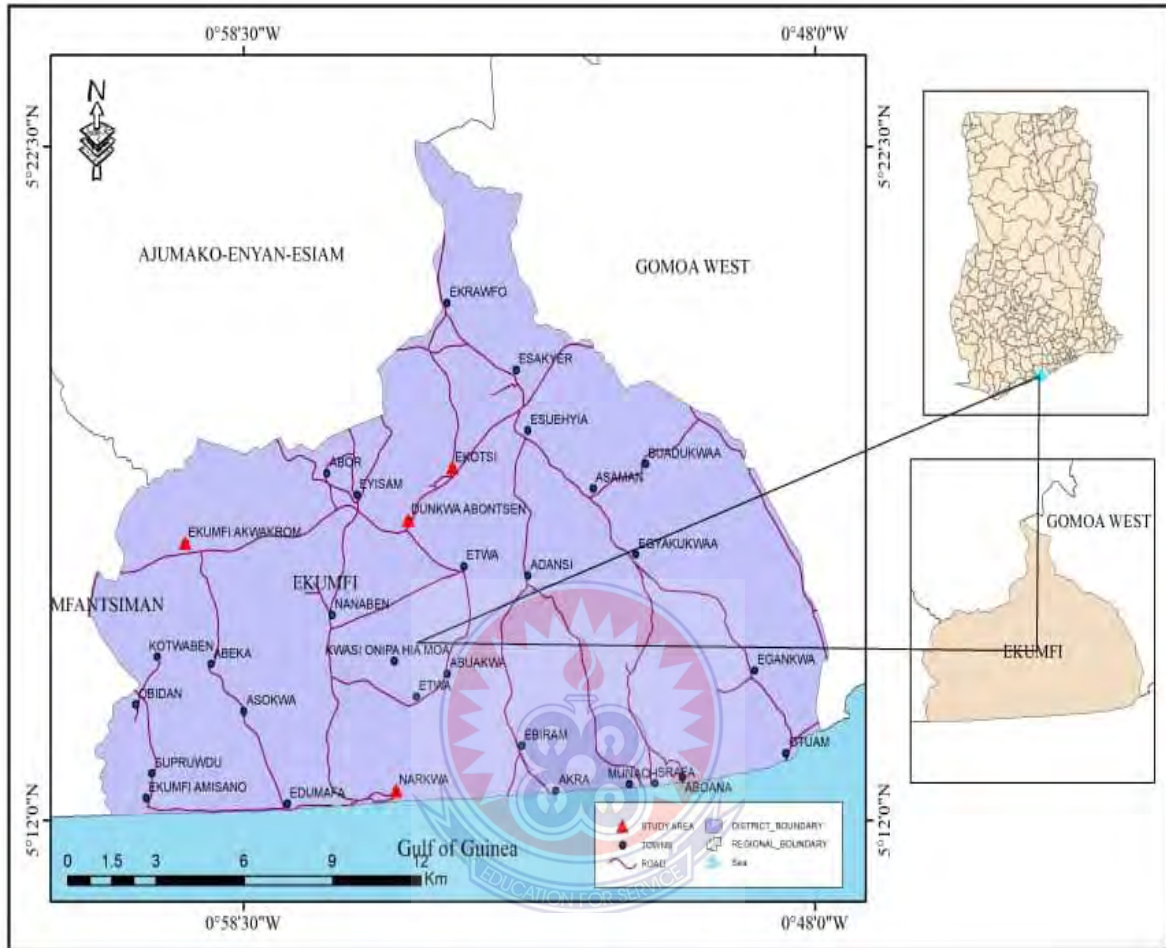
7. In what ways do you think parents support the education of their children in your class?

Section B.3: Family Size

8. How do you think family size affects the academic performance of your students?

APPENDIX F

Study Area



Source: Department of Geography Education, UEW