UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

CAUSES OF LOW ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF AKPAFU ODOMI BASIC

SCHOOLS

VERONICA NTIM

A Project Report in the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of Education and Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, University of Education, Winneba, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the Master of Arts (Educational Leadership) degree

DECEMBER, 2016

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, VERONICA NTIM, declare that this project report, 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.

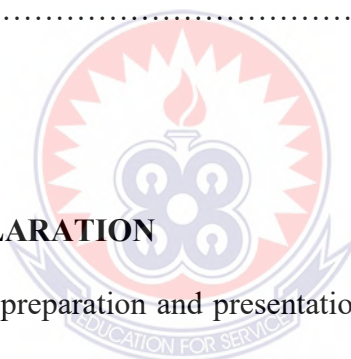SIGNATURE…………………………………………………

DATE …………………………………………………………

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Project report as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

SUPERVISOR: PROF. FRANCIS OWUSU MENSAH

SIGNATURE……………………………………

DATE……………………………………………

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To my family and love ones.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLE

ABSTRACT

The study investigated home environmental, school, and teacher factors that had accounted for low BECE performance in Akpafu Odomi JHS, in the Hohoe Municipality of the Volta Region. The study employed a descriptive survey design. Also, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 61 teachers, students and parents who participated in the study. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire. Questionnaires were designed for all three categories of participants. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and percentages. The Study found that parents in the Akpafu Odomi communities engaged their wards in petty trading and farming activities after school which prevented them from studying. Again, it came out from the study that basic schools in the area lacked library facilities. It was, therefore recommended that parents must refrain from engaging student in farming activities and petty trading after school and rather encouraged them to study at home. In the same vein, schools must desist from using students to do menial work during instructional hours in the name of generating income for the school. Also, Stakeholders of education must build libraries in the communities as well as the schools in order to ensure that students have a place to do their private studies.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of The Study

In a country or a community there should be good education and good training, for development. According to Amoakohene (2008) careful thought should be given to the type of education that the student receives- education which will not be deficient in any one of the three elements (think, feeling and doing). Education makes an individual civilized, refined, cultured and educated. Education is a powerful tool for development and it brings peace and stability, Reduces poverty and health hazards. Education is for life and it is very important for to the survival of people. Quality education is good because it gives individual some desirable knowledge, understanding, interest, attitude and critical thinking and for the nation too as well. Children need special care skillful intervention from trained personnel. They also need assistance from professionals so that their innate gifts talents and potentials would be fully developed. (Introduction to Special Education, page 1 paragraph 3).A house built on clay or sand or clay does not last and cannot withstand strong wind or storms but a house built on a good foundation can withstand strong wind and any kind of storm. It would also last long. It can also be easily renovated to improve upon the beauty and the strength of it. Education is just like these two different houses. Therefore it must have a good strong beginning. The foundation or starting point must be strong for children to have a clear understanding for a bright future. A bright future is not for our children alone but also for development for our beloved country. Education is the key to development worldwide. Efforts are being made in so many

forms to improve on education. This is because good education determines the speed and advancement in development of a nation.

When Ghana obtained independent, in 1957, the new government of Dr Kwame Nkrumah described education as the key to development and a bright future. Since then, Ghana has made significant strides in her educational system. The 1961 Education Act which aimed at providing fee-free and compulsory education for all school going age children for the six-year Primary and four-year Middle school. The Education Reforms were aimed at increasing access to education at the basic level.

Again the Free-Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) was introduced in 1996 with the aim of providing quality education to all children. In view of the compulsory nature of basic education in Ghana, various governments and agencies made concerted efforts to address educational inequality and improve quality. This was evident in policy directives and interventions such as the Education Strategies Plan (ESP) (vol 1) for 2003-2005, the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education programme and Capitation Grant Scheme. Most importantly, the government of Ghana committed itself to the achievement of universal basic education and the Millennium Development Goal (MDG 2) by ensuring that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike would be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. To meet the MDG2 and national targets set in the 2003-2015 Education Strategic Plan, the government of Ghana abolished all fees charged by schools and also introduced the capitation grant scheme to defray school fees previously charged. In addition the school feeding programme was introduced in some selected schools in deprived communities. All these measures were put in place to cushion the burden of parents in meeting the cost of sending their children to school (Ghana Millennium Goals Report 2010). It has

been argued that in much of Africa, the problem is not non –enrolment but how to ensure that once enrolled, children complete schooling.

The gap between urban and rural areas is significantly bigger. Rural children are twice as likely to be out of school as urban children .Fentiman &Bundy (1999) attested to this fact when she found in her research that, in Ghana, many children drop out school annually, with the dropout rate higher in rural schools than urban schools. Bhola (2002) also noted that, although efforts to improve school attendance and achievements have been initiated, some parts of the country, especially rural areas, experience poor attendance or lack of schools. The 2008 Ghana living Standards Survey Report indicated that attendance rates are generally high in all localities except in rural savannah. While the rate ranges from a high of 97.0% in the other localities, in rural savannah it is 63.5% for males and 56.6% for females (Ghana Statistical Service, 2008). In the Sekyere Central District, 39% of the children of school going age are not attending school (Mampong District Education Office, 2006). According to the district report, apart from the poor performance, dropout rate is high in the district, especially in the Afram Plains North Circuit. The Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (2008) stressed that less than a half of basic school age children attend school.

Economics and socio-cultural factors seemed to contribute to low academic performance rates. Growing number of numbers of teachers in the basic schools in Ghana have expressed concern that students are becoming uninterested in their class because of their students' commitments in non-academic activities outside the school. Acknowledging the severity of low academic performance problems, educators are exploring creative techniques to increase class attendance, such as innovative teaching methods and better equipped classrooms.

Street hawking among school children have psychologically imposed other problems sex networking behaviour juvenile delinquent behavior which takes much of students time that necessitated the poor academic performance and drop out syndrome. Once they are engaging in commercial activities the opportunity cost would be their forgoing of their good performance since the two cannot be enjoyed concurrently. It is obvious that students gain financially once they engaged in commercial activities but can this also be said of achieving academic excellence? As the government is trying therefore towns, villages, all communities mist also put measures in place so that things work out successfully. Good education and correct academic performance result is the aim of every school for a better country, for Ghana. That is why Adentwi (2005) stated that education aimed at enabling the youth to play a more effective role in the life of the nation by imparting to them the necessary skills and knowledge and right attitude for a better nation. Educationists have tried and still trying to identify factors affecting academic performance in the country. Some of these problems included lack of motivation, lack of effective supervision and monitoring, lack of teachers and qualified professionals in the education system. There are a lot of factors that contribute to the poor performance in basic schools. This varies from city to city, town to town, village to village and in various communities. In the same manner Diaz (2003) found that factors such as heredity or intellectual ability, bad and poor learning habits, motivation, lack of aims, low self-esteem, socio-economic status of the family, poor family background and anxiety as contributing factors to educational performances. Within all these problem factors, various communities have their own problems at their various stages. A closer look at these problems at their various stages by studying the school and the home and

4

the environmental factors would help us take the right measures to results of academic performance at the basic level.

No literature has shown the causes of low academic performance of Akpafu Odomi Junior High Secondary School of the Hohoe municipality. There is therefore enough zeal to study the causes of low academic performances with specific reference to Basic School in the Hohoe Municipality.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In Ghana, there is an acceptable standard for academic performance. Basic Education starts from primary one to Junior High. Before starting Basic school one must go through a one-year nursery and two-year Kindergarten. This first stage is a form of informal kind of school for children to learn mostly. This prepares them in whole to be ready to start a nine-year journey of basic education. After the nine years of basic education, one must reach a standard to qualify for a continuation in a three-year Senior High School. One must qualify with credits and ranges between aggregate six (6) to thirty (30) as prescribed as the minimum requirement for entry into Senior High School. Anything beyond this becomes a disqualification to Senior High School or Senior High Technical School. Headteachers' Handbook (1994).

With this attempt to understand causes of the poor academic performance in Akpafu Odomi Basic Schools, one has to take into the individual learners as well as the general situation within which it happens. The relevance of this theory to the study is that it has created an urge on the researcher to view the poor academic performance in the school as a phenomenon that it is influenced by wider and different social systems. According to the theory school children are directly present within most of these social systems, such as, their household, school and immediate neighborhood.

5

There are others in which they are not directly involved but which have an effect on their development including their siblings.

Akpafu Odomi is a town in Hohoe / Jasikan road in Volta region of Ghana. For some time now the academic performances in the basic schools is very low as shown in the results of Basic Education Certificate Examination. The basic schools there are made up of E. P.Primary School, L. A. Primary and L. A. Junior High. Their result is poor and it has become a concern in the Hohoe Municipality. A study of the BECE result supports this. In 2010 the school presented 23 candidates for BECE. With this number, it was only one student obtained between aggregate 6-30 representing 0.23%. The rest of the students obtained between aggregate 31- 40. This means that only one (1) candidate out of the twenty-three (23) was able to pass the examination to enable him/her continue education at Senior High School. In 2012 fifteen (15) candidates were presented. In 2013 eleven (11) candidates were also presented. Just to mention a few. None of the students was able to obtain an aggregate between 6- 30. So far from 2010.to 2014 no candidate was able to obtain an aggregate between 6- 30. These years have carried the worst result in the municipality. West African Examination Council (WAEC).

The media and the social commentators of late have been discussing the fate of these students. The situation raises questions about the depth of understanding of factors causing the low performance of these pupils of Akpafu Odomi Basic Schools. The question is, what are the causes of this poor academic performance? Is it the environments or parents? Is it teachers or the cause is from the students/pupils themselves? This study therefore seeks to identify the root factors causing this harm of learners of Akpafu Odomi Basic schools. This would help the educational authorities take correct steps and our future leaders to improve their performance.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Developmental issues now are posing huge problems to parents, government s political parties and stakeholders in education. There is therefore the need to look into performances of our children who are our hope as far as the future is concern. The intention of this project therefore is to find out the causes of low academic performance of Akpafu Odomi Basic Schools, Hohoe, in the Volta Region.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Specifically the study seeks to:

1. Find out teacher factors which contribute to the low academic performance in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) of students in Akpafu Odomi Basic Schools.

2. Investigate the role school environmental factors play in students' low academic performance of Akpafu Odomi Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).

3. To fine out bad role home environmental factors play in students' low academic performance of Akpafu Odomi Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated as guidance for this study:

1. How do home environmental factors cause students in Akpafu Odomi Junior High School to perform very low academically in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).

2. What teacher factors contribute to low academic performance of the students of Akpafu Odomi Junior High School in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE)?

3. How do school environmental factors cause students in Akpafu Odomi Junior High school to perform very low academically in Basic Education Certificate examination (BECE)?

1.6 Significance of the study

This research would assist teachers to use correct method of teaching which would relate to the kind of environment they have for clearer understanding. It would help teachers to identify some major problems which the students have in relation to their environment. The result of this study would assist educationists especially at the Basic level come out with appropriate plans which would help the academic performance of students in Akpafu Odomi. This study would also throw light into the cause of low academic performance of Akpafu Odomi BECE results for parents, teachers, students and everyone concern to buck up. They would therefore have more life opportunities and also improve their lives and economic conditions. This would benefit the whole community and students to improve academically for success. Akpafu Odomi community would benefit from improved quality of education and successful students at the BECE level for a bright future. This work would help parents and guardians to appreciate the importance of high academic performance of their wards and it would create an interest in them to put measures in place to ensure that their children perform well academically. The Akpafu Odomi community would get more contributions towards high performance for development of the community.

Lastly it would help to identify the variables that influence the achievements of young children at school, because it would serve as an essential tool for Ghana Education Service (GES) and other policy makers in the planning of educational policies. Eventually this would result in a rise in the performances and arise in the number of students who pass nationwide. This work would add to knowledge in Akpafu Odomi and the surroundings. The study would also generate a body of knowledge and understanding that will serve as a base line data for further research into the phenomenon of low academic performance and BECE.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The geographical area of this project was Akpafu Odomi a town in Hohoe Municipality of the Volta Region, Ghana. This town was purposely chosen for the study area for a number of reasons.

First in the Hohoe Municipality BECE result and academic performance in that circuit area is generally poor if compared to other towns. Also academic achievement variations in each of the area of the basic schools in Akpafu were taken into account. Second, being familiar with the area and within reach of the researcher, it would lessen the negative impact on the collection of the data as well as the analysis in light of time limitations and financial challenges likely to be faced during the study. Lastly, personal acquaintance with and work experience in the locality could help the researcher gain access to valuable information.

Akpafu Odomi has a population of 3, 500. It has the largest population in the traditional area though not the traditional capital. The main language spoken in Akpafu is Guan, specifically 'Siwu' and their main occupation is farming. It is the largest in Cocoa Production in the Municipality. Their main food crop is rice. Rice is

9

produced in large scale as well and people travel far and near to come and buy for different purposes. For the past six years the best Cocoa farmer and best Rice farmer for each year always come from Akpafu Odomi. This was witnessed personally by the researcher. Even though majority of the people are Christians, they are very involve in celebration of traditional festival 'kamor' which is celebrated in April annually. During the festival all sons and daughters from far and near congregate at Odomi to participate in the activities.

Funerals are also organized first weekend of every month mostly Friday. Schooling on Fridays is not very regular or pleasant to students in the town. This is because mostly they either weed at school or fetch water for teachers during contact hours while others prefer to stay away from school instead of going to work. Teachers seem to be tired and give notes to students to copy instead of being in the classroom with them. Indeed, teaching and learning on Fridays in Odomi is not encouraging. These are some of the important issues that might be affecting performance in the school and an indication of why their school is a good choice of area of the study. There is one Senior High Technical School (ASSETS) in Akpafu. There are private schools around in the neighbourhood where some people send their children due to the low performance of the schools.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

Selecting an area for this kind of project is very important. It must be a place with a researchable problem which actually needed to look into. An inappropriate location could weaken or ruin eventual findings. The researcher must be careful to identify an appropriate population, and not merely just an easily accessible one Berg (2004). This study therefore was to investigate causes of low academic performance

in a town- Akpafu Odomi Hohoe municipality of the Volta Region of Ghana. The study is restricted to all the three basic schools in the town. These include E.P Primary, L.A. Primary and L.A. J.H.S., Teachers and Parents in the school and the community. The study concentrated on students' academic performances in their end of term examination and BECE results. Also this study will focus on their academic performance results for 2012 and 2013, thus two academic years.

1.9 Limitation of the study

Limitations are those conditions beyond my control as a researcher that placed restrictions on the conclusions of the study and their application to their situations. Ideally the scope of this research should have been widened to cover at least all Junior High Schools in the region so that equal chances and training would be applied, which would be by getting a representative sample of every school in the region . This could not be so due to time constrain. Also this study covers only Akpafu Odomi Basic School, it would be difficult to generalize the findings to the population as a whole. Therefore while the findings from this research may be used to guide future research efforts, it cannot be applied to other settings. In this regard, it is suggested that future research should look at factors affecting the poor academic performance of students in Akpafu Odomi.

1.10 Organization of the Study

The success of any research work depends on how it is well organized. This study is divided into five Chapters. The project work starts with chapter one which presents the introduction and provide a background to the study and then discusses key research issues such as statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations and the organization of the study chapters. Chapter two is the literature review. Literature on the role of different factors in students' academic performances including school environment, home environment, teachers and parents variables have been reviewed. Chapter three is the methodology. It and provides information on the methods used for the study. It includes the research design, the study population and the sampling techniques used. It also provides information in the data collection methodology and analysis procedure for the study. Chapter four is the data presentation, analysis, and discussions and finally in the last chapter, a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations are offered.
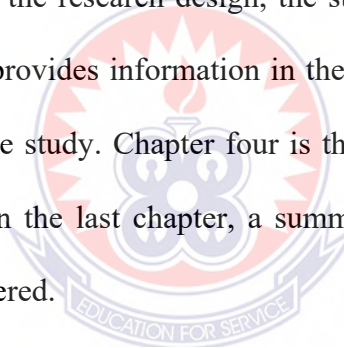
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

This chapter deals with review of related literature. Low academic performance in Akpafu Odomi Basic Schools may be the result of many factors. Therefore this literature reviews factors affecting academic performance under the following subheadings:

1. Concept of Students' academic performance

2. Environmental factors which influence academic performance

3. Teaching strategies that influence academic performance

4. Other determinants of academic performance

2.1   Concept of Students' academic performance

The students' involvements in all academic activities are important variables as far as academic performance is concern. These things on most occasions have been taken for granted. It is observed that the positive contribution of good school attendance to academic performance may be greater than historically thought. Cary, Roseth, David and Roger (2008) define academic performance as all tasks given with measures including comprehension, quality and accuracy of problem solving, frequency and quantity of desired outcome, time and rate to solution, time on task, level reasoning and critical thinking, creativity retentive memory and transfer of tasks. In Great Britain it was noted that school attendance was one of the most important factors associated with progress toward literacy for children in British schools.

13

Academic performance also refers to a successful accomplishment or performance in a particular subject area and indicated by grades, marks and scores of descriptive commentaries. It also refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers in a fix time or academic year (Dimbisso, 2009).

With the two groups of academic performance, the first one could be considered more objective it refers to numerical scores of pupils' knowledge which measure the degree of pupils adaptation to school work and to the educational system. The second group in the definitions is more subjective one because as its determination of academic success rely upon the student's attitude towards the academic performance and the individual, as well as the attitude of significant behavior towards others for their success.

Several studies have been carried out in the area of gender differences in academic performance. Girls have scored higher academic performance scores than boys have done at the Basic level and at the college level and explain that several reasons account for this phenomenon. For instance, in the Arab cultures, the socialization of boys and girls and the way of living partially explain the differential gender effects on performance and academic related variables. Girls are more restricted and confined to home, especially during adolescence than boys than boys are. It was argued that this appears to give girls more time to concentrate on their studies than boys who have more freedom to be outside of their homes making them focus less on their studies. This view was corroborated by Kim (2004) who held the view that females are better with motor skills that involve throwing a projectile or aiming at a target than males. There are several explanations why girls seem to generally score better grades starting in elementary school and continuing into high

14

school. One explanation given is the neurological differences that produce different cognitive capabilities and socially determined factors. The sociological perspective refers to the change in the academic performance of girls and boys in school environment over time.

It is observed that female students obtain higher GPA as compared to their male counterparts. In examining sex-related difference in classroom, it is noted that in contrast to standardized measures of mathematics achievement tests, female students perform better than their male colleagues in math classes. Females tend to work more conscientiously and have stronger work ethics than males. They also tend to have better language abilities including essay writing skills, vocabulary and fluency which contribute to better study. This phenomenon explained was due to boys' disregard for authority, academic work, formal achievement, differences in students' attitudes to work, their goals and aspirations as well as girls' increased maturity and more effective learning strategies.

In Ghana, there exist striking inequalities in enrollment to primary education between girls and boys. Studies in other parts of Africa support these findings of the precarious position of girls as far as access to school is concern. Both formal and informal factors such as institutional policies, practices and procedures and informal factors stereotyped attitudes and beliefs were sited to constitute barriers to girls' full participation in school which subsequently affect their academic performance.

2.2   Environmental Factors which influence academic performance

The school is part of the general organization of a town or village. Whatever goes on at school affects the community. When the school is well equipped and student pass well in their final examination everyone in the community shares in their

achievement. On the other hand, when the examination results of the school are poor, some people express their anger, sometimes by means of verbal attacks on the teachers. It is important to co-operate with the community. The school will benefit a great deal if there is good relationship with the people.

Engin-Demir (2009) argued that sizable research has consistently shown that students' academic performance has been influenced by background of family characteristics such as socio-economic status of parents. Wang and Wildman (1995) also argued that parents who have more education appear better able to provide their children with the academic and social support for educational success than when compared to parents with less educational background. Avortri et al,(1999),for instance, found that the educational status of parents was a major factor determining a child's academic achievements. This finding corroborates that of Johnson and Kyle (2001) study that parental education, particularly the mother's education has a big influence on children's achievement. Fertig and Schmidt (2002) also found that mother's education has a greater effect on child's learning overall, but that father's education becomes more important when they have attained tertiary levels.

Parental education and occupation to have more substantial effects on reading than on mathematics test scores. They stated that parental occupation and having at least one parent with a full-time job have important effects on pupil academic performance. In other words poverty, low level of parental education, parental and neighbourhood negative attitudes toward schooling in general, children among from disadvantaged background have significantly affected academic achievement negatively (Currie, 1995) whereas children with high level of parental education have greater access to a wide variety of economic and social resources (family structure, home environment, parent-child interaction) that can be drawn upon to help their

children succeed in school (Coleman, 2006; McLean (1999). Higher family is associated with higher student's achievement (Hanushek, 1992). Pupils from poor homes are forced out of school and made to engage in hawking, selling packaged drinking water and likes so as to save money for their school expenses. Most of the time, they cannot afford instructional materials, and are always at the mercy of examiners during examination period. The persistence of this in the life of an individual student may spell doom for his or her academic success. Individuals at the lowest economic level are often the least well-served by the school system.

Akanle (2007) studied socio-economic factors influencing student's academic performance in Nigeria. The study revealed that insufficient parental income influences students' academic performance. Jing-Lin, Gang and Wei (2009) found that perceived importance of learning success to family, English writing ability and social communication with their compatriots are significant predictors of international students' academic achievement.

The number of siblings that a pupil has is assumed to have an influence on his/her academic achievement. The larger the family size the less the attention and devotion from parent child parents and more the difficulties encountered by the parents in meeting the needs of the children both physically and emotionally particularly in this austerity period when the prices of food and commodities are skyrocketed. An increased number of children in the family leads to less favourable child outcome. Children from larger families have been found to have less favourable home environments and lower levels of verbal facility Parcel and Menagham (1994) as well as highest rates of behavioural problems and lower levels of education achievement (Downey, 1995).

Research work has shown that the nature of parental discipline affect academic output of children (Aremu 2000). Oluwole (2001) found that the degree of self-efficacy and anxiety manifested by learners, determine their academic performance. On the other hand, children from permissive homes are too complacent, unmotivated, and lack personal will to succeed. The democratic style of parenting has been found to be very helpful to teaching-learning situation. Here, children receive punishment that is commensurate with the offence committed. Such children are strong willed and ready for success. Aremu (2000) observes from a study that undergraduates that receive democratic type of parenting perform better than their counterparts from autocratic homes.

In addition, structurally, a family is either broken or intact. A broken family in this context is one that is not structurally intact for various reasons; death of a parent, divorce, separation, dissertation and illegitimacy in which case, the family was never completed (Coukline, 1996). This analysis becomes necessary because life in a single parent family can be stressful for both the child and the parent. Such families are faced with the challenges of diminished financial resources, assumption of new roles and responsibilities, establishment of new patterns in intra-familial interaction and reorganization of routines and schedules (Agulanna, 1999). These conditions are not conducive for effective parenting. This is because when the single parent is overburdened by responsibilities and by their own emotional reaction to their situation, they often become irritable, impatient and insensitive to their children's needs. Such conditions do not provide a suitable environment for academic excellence.

Furthermore, parental involvement tends to influence children's school achievement. Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1987) indicated that pupils with parents who

18

are involved in their education tend to have better academic performance than pupils whose parents are not involved in the school. This Collaborate with findings that there is a significant relationship existed between parental involvement and academic achievement. Parental involvement has a strong positive effect on student achievement. Further research shows parental involvement in children's learning not only leads to higher academic achievement, but greater problem solving skills, greater school enjoyment, better school attendance and fewer behavioural problems at school

Additionally, Tremblay, Ross and Berthelot (2001) found a significant association between students with parents involved at school and their academic performance.

Also, parental interest in schooling has been found to contribute significantly to the academic achievement of pupils. For instance, Odinko and Adeyemo (1999) found that parental interest in schooling together with socio-psychological factors were good predictors of students' learning outcomes in English language. Ghanney (2007) examined the effects home environment has on the child's achievement in primary schools in Winneba Township. He found that positive parental attitude towards education; great parental support and interest combine to enhance children's progress in education rather than the level of parent's educational attainment.

2.3   Teaching strategies that influence academic performance

Experience has shown that adopting any single theory of learning may not be the ideal approach. There is the need to develop a comprehensive approach which will challenge the learner's capabilities. The role of the teacher needs therefore to change from being a transmitter of knowledge to a facilitator of the learning process. When the teacher becomes a facilitator, the learner becomes the main focus of the learning

process. The learner takes full responsibility for acquiring the needed knowledge or skills; taking advantage of the teacher's effort in leading the learning processes. To enable the teacher to lead or facilitate the learning process, he/she must be conversant with many means of enhancing his/her approaches. He or she has to find effective means by which the learner must able to understand what is being taught. The learning process must be meaningful and challenging. Sarfo and Adentwi (2011.)

A good relationship between students' learning preferences and instructor's teaching style has been demonstrated to have positive effect on students' performance. Learning preference refers to a person's `natural, habitual and preferred way'' of assimilating new information. This implies that individuals differ with regard to what mode of instruction or study is most effective for them. Scholars, who promote the learning preferences approach to learning, agree that effective instruction can only be undertaken if the learner's learning preferences are examined and the instruction is tailored to learner's preference. ''I hear and I forgot. I see and I remember. I do and I understand. This is a quote that provides evidence that, even in early times, there was a recognition of the existence of different learning preferences among people. Some students seem to learn better when information is presented through words (verbal learners), whereas others seem to better when it is presented in the form of pictures (visual learners). This suggests that clearly in a class where only one instructional method is employed, there is a strong possibility that a number of students will find the learning environment less optimal and this could affect their academic performance. Fettler (1999) established that alignment between students' learning preferences and an instructor's teaching style leads to better recall and understanding. The learning preferences approach has gained significant mileage despite the lack of experimental evidence to support the utility of this approach. There

20

are a number of methods used to assess the learning preferences/styles of learners but they all typically ask students to evaluate the kid of information presentation they are most at comfortable with.

A number of learners are indeed, multimodal, with more than one preferred style of learning in addition to using different learning preferences would depend on the subject matter being taught. The question that arises is whether a particular learning preference is favoured in certain subject/courses. This study will attempt to answer this question with regard to Basic schools in Akpafu Odomi. Learning style in this study was measured by administering to students, the questionnaire that provides users with a profile of their learning preferences. The category with the highest score was taken as the student's learning preferences. Where categories had equal scores, all the categories were taken as the student's learning preferences (multimodal).

Teacher regularity in school is very important. The prevailing evidence is that teacher absenteeism at primary school level in Ghana appear to have worsened in the last fifteen years (World, Bank 2004) The World Bank Impact Evaluation of basic Education Ghana found that in 2003 nearly 13% of teachers had been absent in the past month, compared to just over 4% in 1998 (World, Bank, 2004) It was also observed that in 1988, 85% of schools did not suffer at all. Whereas this figure has now fallen to 61%, with 13% of schools with over 1/3 of the teachers being absent for reasons other than sickness in the past month. The study also found truancy to be significantly worse in rural schools than in urban schools, and worse in public schools compared to private schools. Similarly the CARE International (2003) report which looked at deprived rural areas in Northern Ghana talked of 'chronic teacher absenteeism' which adversely affects the learning environment. Dunne and Leach (2005) talked about the low levels of professionalism in schools, especially, low

performing ones where teachers have high rates of lateness, absenteeism and sometimes refusing to teach classes.

The World Bank (2004) report put forward a number of reasons for interesting teacher absenteeism. These included teachers living long distances from schools and experiencing transportation difficulties. Teachers have to travel to town once a month to collect their pay. In this case the teacher may or may not have arrived on time to continue his/her work. Rural-area teachers also engage in farming activities. Barnes (2003) indicated how teachers are being encouraged in Ghana to facilitate local level development. This is good although, but can have negative influence on schooling and also lead to teacher absenteeism and lateness.

When the syllabus is not completed, students find it difficult to understand content which is to be taught in the next class which foundation in most cases is based on the previous class. This is because most children do not follow school work because they do not possess the understanding from previous work that is prerequisite for the syllabus of the higher grades of primary school and junior high school. Both absenteeism and lateness, Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) pointed out that the educational systems that are unable to manage teachers effectively, have weak teacher management structures and are unable to provide incentives to motivate teachers to improve their attitude to work.

Another factor is teacher motivation. A highly motivated person puts the maximum effort in his/ her job. Ofoegbu (2004) linked low academic performance of students to poor performance in terms of accomplishing the teaching task, negative attitudes to work and poor teaching habits which have been attributed to poor motivation. Corroborating this position, Lockheed and Verspoor (1991) asserted that lack of motivation and professional commitment on the part of teachers produce poor

attendance unprofessional attitude towards people which in turn affect the performance of students academically.

The influence of effective teaching on pupils' academic performance has been the subject of several studies. Quality of teachers and commitment are key inputs in educational production to perform better achievement. A teacher's knowledge of the subject matter coupled with textbooks, instructional time and other learning materials have great influence on learning at the Basic school level. Agyemang (1993) reported that a teacher who does not have both the academic and the professional teacher qualification would undoubtedly have a negative influence on the teaching and learning of his/her subject. According to Hedges (2002) many trained teachers are unwilling to accept postings to deprived communities in Ghana. As a result there is tendency for less qualified teachers to be employed in these communities. This affects their academic performance negatively. Darling-Hammond (2000) found that teacher quality characteristics such as certification status and degrees in subject to be taught are very significant and positively correlated with subject outcomes in science and mathematics. Ingersoll (1999) found out that 63% of chemistry, physics,earth and space science instructors do not have certification in the subject and this result into low performance of students in American Secondary Schools. Academic achievement positively correlated with teacher qualification. Additionally, teacher qualification to be is a potent causal effect on students' achievement.

Bilesanmi (1999) found that teachers' teaching experiences had significant effect on students' achievements in science. Also Ferttler (1999) investigated the relationship between measures of teachers' experience and student achievement in science and mathematics. He found that teaching experience as measured by year of service correlated well with students test results.

Effective teaching embraces a variety of different aspects of teaching such as subject mastery, effective communication, lesson preparation and presentation, pacing the class to the students' level and taking into account individual differences, allowing students to practice and applying what they have learned, letting students know what is expected of them, and monitoring and evaluating performance so that students learn from their mistakes. Jacob and Lefgren (2006) found a positive correlation between effective teaching and academic achievement. Similarly, Adediwura and Tayo (2007) suggested that effective teaching is a significant predictor of students' academic achievement and concluded that effective teaching produce students of higher academic quality. And effective teaching can produce better performing students.

2.4   Other determinants of academic performance

Among adolescents' ages between12 to 18, peer pressure effect and drug use was strongly associated with truancy and increased likelihood of high school dropout. Medical factors influencing students' absenteeism at the primary level included respiratory infections, toothaches, abdominal pains, headache, and pains on legs or arms; while non-medical reasons for absenteeism were truancy, family events, excursions, and helping family at home. Among causes of absenteeism 27% of school children said that at some time they had absented themselves from school without their parents' knowledge. They highlighted school-related reasons for their absenteeism. Being bullied was the likely cause. Other reasons included boredom, dislike of teachers and avoidance of tests. Most pupils thought their parents would keep them off school for reasons which schools would consider acceptable, but a few indicated that their parents authorized absences which were unacceptable to the

school. Personal reasons to miss school included the desire to impress friends and moodiness. 16% of the secondary school students admitted to having skipped school at some time.

Junior high students' reasons for absence focused on school rather than home and included boredom, problems with lessons and teachers, anticipation of trouble, frustration at school rules, the size and complexity of secondary schools and fear of returning after a long absence. Bullying, having no friends and peer pressure to 'bunk off' were also mentioned. Some pupils mentioned home-related factors such as distress when parents split up, and a few noted personal factors such as laziness and the habit of poor attendance.

Researchers find that students are likely to attend school when they perceived their classes are boring or irrelevant; feel unsupported or disrespected by teachers and other school staff; feel uncomfortable or bullied by other students; or feel targeted for discipline and behavioural issues (Wahstaff, Combs, & Jarvis, 2000). The same research also noted that students were likely to attend school when they perceived that they had fallen behind on their school work or could not balance the competing demands of work and school (Wagstaff, et al., 2000). With regard to issues to issues related to the student's physical and mental health Kearney, (2008) observed that students academic achievement was directly related to student attendance. Chronic health conditions are among the most significant predictors of student absenteeism. The researcher explained that illness is one of the leading predictors for student absenteeism. , Absenteeism related to illness can be exacerbated by numerous factors, including age, poverty, medical care, as well as the student's living environment.

In addition, researchers have found that teenage pregnancy peer pressure effect and drug/alcohol use were found to be significantly related to student absenteeism.

Government programmes should target children in the early years before age five. Such programmes should provide training in effective parenting skills, and early childhood educators should be encouraged to work in partnership with health professionals support vulnerable families.

The influence of age and gender on academic performance has been investigated in a number of studies with widely differing conclusions. Most of the differences in reported findings are due to varying contexts such as subject of study, age and gender interactions. Research has shown that men performed better than women in certain setting while women outperformed better than men in other settings. Oluwole (2001). On the other hand, it was found that no evidence of academic performance being influenced by gender. Based on analysis of close to two million graduating students, female students outperformed better than male students and attributed this partly to female students being more conscientious and thus less likely to miss lectures. With regard to the issue of student age, recent changes in educational policies around the world have led to an increase in the number of mature-age admissions in educational institutions. While a large proportion of undergraduate students are still 19-year olds, the ages of students in classes are now more variable than 15 to 20 years ago. The definition of mature student varies by country with 21, 22 and 25-year old students being classified as mature students in the United Kingdom, United States of America and Australia, respectively. Mature students are defined as those students whose age was greater than 21 years on their first day at the senior high school level. Students who were 20 years of age and younger were classified as 'young' students. Mature students are thought to lack basic skills required for effective study or to be impart by age-related intellectual deficits. Mature students tend to be admitted into their programmes with distinctly lower educational

26

attainment than the younger students. However, when compared to the younger students, the academic performance of mature students is as good, if not better. It should, however be pointed out that this comparison depends on the subject matter and types of assessment. Also mature students are more likely than younger students to adopt a deep approach or a meaning orientation towards their academic work, and were conversely less likely than younger students to adopt a surface approach or a reproducing orientation. Another determinant of academic performance is self-motivation, while a positive relationship between self-motivation and academic performance is self and academic performance has been established.

Several pupils' characteristics have also often been identified as influences to their academic performance. These include time with books and homework, attendance in school, pupils' attitude towards schooling, pupils' self-concept and motivation, health and nutritional status of pupils.

According to Engin-Demir (2009) regardless of intelligence, students who spend more time on assignments and homework are very important activities to improve their grades. The values of time students invest in homework and other related activities have also been found to be strongly related to motivation. Etsey, at el (2004) found homework to be a correlate of academic performance. He stated that ''homework bore a positive relationship with learning outcomes when it is relevant to learning objectives, assigned regularly in reasonable amounts, well explained, motivational and collected and reviewed during class time and used as an occasion for feedback to students''. Homework is in reality an interaction between school and the home, and an essential ingredient of the educational process when measuring academic achievement (Harbison & Hanushek 1992; Alomar, 2006). Also Stricker and Rock (1995) conducted an analysis by assessing the impact of the pupils' initial

27

characteristics (gender, ethnicity, parental education, geographic region and age) and the academic performance. They found that the students' initial characteristics have a modest impact on their academic performance and among them parental education is the most significant.

In addition, school attendance has a high correlation with individual academic achievement. The success of a pupil in school is predicted on regular school attendance. Poor attendance such as truancy or unexcused absence from school, cutting classes, tardiness, and leaving school without permission is seen as important in determining pupils' academic. There is a negative relationship between student academic achievement and work during school hours. Additional working hours decrease a child's reading and computational ability, whereas with additional hours of school attendance and study the reading and computational ability increased. Ray and Lancaster (2003) concluded that time spent at work had negative impact on education variables with marginal impact weakening at higher levels of study hours. Unbalanced demand of work and education places a physical and mental strain on students and often leads to poor academic performance. Several researchers have investigated the significant role pupil attitudes toward learning with regard to their academic achievement. Pupils' attitudes such as absenteeism, truancy, indiscipline, etc can affect their performance. For instance, McLean (1997) found, by distinguishing between the attitudes of high and low achievers, that five attitudinal factors were significantly related to academic performance. Pupils' attitudes may not only directly affect academic achievement, but also may indirectly influence the effect of other factors as well. Despite the fact the difference between the findings of these two studies, the authors achieved consensus as regards to the significance of attitudes in predicting achievement. House (1997) and Hassan (2002) further complemented the

results of earlier studies, with the former proving that the pupil's initial attitude towards school was significantly related to academic performance, while the latter found that attitudes predicted the pupil's basic approach to learning.

Among one of the personal variables most studied is self-concept, which concerns the group of thoughts and beliefs that a pupil has about his/her academic ability. Self-concept results from the pupil's internalization of his social image. It is developed from different interactions with the social environments and agents. Great importance is assigned the pupils self-image and the acceptance or rejection by others (Diaz, 2003). This factor has also been investigated by several authors, as regards the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement. Marsh (1990) investigated the reciprocal relationship between self-concept and academic achievement and found that an individual's present achievement is affected by prior academic self-concept, and that grades had no effect on subsequent academic self-concept. Prior academic achievements did affect subsequent academic self-concept, and likewise, prior academic self-concept also affected subsequent achievement, with prior achievement being the control. The elementary school achievement did not affect prior self-concept. Edwards (2002) found that self-concept better predict performance than variables such as age or student gender.

Another personal variable most studied is motivation. Motivation is considered to be the element that initiates the pupil's own involvement in learning. When a student is strongly motivated, all his effort and attention are directed toward the achievement of a specific goal, thus bringing to bear all his or her resources (Diaz, 2003). In relation, students' academic achievement motivation is influenced by the students' perception of parental support and involvement. If students' perception is positive on their parents support and involvement, they will achieve well. Parental

29

motivational practices have significant direct effects on academic intrinsic motivation, and indirect effects on subsequent motivation and achievement. According to Engin-Demir (2009); Students' perceptions that their parents are involved and interested in their schooling and encourage them to do well are positively related to academic achievement. Through their involvement, parents convey the message that school is important an provide their children with positive emotional experiences in relation to school. Fuchs and Woessmann (2004) observed that students performed significantly worse in reading mathematics and science in schools whose principals reported that learning was strongly hindered by lack of parental support. However, some research has shown most aspects of the relationship between educational support of parents and scholastic achievement of children to be negative.

Studies have looked at children's nutritional and health status on school indicated such as classroom concentration, general intelligence and performance on selected cognitive tasks including achievement test scores (Pridmore, 2007). Research by the Ghana National Commission on Children ([GNCC], 2000) found that in total, a little over 16% of school-aged children surveyed, suffered from recurring health problems such as headache, malaria/fever, stomach disorder and other ailments. Research by Fentiman, in the Eastern Region, revealed that 70% of all primary school-age children were anaemic. Sarris and Shams (1991) studied malnutrition among school age children in Ghana and found that about 36% of children surveyed were malnourished. Most weighed below the 80% weight-for-age standard. The GNCC survey (2000) also reported that only about a third (29%) of children ate meals with protein. The research indicates that in general malnutrition is higher in northern Ghana where socio-economic indicators are low. In these regions enrolment, attendance, completion rates and achievement tend to be lower.

Health has the potential to affect access to schooling. Research indicates a child's health can influence when and whether they go to school, their functioning in school and how long they are expected to stay in school. Research in Ghana indicates a correlation between malnutrition, stunted growth and delayed enrolment in school, Fentiman, & Bundy (1999, 2001). A child's health status affects how they function at school. Children who suffer from malnutrition, hunger, or who lack certain micronutrients do not have the same potential for learning for learning as healthy and well-nourished children (Pridmore, 2007).

Harbison and Hanushek (1992) found a statistically significant relationship between health and nutritional indicators and academic achievement. They concluded that the influence of poor health and nutritional status on achievement begins early in a child's life and have cumulative impact on pupils' achievement. Vegas and Petrow (2008) assert that although the mechanisms by which malnutrition affects academic performance are not known, deficiencies in proteins, calories and micronutrients are believed to impair cognitive development. Three aspects of nutritional status that affect academic achievement adversely: temporary hunger, micronutrients deprivation and protein-energy malnutrition. A local study on early primary school children in Malaysia showed a weak but significant association between poor nutritional intake and academic achievement (Ong, Chandran, Chen & Poh, 2010).

They reported a significant relationship between protein-energy nutritional status and school performance in Kenya. He further indicated that children who are temporary hungry as a result of not eating breakfast are more easily distracted from their school work than those who have eaten.

2.5 Summary

The several studies reviewed in this research provided evidence to show that there is a relationship between school attendance and academic achievement. While some authors argued that the correlation is positive and strong. Others see the relationship as positive but weak no zero correlation was observed. Various factors have been mentioned as responsible for low school attendance. Some of these factors are illness, inability to pay school fees, boring lessons and peer pressure.

Other reasons for absence from school focused on school factors such as boredom, problems with lessons and teachers, anticipation of punishment, frustration at school rules, the size and complexity of schools and fear of returning after a long absence. Bullying, having no friends and peer pressure to ''bunk off'' were also mentioned. Some pupils mentioned home-related factors such as distress when parents split up, and a few noted personal factors such as laziness and habit of poor attendance. Gender disparity and student learning preferences were also mentioned in some of the studies to have had some relationship with academic achievement. The greater number of studies in this review was concluded that the kind of performance in all activities in school determines the kind of students' academic grade.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

The chapter deals with the methods used in gathering information for the study. It includes views of students, Teachers and parents on the causes of low academic performance of Akpafu Schools in Basic Education Certificate examination (BECE). It deals with the statistical methods used to analyze the data collected. These are made up of   Questionnaire, observation, interviews, procedure for Data Collection, Data Analysis and interpretation. The following sub-topics have been discussed in this chapter.

- Research Design

- Population

- Sample and Sampling procedure

- Instrument used in the study

- Procedure used in data collection

- Data analysis

- Validity and reliability of the instrument
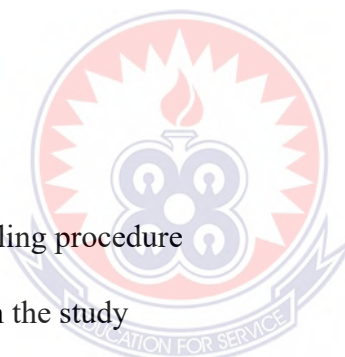
3.1 Research Design

Research design refers to the overall plan employed by the researcher to obtain answers to the research questions and for testing the hypothesis formulated. (Agyedu et al., 2010) In this wise the researcher needs to state the type of research design adopted to test the hypothesis and to answer the questions that guide the study. The design adopted in this study is descriptive survey using a quantitative design with a

casual comparative approach. In quantitative research, the phenomena are explained by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematical based methods. I have chosen this design because it has the strength of analyzing samples of data based on availability of the data (Agyedu et al 2010) such an approach does not involve the manipulation of variables in the study. It neither adds nor subtracts from the existing facts. It only carefully observes and records the data as it naturally occurred at the time the study was conducted. Questionnaire was my main data collection instrument and closed ended with predetermined responses. The reason for this research is to find out problems that are the cause of low education performances of students in Akpafu Odomi L.A J.H.S school in their Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). Other J.H.S schools in the municipality were used as a comparison to identify these factors. Through observation it was identified that other schools perform higher than Akpafu schools. These schools include St. Francis Demonstration J.H.S, St. Teresa's Demonstration J.H.S, all J.H.S in Santrokofi, Mempeasem, Todzi and Experimental J.H.S in Hohoe municipality. Akpafu J.H.S represents the lowest performing schools in the whole municipality. A study of their BECE results between 2005 to 2012 shows an unpleasant picture compared to other schools.

3.2 Population

The term population refers to the complete set of individuals, objects, or events having a common observable characteristics in which the researcher is interested to study (Agyedu et al 2010). The population for this study consisted of the Basic Education Certificate School students at Akpafu Odomi parents and teachers pf the school. These include 158 students, 121 parents and 14 teachers

3.3 Sample Size

A sample is a set of respondents drawn from a larger population about which quantitative and qualitative information is sought .It is desirable to select a sample in such a way that the research is assured that curtained subgroups in the population or stratum (class, sex, etc) would be represented in the sample. Out of the total population of 293, a sample size of 32 students, 16 parents and 13 teachers were selected.

3.4 Sampling Technique

For individuals in a defined population to have equal probability and independent choice of being selected as members of the sample, simple random sampling must be used. Both stratified sampling and simple random sampling were used in this study. The student, teachers and parents were randomly sampled. In doing this, the names of the students were written on pieces of papers and then folded them so that the names would not be seen. These papers were mixed in such a way that they could not be identified. The researcher then selected the students that selected a particular mark on them. Teachers and parents were also selected in a similar way by the researcher.

Sample size picture

Name of Population	Population	Sample Size
Students	158	32
Teachers	14	13
Parents	121	16
Total	293	61

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

On March 29th 2016 the researcher would go to the selected school-Akpafu Odomi L.A J.H.S and meet the teachers and students who were sampled for this study. They will be informed earlier during last visit to the school. One category of respondent constitutes the sample for this study. The questionnaire was the means to solicit the views of respondents on things that cause them to perform low in their academic work, to be precise in BECE result. Close ended items were provided to this effect. Spaces were provided for their answers and they were supposed to tick, but names were not required. The Basic Education Certificate Examination results (BECE) was also collected with the number of student who wrote the exams that year, their performances and their positions. Face to face interviews was used to collect data from parents. With this procedure the questions were read by the researcher to the parents who were the respondents and then the responses were recorded. The researcher translated the questions into the local language for some parents. Since most of them do not speak English hence translation was needed. The interview was very good because I had the chance to observe more conditions at the home and the community making use of the psychology studied in education.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instrument are tools that a researcher uses to collect data. The instruments used are very simple. They were not in the form of spears and guns or bombs but simple questionnaires and structured interviews. Three categories of respondents constituted the sample for this study. I therefore administered a set of questionnaires to respondent as the main instrument. Questionnaires were design to get information on the cause of low academic performance of Akpafu Odomi Basic Schools. Questionnaires which were utilized in this study were three. They were designed respectively for school teachers, pupils and parents on causes which might be affection academic performance in the school. The questionnaires elicited or followed directly on aspects relating to school environment factors, home and community conditions, teacher relationships and methods of teaching factors and pupils related variables. This is shown in the appendices. Items of the questionnaire were arranged in a way to help the respondents to select alternative answers against their choice of responses. The questionnaire made it possible for me to approach respondents more easily and assure them more of anonymity. The type of questions used included close ended and few open ended questions. Face to face interviews were also used for almost all the parents. The interview was structured and directly used for the interview. The researcher read the questionnaire and interpreted if for the participants. The demographic items for students included class, form, age , where they live, the subject the prefer, the medium of instruction which is used to teach them, if their parents visit them in school and if they prefer another school. They were also to indicate a yes or no by ticking the space provided. On one side of the items they were ask to answer the same way how often, always, sometimes, never with a chat indicating reasons why they absent themselves from school. Teachers were ask to

answer the same manner with items like if they have enough teaching materials for references, if they supply their own materials for teaching, if they are trained teachers, their highest qualification, if parents visit them while in school, if headmaster watch them teach, if students came to school late and also if they have Parent-Teacher-Association (PTA) in the school, their highest qualification and also answer on a chat about the facilities in the school. Parents were also asked to answer in the same manner. It was only two (2) parents who were able to answer the questionnaires on their own because they were literates. The rest of them were interviewed by me the researcher. It was very interesting to sit down with some of them. They were excited and glad. They were asked to answer the following questions; their age, if they provide their wards with enough materials for school, food, if they like the teachers, their occupation, how often they engaged their children, etc. lastly I ask them some open questions about how they see the performance of their children and what they expert at BECE exams.
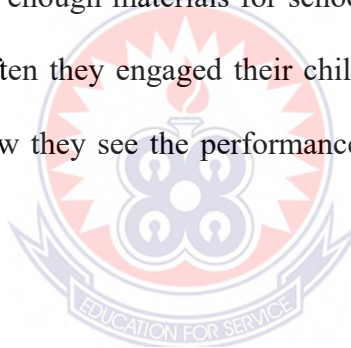
3.7 Data Collection

The researcher made subsequent visits to the school alone to administer the questionnaire and conducted my interviews with the parents and some of the students. I went to the school and directly to the headmaster for information about the population of students, teachers and parents. I also collected the results of the BECE from the year 2000 to date and the position of the school in the municipality. He introduced me to the P.TA chairman, the assembly man, teachers, students and some of parents. The headmaster was very instrumental in the data collection. Anyway I showed appreciation before the whole staff and students. All instruments were administered concurrently. In the design, the researcher collects two or more forms of

38

data simultaneously during the working time and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results (Cresswell, 2003). The Data Collection took place in Akpafu Odomi, Volta Region in the Hohoe municipality form 29th march to may 2016.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The data were collected and entered in order to address all questions and the answers. After editing the few open-ended questions were coded. This means the assignment of numbers responses to make them readable. After editing and coding, the data were entered into the computer using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software. The data were analyzed using basic descriptive statistics involving frequency distribution and cross tabulations.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Consent was obtained from the school headmaster. In doing so, a consent statement was read out to the students and teachers for acceptance before administration of these questionnaires. For parents, I obtained informed verbal consent from them before the commencement of the interviews. The participants were informed that this assignment was voluntary and they were allowed to decline or withdraw at anytime they were not comfortable. I made much attempts to maintain the confidentiality of the responses. While I interviewed them I told them that their responses and contributions would be kept confidential. Nobody known to them would have his or her hands on the information which they provided. I also assured them that I did not record their names.

3.10 Validity and Reliability

Prior to using any instruments, its validity and reliability needs to be assessed to determine its accuracy and consistency. According to Agyedu et al (2013), Validity is concerned with the accuracy of measurement. It thus refers to the purpose to ascertain the degree of accuracy for a specific purpose. I the researcher did a pre-test in one of the schools in the Santrokofi Gbordome municipality. The result I gathered there made it certain that the quality of my work is assured at 80% because 12 out of 16 respondents gave out almost the same answers. Reliability according to Agyedu et al (2010) refered to the extent to which an instrument measures the same thing each time it is used under same conditions with the same subjects. To be assured of validity and reliability of the instruments, I the researcher allowed lecturers who were experts on this field in the University of Education Winneba (UEW) to evaluate the questionnaires for content and construct as well as face validity. The change and corrections were made with the questionnaires and was also improved. I tested it to make sure that respondents would understand exactly what it means in order to give accurate response to what is demanded of them. The pilot testing made it easier for me to identify defective items also. In the next chapter is the data analysis result.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter four of the research focuses on presentation of analysis and discussion of the results. The intention of this study was to explore what had accounted for low BECE performance of Akpafu Odomi JHS, in the Hohoe Municipality of the Volta Region. The data are presented in frequency tables and percentages in a accordance with the order of the research questions formulated to guide the study. The purpose of the analysis and discussions was to find answers to the three research questions of the study.

The first part of the chapter considers the demographic characteristics of respondents which focus on gender, age and form distribution of students and the educational level and occupation of parents. The second part presents the findings on home environmental, School and teacher factors which might have accounted for the low BECE performance of JHS candidates in Akpafu Odomi communities.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The Table 4.1 presents gender of respondents.

Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequent	Percentage
Parents		
Male	7	41.2
Female	10	58.8
Total	17	100.0
Teachers		
Male	7	53.8
Female	6	46.2
Total	13	100.00
Students		
Male	13	40.6
Female	19	59.4
Total	32	100.00

Table 4.1 shows the gender distribution of respondents. More than half of the parents 10(58.8%) and students 19(59.4%) involved in the study were females as compared to male who were 7(41.2%) and 13(40.6%) respectively. On the part of the teachers they were almost divided. According to the table, 7 (53.8%) of the teachers involved in the study were male while the other 6 (46.2%) were female. The results give an indication of fair gender distribution since none of the respondent categories recorded less than 40%. The Table 4.2 illustrates the age distribution of students' respondents.

Table 4.2: Age Distribution and Form of Students

Age Range & Form	Frequent	Percentage
Age Range		
9-11	1	3.1
12-14	9	28.1
15 and Above	22	68.8
Total	32	100.0
Form		
One	3	9.4
Two	8	25.0
Three	21	65.6
Total	32	100.00

More than two-thirds 22(68.8%) of the students were 15 years and above and almost one-third 9(28.1%) were 12-14 year olds, according to Table 3. The table also revealed that two-thirds 21(65.6%) of the students were in JHS final year (Form Three Students). This implies that a large proportion of the questionnaires were given to the final years students since they were preparing for the BECE. Again, it also reflects the results that majority of the students' respondents were aged 15 years and above. The Table 4.3 shows the level education and the occupation of parents of JHS students in the Akpafu Odomi communities.

Table 4.3: Level of Education and Occupation of Parents

Age Range & Form	Frequent	Percentage
Education of Parents		
Basic	12	70.6
Secondary	4	23.5
Drop out	1	5.9
Total	17	100.00
Occupation of Parents		
Farming	12	70.6
Petty Trading	4	29.4
Total	17	100.0

The Table 4.3 shows the level education and the occupation of parents of JHS students in the study area. Majority 12(70.6%) of the parents had basic education while almost one-third 4(23.5%) of the parents had secondary education. This finding implies low parental education in the communities which had the potential to affect the students' education negatively. This contrast an earlier study which found that parents who are educated are in better position to provide their children with academic and social support for educational success (Schiller, Khmelkov & Wang, 2002).

The occupation of the parents also reflects their level of education which is very low. Table 4 depicts that Majority 12(70.6%) of the parents are farmers. This is a trade they mostly acquired informally which is for the subsistence of their family. The lack of training in best farming practices and less financial support will affect the quality and quantity of farm yields which would result in low income for the parents. This finding agrees with the literature that insufficient parental income has the potential to influence students' academic performance in school (Akanle, 2007).

4.3 Home Environmental Factors Responsible For Low Academic Performance among Students

This sub-topic was to find answers to research question one which sought to find out home environment factors responsible for students' low academic performance in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in Akpafu Odomi Junior High Schools. Table 4.5 gives idea about where students live.

Table 4.4: The Areas Students Live

	Frequent	Percentage
Village	6	18.8
Town	26	81.2
Total	32	100.0

Table 4.4 shows that 26(81.2%) of the students lived in the Akpafu Odomi town while 6(18.8%) lived in the villages. None of the student respondents lived in the farm huts according to the table. This means that majority of the students live at where the schools are located and therefore have easy access to them. Table 6 presents information about students' parents who are alive and whether students live with them.

45

Table 4.5: Living Parents and whether Students live with them

	Frequent	Percentage
Alive Parents		
Mother	5	15.6
Father	3	9.4
Both	24	75.0
Total	32	100.00
Students asked whether they live with their parents		
Yes	25	78.1
No	7	21.9
Total	32	100.00

Majority of students 24(75.0%) had both parents alive as against 8(25%) who had either their mother or father alive. According to Table 6. This is a positive development because parents are the best people to plan and support their wards education. On the question of whether they live with their parents majority of them 25(78.1%) responded in the affirmative. This implies that the supervision of students' activities by parents is a possibility and if it is done well it would change the low performance of students in the BECE. Another 7(21.9%) of the students said they stay with people other than their parents. This category of students spent a lot of their times on household chores at the expense of their studies after school. This is likely to affect their performance in both internal and external examinations. Table 4.6 presents the results of number of siblings of students.

Table 4.6: Number of Siblings of Students

Siblings	Frequent	Percentage
One	1	3.1
Two	3	9.4
Three	9	28.1
Four or more	19	59.4
Total	32	100.00

More than half 19 (59.4%) of the students had four or more siblings while almost one-third 9 (28.1%) had three siblings. Parents with many children usually find it difficult to provide adequate support for all of them both at home and school. This finding is in line with what Asikha (2010) found that the larger the family size the less the attention and devotion from parents and more the difficulties encountered by the parents in meeting the needs of the children both physically and emotionally particularly in this austerity period when the prices of food and commodities are skyrocketed. Again, Akanle (2007) on his part revealed that the academic achievement of a pupil is assumed to be influenced by number of siblings he/she has. Parental inability to provide the basic school needs for their wards will affect their effective participation in classroom activities which will eventually affect their academic performance. The results of how students are supported in their homework are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Support for Students in their Homework

	Frequent	Percentage
Mother	3	9.4
Father	5	15.6
Siblings	24	75.0
Total	32	100.00

Table 4.7 shows that students receive help when they are given homework. Greater majority 24(75.0) of the respondents were supported by their siblings to do their homework. Also, one out of four 8(25.0%) of the respondents said their parents help them in their homework. This implies that more parents in the communities are not in the better position to help in the studies of their children at home probably due to little or no education. It is not out of place for older siblings to help their junior ones at home but it is more appropriate for parents to take centre stage in their children studies at home. This will afford them the opportunity to understand the progress of their children even before the final examinations. Research has shown that parents who have more education appear better able to provide their children with the academic and social support for educational success than when compared to parents with less educational background (Schiller, Khmelkov & Wang, 2002). Table 4.8 presents issues that could cause students to absent themselves from school.

Table 4.8: Situations that could Cause Absenteeism among Students

Item	Yes	No	Total
I am ill	23(71.9)	9(28.1)	32(100.00)
I did not eat	1(3.1)	31(96.9)	32(100.00)
We went to the farm	9(28.1)	28(71.9)	32(100.00)
I am late to school	6(18.8)	26(81.2)	32(100.00)
I owe school fees	14(43.8)	18(56.2)	32(100.00)
I do not have footwear	12(37.5)	20(62.5)	32(100.00)
I do not have uniform	12(37.5)	20(62.5)	32(100.00)
When our teacher is not in school	0(0.0)	32(100.0)	32(100.00)

Figures in parentheses are percentages (%)

Table 4.8 shows a list of item that could cause students to absent themselves from school. Obviously, 23(71.9%) said they absented themselves from school when they were ill. This is expected because students cannot do much at school when they are not feeling well. Respondents were almost divided as to whether they will go to school or absent themselves when they owe fees. Almost half 14(43.8%) of the respondents would absent themselves from school due to unpaid fees but more than half 18(56.2%) said they would not. This means that students owing any kind of fees at school could cause absenteeism. This is because even those who said they will go irrespective of the fees they owe could be asked to go home and bring the fees a situation they found embarrassing. Akanle (2007) revealed that insufficient parental income influences students' academic performance.

More than a third (37.5%) of the students responded in the affirmative to the question whether they will absent themselves to school if they do not have footwear or uniform. The almost two-thirds (62.5%) of the respondents believed that lack of footwear or uniform was not enough reason to stay at home on a school day. Student

49

absenteeism is a contributing factor to low academic performance. Table 4.9 present results on the question whether students spent their time watching movies.

Table 4.9: Students Spent Their Time Watching Movies

	Frequent	Percentage
Yes	10	31.2
No	22	68.8
Total	32	100.0

Table 4.9 shows that two-third 22(68.8%) of the students did not spent their spare time watching movies at home or outside. However, the remaining one-third 10(31.2%) said they spent their spare watching movies. This means that a third of the students are not using their spare time after school profitably, although the majority of them are spending their time well. This is an indication that their studies at home will be affected which will eventually bring down academic performance in the schools. The time students spent on their books after school is very important to their academic success. It is said that regardless of intelligence, students who spend more time on assignments and homework are more likely to improve their grades (Engin-Demir, 2009). Parents view on what children do after school was presented in table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Parents View on what Children do after School

	Frequent	Percentage
Private studies	5	29.4
Petty trading	4	23.5
Join parents in farm	8	47.1
Total	17	100.0

Table 4.10 shows that majority of the students were engaged by their parents in petty trading 4(23.5%) and farm-work 8(47.1%) after school. These two activities are most likely to get the students exhausted thereby preventing them from studying after school. Students' inability to study after school may be a contributing factor to low academic performance among JHS leavers in the area. Students are more likely to improve their grades when they spend more time studying after school (Engin-Demir, 2009). However, 5(29.4%) of the students did their private studies after school according to the parents. This is heartwarming because personal studies improve students' grades.

4.4 School Environmental Factors Responsible For Low Academic Performance among Students

The caption was to address research question two which sought to find out school environment factors responsive for students' low academic performance in BECE in Akpafu Odomi Junior High Schools. The Table 4.11 presents students' view on school activities which enhance academic performance.

Table 4.11: Students View on School Activities that could Enhance Academic Performance

Item	Yes	No	Total
Playing during break	9(28.1)	23(71.9)	32(100.00)
Learning outside classroom	29(90.6)	3(9.4)	32(100.00)
Parental school visit	22(68.8)	10(31.2)	32(100.00)
Headmasters visit to class	32(100.0)	0(0.0)	32(100.00)
Circuit supervisors visit to school	30(93.8)	2(6.2)	32(100.00)
Giving students homework	31(96.9)	1(3.1)	32(100.00)
Students feel happy their teacher	30(93.6)	2(6.4)	32(100.00)
Students prefer another school	6(18.8)	26(81.2)	32(100.00)

Figures in parentheses are percentages (%)

Table 4.11 shows that less than a third (28.1%) of the students said they do play during break time. Greater majority (71.9%) of the students said they do not play during break. The students' behaviour during break does not inspire confidence in them which have the potential to affect their studies in school which will finally result in low academic performance. Students are expected to be happy during break after working hard in class for a period of time. Students responded *yes* to the fact that parents, headmaster and circuit supervisors visit them when they are in school studying. For instance, 22(68.8%) of parents visit the schools to see how their children are doing. Although this is a positive development, 10(31.2%) of the parents do not visit the school. Parental involvement in children's educational activities goes a long way to improve their performance academically. This finding agrees with Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1987) that pupils with parents who are involved in their education tend to have better academic performance than pupils whose parents are not involved.

Again, overwhelming majority 30(93.6%) of students were happy with their teachers. A good teacher-student relationship also promotes good academic results in schools. The reason is that students are likely to attend school when they perceived that teachers and other school staff give them respect. Students' positive response to the above items should reflect in their BECE results but on the contrary their performance in the examination is low. Table 4.12 presents teachers view on existing school facilities.

Table 4.12: Teachers View on Existing School Facilities

Item	Yes	No	Total
Classrooms	12(92.3)	1(7.7)	13(100.0)
Water	13(100.0)	0(0.0)	13(100.0)
Toilet	13(100.0)	0(0.0)	13(100.0)
Electricity	12(92.3)	1(7.7)	13(100.0)
Headmaster's Office	13(100.0)	0(0.0)	13(100.0)
Computer Laboratory	13(100.0)	0(0.0)	13(100.0)
Library	0(0.0)	13(100.0)	13(100.0)
Teachers Quarters	1(7.7)	12(92.3)	13(100.0)
School Park	13(100.0)	0(0.0)	13(100.0)
Sports Equipment	10(76.9)	3(23.1)	13(100.0)

Figures in parentheses are percentages

In the view of the teachers, facilities such as classrooms, water, toilet, electricity, computer laboratory, sports and the like are available in the Akpafu Odomi basic schools. For example, 12(92.3%) of the teachers agreed that the schools had adequate classrooms and also electricity to power the computer laboratory, according to Table 4.12. These facilities make teachers and students feel comfortable in their academic work. On the other hand, neither the community nor the schools had library at the moment, according to the teachers 13(100.0%). This implies that students do not have a more serene place to go and study during their spare time. This could be one of the reasons why some of them waste their time watching television and movies. Libraries are important educational facilities that could help students improve upon their performance especially those at the basic level. Teachers view on circuit supervisors' visit is presented in table 4.13

Table 4.13: Teachers' View on Circuit Supervisors' Visit Schools

	Frequent	Percentage
Often	3	23.1
Rarely	10	76.9
Total	13	100.00

According to Table 4.13, large majority 10(76.9%) of the teachers said circuit supervisors rarely visit the schools as only one out of five 3(23.1%) of the teacher said they visit the schools often. This finding is in contrast with what the students said that circuit supervisors visit their schools to supervise teaching and learning activities. External supervision is very important to the success of the school system especially at the basic level. Some school authorities and teachers show a lot laxity when circuit supervisors rarely visit their schools. This has negative implication for academic performance in the schools. Table 4.14 presents school language usage.

Table 4.14: Teachers' and Students' View on Language Usage in Schools

Frequent	Percentage	Teachers
Language Used in Classroom		
English	11	84.6
Ewe	1	7.7
Local	1	7.7
Total	13	100.00
Language Spoken on Campus		
English	1	77.7
Ewe	1	77.7
Local	11	84.6
Total	13	100.0
Students		
English	27	84.4
Vernacular	5	15.6
Total	32	100.0

54

Overwhelming majority of both teacher 11(84.6%) and students 27(84.4%) responded that English language is the medium of instructions in the schools in Akpafu Odomi according to Table 4.14. This is a positive development because English language is the medium of instruction in basic schools for all subjects except other languages and at the lower primary. Giving student enough opportunity to express themselves in English language will go a long way to enhance their performance in the final examinations. However, 11(84.6%) of the teachers said students spoke local language on the school compound instead of English language. Students' inability to speak English outside the classroom shows their lack of confidence to practice the language they would need to write almost all assignments, test, and examinations. The possible causes of poor academic performance according to parents are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Parents View on possible Causes of Poor academic Performance Among BECE candidates

Causes	Frequency	percentage
Laziness on the part of teachers	4	23.5
laziness on the part of students	6	35.3
schools use students for menial job	5	29.4
less corporal punishment	2	11.8
Total	17	100.0

From table 4.15, One-third 6(35.3%) of parents respondents said that students non performance in BECE was due to their laziness in doing personal studies. Engin-Demir (2009) reported in his study that students were more likely to improve their grades when they spend more time studying after school. Again, another 5(29.4%) of parents thought that students were not performing because the schools used them for

menial jobs such as carrying stones and sand for building contractors in order to raise money for the school. This would lead to the lost of instructional time and non-completion of syllabus in such schools which would consequently affect the performance of students in BECE.

4.5 Teacher Factors that Contribute to Low Academic Performance among Students

This sub-topic was to find answers to research question three which sought to find out home environment factors responsive for students' low academic performance in BECE in Akpafu Odomi Junior High Schools. Table 4.16 presents teacher related factors that could affect classroom teaching and learning.

Table 4.16: Teacher Related Factors that could affect Classroom Teaching

Item	Yes	No	Total
Are you a trained teacher	12(92.3)	1(7.7)	13(100.00)
Do you have adequate ref material	3(23.1)	10(76.9)	13(100.00)
Do you supply the reference material	9(69.2)	4(30.8)	13(100.00)
Difficulty in interpreting syllabus	4(30.8)	9(69.2)	13(100.00)
Time allotted for teaching	7(53.8)	6(46.2)	13(100.00)
Teacher scheme of work	13(100.0)	0(0.0)	13(100.00)

Table 4.16 depicts that almost all 12(92.3%) the teachers in the Akpafu Odomi junior high schools are trained teachers. This is a positive development because effective teaching and learning requires professional teachers who understand both content and methods of teaching their subject. This finding corroborates what Agyemang (1993) reported that a teacher who does not have both the academic and

the professional teacher qualification would undoubtedly have a negative influence on the teaching and learning of his/her subject.

However, materials they need to ensure effective teaching in the schools are in short supply according to the teachers. Greater majority 10(76.3%) of the teachers said reference materials they need for effective preparation of the lesson notes were inadequate while more than two-thirds 9(69.2%) of them said they supply their own reference materials. This implies that the supply of materials needed for teaching is left to some extent to the discretion of the teacher. This situation will no augur well for effective preparation of lessons and instructional delivery.

Again, 7(53.8%) of the teachers were of the view that time allotted for teaching the various subjects at the JHS was adequate, but another 6(46.2%) thought it was not enough. Teachers need enough time to complete the syllabus. This is because when the syllabus is not completed, students find it difficult to understand content which is to be taught in the next class which foundation in most cases is based on the previous class. The non-completion of syllabus has negative impact on the performance of students in the BECE. Table 4.17 presents teachers view on school and parental leadership.

Table 4.17: Teachers View on School and Parental Leadership

Item	Yes	No	Total
Parental visit to schools	1(7.7)	12(92.3)	13(100.00)
School PTA meeting	12(92.3)	1(7.7)	13(100.00)
Students have basic school needs	1(7.7)	12(92.3)	13(100.00)
Students lateness to school	10(76.9)	3(23.1)	13(100.00)
Heads instructional supervision	11(84.6)	2(15.4)	13(100.00)

Teachers had a different view about whether parents visit the schools to see how their children are doing. Overwhelming majority 12(92.3%) of the teacher respondents said parents do not visit the schools according to Table 18, contrary to two-thirds of the students who said their parents visit them. This does not show parental involvement in school whose importance cannot be over-emphasized. Besides, 12(92.3%) of the teachers said that parents do not provide the basic things their wards need in school. This may be largely due to insufficient parental income which has the potential to influences students' academic performance in school (Akanle, 2007). From the table, 10(76.9%) of the teachers revealed that students' lateness to school was an issue of concern to them in the community. Lateness to school in whatever form, hampers teaching and learning, and eventually academic performance. Teacher attitude to work is presented in Table 4.18 according to the students.

Table 4.18: Students View on Teachers Attitude to Work

Causes	Frequency	percentage
Hard-working	30	93.8
Lazy	2	6.2
Total	32	100.0

The Table 4.18 shows that teachers had positive attitude towards work. Overwhelming majority 30(93.8%) of students' respondents said their teachers are hard-working. This means that teachers are doing their best for students in both curricular and co-curricular activities. However, the effort made by teachers which is well appreciated by the students is yet to reflect on their academic performance at the BECE level.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. It also includes suggested areas for further studies. The chapter is structured under the captions introduction, summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore what had accounted for low BECE performance of Akpafu Odomi JHS, in the Hohoe Municipality of the Volta Region. The study employed descriptive survey design with quantitative approach. In quantitative research, the phenomena are explained by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematical based methods. The population for this study consisted of the BECE schools, students, teachers and parents in Akpafu Odomi communities.

The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. It was used to solicit the views of respondents on factors that might have accounted for candidates' low academic performance in BECE. The data were analyzed using basic descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and percentages.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The following were the summary of study findings.

1. The study found that students in JHS in Akpafu Odomi had three, four or more siblings. Parents with many children usually find it difficult to provide adequate support for all of them especially at school.

2. Almost half of students' respondents would absent themselves from school due to unpaid fees and other levies. Student absenteeism is a drawback to academic progression.

3. Parents engaged their wards in petty trading and farming activities after school. These income generating activities got the students exhausted thereby preventing them from studying after school. This is a contributing factor to low academic performance among JHS leavers in the area.

4. Majority of the teachers said circuit supervisors and parents rarely visit the schools to supervise teaching-learning activities and how students were faring respectively, but two-thirds of the students held a contrary view. External supervision and parental involvement are very important for academic success in schools.

5. The study found, according to the teachers, that facilities such as classrooms, water, toilet, electricity, computer laboratory, sports were available in the Akpafu Odomi basic schools, but community or schools library were lacking

6. It came out from the study that parents attributed students' low performance in BECE in the area to laziness on the part of both teachers and students in playing their roles to ensure academic success and also

60

menial job students do during school instructional hours. On the other hand, students thought their teachers were hard-working.

7. Teachers were divided in their opinion about the adequacy of the time allotted for teaching the various subjects at the JHS level. Teachers need enough time to complete the syllabus and also give students more practice time to prevent low performance.

5.3 Conclusions

The study investigated home environmental, school, and teacher factors that had accounted for low BECE performance in Akpafu Odomi JHS, in the Hohoe Municipality of the Volta Region. The study concluded that large family size and its resultant less support for students, engaging students in income generating activities after school were some of the home environmental factors that contribute to low BECE performance in the area. Besides, the school factors include less external supervision and parental involvement and lack of library facilities. On the teachers' front, sheer laziness on the part of some teachers in helping students to succeed and also non- completion of syllabuses were contributing factors to low candidate performance in BECE in the area.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings and conclusions of the study.

1. Parents in the Akpafu Odomi community must refrain from engaging student in farming activities and petty trading after school and rather encourage them to study at home. In same vein, schools must desist from

using students to do menial work during instructional hours in the name of generating income for the school.

2. The Ghana Education Service, municipal assembly and all other stakeholders should Support the circuit supervisors to visit the schools regularly to ensure that teachers do what is expected of them, especially the lazy ones. They should provide them with motorbike, fuel and other allowances.

3. Parents should be encouraged to participate in school management through the SMC and PTA to ensure its smooth running. Again, parents must visit their wards in school and familiarized themselves with their academic progress.

4. Stakeholders of education, including benevolent organizations and philanthropists, must build libraries in the communities and the schools to ensure that students have a place to do their private studies.
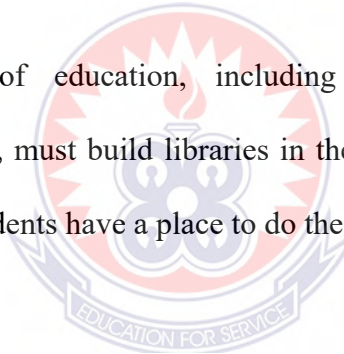
5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

Future studies should look at student factors contributing to low performance and factors that predict academic performance in schools.

REFERENCES

Adediwura, A. A., & Tayo, B. (2007) Perception about teachers knowledge, attitude and teaching skills as predictor of academic performance in Nigerian secondary schools

Adentwi, K. I. (2005). *Curriculum Development.* An Introduction.

Adentwi, K. I. (2005*). Curriculum Development. An Introduction.* Kumasi: Truimph Press,

Agulanna G. G. (1999) Family structure and prevalence of behavioural problems among Nigeria adolescents.

Agyedu G. O., Donkor F. & Obeng S. (2010). Teach yourself Research Methods. Kumasi*. International Journal of Educational Research and Development.* (IJERD) Vol. 3 August 2014

Agyeman D. K. (1993) Sociology of Education for African students.

Akanle, O. B. (2007) Socio-Economic factors influencing students' academic performance in Nigeria. Some explanation from A local Survey, *Sociology and Social work community*. Retrieved From ijournals.org/index/php.com

Alomar B.O. (2006) Personal family paths to pupils achievement. Social Behaviour and Personality. Retrieved May 2016. http://web.ebscohos.com

Amoakohene, S. K. (2008). *Technology and Society*. Kumasi. Seneps Publications.

Aremu, A. O. (2000) *Academic performance 5 factor inventory*. Ibadan. Stirling Horden Publishers. Retrieved December 9 2015 from http://www.eurojournals.com/ejss

Asikha A. U. (2010) Factors influencing Students Academic Performance. *gjournals.org/GJER/Publications/2015*

63

Avortri, R., Owusu-Darko L., Eghan H. & Ocansey S. (1999) Gender and primary schooling in Ghana. Brighton: IDS/FAWE

Barnes W. (2003) Teachers participation in community development activities in Ghana. Unpublished Dphil thesis, Brighton University of Sussex.

Bennell, P. & Akyeampong A. K. (2007) Teacher motivation and incentives. Evidence from an International Research Project. London: Final report submitted to DFID.

Bhola, H. S. (2002). *A Discourse on Impact Evaluation Model and its Application to a Literacy Intervention in Ghana.*

Bilesanmi, J. B. (1999) *A causal model of teacher characteristic and student achievement in some Ecological concepts.* Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Ibandan. Retrieved may 2 2016. http://pkukmweb.ukmm.my

Cary J., Roseth W.J., David T. & Rojer J. (2008) Promoting early adolescents achievement and peer relationship; The effect of cooperative, competitive and individualistic goal structures.

Coleman J. S. (2006). The Adolescent Society

Coukline J. (1996) Introduction to Criminology

Currie J. (1995) Welfare and the well-being of children. Fundamentals of Pure and Applied Economics

Darling-Hammond L. (2000). Teacher quality and student achievement; A review of state policy evidence. Educational policy Analysis Archives.

Diaz A. L. (2003). Personal, family and Academic factors affecting low achievement in secondary schools. Electronic Journal of Research in educational Psychology and Psycho-Pedagogy. Retrieved May 2016 from http://www.investigacionpsicopedagoca.org/revisa

Dimisso T. S. (2009). Understanding female students academic performance; An exploration of the situation in South Nations nationalities and peoples regional state-Ethiopia. A research paper presented in Partial fulfillment of the requirement for obtaining the degree of Masters of Arts in Development Studies, International Institute of Social Science, The Hague, The Netherlands.

Downey, P. (1995). *Bigger is not better: family size, parental resources and children's education performance*. American Sociological Review.

Dunne M., & Leach, F. (2005) *Gendered school experiences. The impact on retention and achievement in Botswana and Ghana*. London; DFID

Edwards J. E. (2002). *The validation study of the Joseph self- concept scale for children.* Dissertation abstracts International; The Science and Engineering.

Engin-Demir C. (2009) Factors affecting the academic achievement of Turkish Urban Poor. International Journal of Educational Development.

Etsey Y. K. A., Amedahe, F. K., & Edzah, K. (2004). *Do private schools perform better than public schools in Ghana?* Unpublished paper. Department of Educational Foundations, University of Cape Coast (UCC).

Fentiman A., Hall, T., & Bundy, D. (1999). *School Enrolment Patterns in Rural Ghana. A Comparative study of the impact of location, gender, age and health* on Children's Access on basic Schooling.

Fertig, M., & Schmidt, M. C. (2002). *The role of background factors for reading literacy.*

Fettler, M. (1999) The relationship between measures of a teacher's experience with mathematics and educational level and students achievement in mathematics

in the critical importance of well-prepared teachers. http://pkukmweb.ukm.my

Frederick Kwaku Sarfo & Kobina Impraim Adentwi (2011). Educational Technolog

Fuchs T. & Woessman L. (2004). *What accounts for International differences in students performance?*

G.O.Agyedu, F. Donkor, S Obeng (2010) Teach yourself Research Methods.International Journal of Educational Research.and Development. (IJERD)Vol. 3 August 2014

Gary Yulk (2010) Leadership In Organizations.

Gay L.R.(1996) Educational Research: Competencies for analysis and application. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Ghana National Commission on Children (GNCC) (2000). Ghana's children; The child's perspective. Accra GNCC..

Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) Provision result of the 2012 population housing census Retrieved.

Ghanney R.A. (2007) Effects of home environment on parental attitudes towards educational attainment of primary school pupils in Winneba township. Ghana International journal of Educational Research. Retrieved April 20th 2015 from http://www.ajol.lnfo/viewarticle.php?jid

Grolnick W. S., & Slowiaczek M.L. (1987). *Parents involvement in children schooling,* A multidimentional conceptualization model.

Hanushek, E. A. (1992). The trade-off between child quantity and quality

Harbison R. W., & Hanushek, E. A. (1992). *Educational performance of the poor; Lessons from rural Northern Brazil*. New York: Oxford University Press for the World Bank.

Hassan M.M. (2002) Academic satisfaction and approaches to learning among United Arab Emirate University Pupils, social behavior and personality. An International journal.

Headteachers' Handbook (1994) Education Strategic Plan. Vol. 1

Hedges J. (2002) The importance of posting and interaction with the educational bureaucracy in becoming a teacher in Ghana. International journal of educational development.

House J. D. (1997). *The relationship between self- beliefs, academic background and achievement of adolescent.* Asia-American pupils child study journal.

J.A.Owusu Asamoah (Rev) (2009). Methods of Teaching Technical and Vocational Education courses

Jacob B. & Lefgren l. (2006). When Principals Rate Teachers. Education Next. Hoover Institution. Retrieved on May 2016. http://www.educationnext.org

James Kouzes & Barry Posner (2012). *The Leadership Challenge*

Jing-Lin D., Gang L., & Wei C. (2009) Determinants of International students academic performance

Johnson R., & Kyle S. (2001). *The determination of girls Child Educational Enrolment in Ghana*

Judith Bell (1993) Doing your Research Project. A guide for first time researchers in Education and Social Science. *Introduction to Special Education, 1*, 3.

Kim, H. (2004) Family resources and children's academic performance.

Maclean, (1997). *Selected attitudinal factors related to students' success in High School.* Alberta Journal of Educational Research.

McNeal, R. B. (1999). *Parental involvement as social capital: differential effectiveness on science, achievement, truancy and dropping-out.*

Ministry of Education (1994). Headteachers' Handbook.

Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MOESS) (2007). Access to Basic Education in Ghana: The Evidence and the Issues. Brighton: Centre for International Education, University of Sussex.

Odinkro M. N., & Adeyemo D. A. (1999). *Students' socio-psychological factors as predictors of achievement in senior secondary school English language*.

Ofoegbu F.I. (2004) Teacher motivation, a factor for classroom effectiveness and school improvement in Nigeria. Gale Group. Retrieved in May 2016 from http;//www.findarticle.com

Oluwole D. A. (2001). *Gender and birth order as predictors of normal pupils anxiety pattern in examination*.

Ong, L. C., Chandran, V. Lim Y. Y., Chem A. H., & Poh, B. K. (2010). *Factors associated with poor academic achievement among urban primary school children in Malaysia.* Singapore Medical Journal. From htt//smj.sma.orgsg/5103/a9.pdf

Oti Agyen, P. (2009). *Philosophical and Sociological Foundation of Education. An Introduction.*

Owusu- Akyaw, K. B. (2010). *Microsoft Excel for Tertiary Students and Educationist*

Parcel L.T., & Menagham, E. C. (1994). *Early parent work family. Social capital and Early childhood outcomes*

Pridmore P. (2007). *The impact of Health on Education access and Achievement-A cross national review of the research evidence*.

Ray, R., & Landcaster, G. (2003). *Does child labour affect school attendance and school performances*

Sarfo F. K., & Adentwi K.I. (2011) *Educational Technology*. Kumasi: Seneps Publications.

Sarris A.H., & Shams H. (1991). *Ghana under Structural Adjustment; The impact on Agricultural and the poor*. New York:

Schilla K. S., Khemelkov, V. T., & Wang, X.Q. (2002). *Economic Development and the effect of family characteristics on Mathematics achievements. Journal of marriage and family.*

Stricker L. J. & Rock D.A. (1995). *Examinee background characteristics and GRE performance.*

Tremblay S., Ross N. & Berthelot J. (2001). *Factors affecting grade 3 student performance in Ontario.*

UNITED NATIONS (2006). *The Millennium Development Goals Report: United Nations Development Programme*. Retrieved May 11, 2016 from www.undp.org/publicatios/mdgreport2006.pdf

Vegas E., & Petrow J. (2008). *Raising Students' learning Latin- America. The challenge for the 21st century.* Washington DC

Wang, J., & Wildman L. (1995). An empirical examination of the effect of family commitment in education on students achievement in seventh grade Science. *Journal of Research on Science teaching, 5,* 5-12.

West African Examination Council (WAEC) (2014). Release of 2011-2014 Provisional Result for April Basic Education Certificate Examination. Retrieved May 2016. http://www.ghana.gov.ghphp/news/general-news

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES

This questionnaire aims at soliciting your views on reasons for poor academic performance in your school. Please help in this research by ticking (   ) or give the appropriate answer where necessary. Be assured that any answer given will be kept as confidential as possible and is for the purpose stated above only.

A. Environmental factors

Name of school

Akpafu Odomi E P Primary School

Akpafu Odomi L A Primary School

Akpafu Odomi L A Junior High School

Class

Form

Gender   Male ☐   Female ☐

Age   09-11 ☐   12-14 ☐   14-16 ☐

1. Where do you live?

1. Farm house ( )

2. Village   ( )

3. Town   ( )

2. Do you live with your parents?

1. Yes ( )

2. No ( )

3. How many brothers and sisters do you have?

     1. Brothers   ( )

     2. Sisters   ( )

4. Are you the first or last born?

     First born   ( )

     Middle   ( )

     Last   ( )

5.Which of your parents is alive?

     Mother   ( )

     Father   ( )

     Both   ( )

     None   ( )

6.Complete the table by indicating yes or no with the following statement as your absence to school.
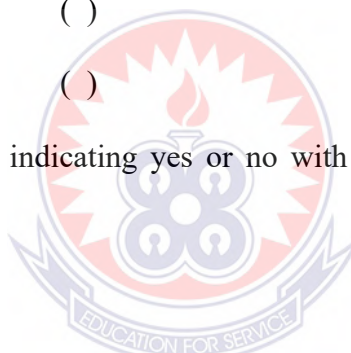
No	I absent myself from school when:	Yes	No
1	I am ill		
2	I did not eat		
3	We went to farm		
4	I am late to school		
5	I am un able to pay school fees		
6	I do not have footwear or uniform		
7	I am weak		
8	Our teacher is not in school		
9	I am not happy		

7. Do you like your teacher?   Yes ( )   No ( )

8. Why? …………………………………………………………………………

9.If you are given the chance, will you preferred another school?

10. If yes, why?..

11. Which subject do you prefer?

12. Do you get all answers correctly in your class exercise?

    Yes ( )

    No ( )

13. What language does your teacher speak when teaching?

    English

    Vernacular

14. Do you play during break?

    Yes ( )

    No ( )

15. Do your parents come to your school?

    Yes ( )

    No ( )

20. Do you fear when the teacher is teaching?

    Yes ( )

    No ( )

21. Do you sometimes learn outside the classroom?

    Yes ( )

    No ( )
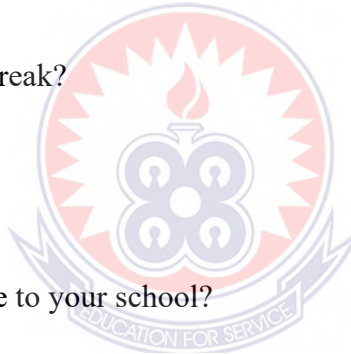
22. If yes, where?

> Library ( )

> Computer laboratory ( )

> Under the trees ( )

21. Does your headmaster come to your classroom

> Yes ( )

> No ( )

22. Where does your teacher live?

> This town ( )

> Outside town ( )

23. Do education officers visit your school ?

> Yes ( )

> No ( )

24. Do they cook for you in the school?

> Yes ( )

> No ( )

25. Do you prefer being at home to school?

> Yes ( )

> No ( )

26. Does your teacher give you homework?

> Yes ( )

> No ( )

27. Do you feel happy whenever you see your teacher?

> Yes. ( )

> N0. ( )

28. Does your teacher give you homework?

Yes. ( )

No. ( )

29. Select one option for your teacher.

Hard working ( )

Lazy ( )

30. Who helps you with your home work

Mother ( )

Father ( )

One of my Siblings. ( )

31. Do you go out to watch movies?

Yes. ( )

No. ( )

74

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WNNEBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES

Questionnaire for Teachers

This questionnaire is seeking to solicit for information on causes of low academic performance in your school and how best the researcher can help to improve the pending problem.

Please help answers the questions by ticking or give the appropriate response where necessary. Answer provided will be kept confidential as possible and for the reason stated above only. Name is not necessary. Thank you.

1. Do you have adequate materials for references before teaching?

    Yes. ( )　　　　　No ( )

2. Do teachers supply their own materials for teaching?

    Yes　　　　　No. ( )

3. .Are you a trained teacher ?

    Yes. ( ) No. ( )

4. If no, what is your highest qualification?

    Senior High School certificate ( )

    NVTI Certificate　　　　( )

    HND Certificate　　　　( )

    DBS Certificate　　　　( )

    First Degree　　　　( )

5. Do you teach in Primary School?

      Yes   ( )   No ( )

6. If yes, which level of class do teach?

   1 ( )   2. ( ) 3.( ) 4. ( ) 5. ( ) 6. ( )

7. Do you teach in the Junior High Section?

       If yes what subject do you teach? --

8. Are you a male or female

    a. Male ( )

    b. Female ( )

9. Use this table and answer the kind of infrastructure in your school

Facility	Available	Not available
Classrooms		
Water		
Toilet		
Electricity		
Headmasters Office		
Computer Laboratory		
Library		
Teachers" quarters or bungalows		
School park		
Balls		

10. Does most of your students have all basic needs necessarily for schooling

      Yes   ( )   No ( )

11. Do you find it difficult interpreting the syllabi?

    a. Yes. ( )   No. ( )

12. Does parents or guardian of your students visit you to find out about their wards performances?

      i. Yes. ( )   No. ( )

13. Is the time allocated on time table enough for teaching?

      i. Yes. ( )   No. ( )

14. How often does your district supervisor visit your school?

      i. Often.   ( )   Rarely. ( )   Does not ( )

15. What language do you use as the medium of instruction when teaching?

      i. English. ( )   Ewe. ( )   Local ( )   Any ( )

16. Does your school has Parent Teacher Association meetings

      i. Yes ( )   No ( )

17. How many students do you teach?

18. What language do your students speak among themselves in school?

      i. English. ( )   Ewe. ( ) Local   ( )

19. Do students come to school late?

      i. Yes. ( ) No. ( )

20. Does your headmaster watch you teach sometimes for few minutes?

      i. Yes. ( ) No. ( )

21. Do you write examination?

      i. Yes. ( )   No. ( )

22. If yes, how often?

      i. Yearly. ( ) Termly. ( ) Monthly. ( )

23. Do you write scheme of work and lesson notes?

      i. Yes. ( ) No ( )

APPENDIX C

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES

Questionnaire for Parents

This questionnaire aims at soliciting your views on causes of low academic performance at BECE level in your ward's school. Kindly spare eight minutes of your time and answer these few questions.

You are assured that the identity of the respondent will not be disclosed as this information is solely for academic purpose.

1. Does your child eat breakfast before leaving home to school?

   i. Yes. ( ) No. ( )

2. If yes , do you provide every day?

   i. Yes ( ) No. ( )

3. How old are you? ………………………………………

4. Do you like the teachers in your ward's school?

   i. Yes ( ) No ( )

5. If yes why do you like them? ………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

6. If no why ? ………………………………………………………………

7. What is the level of your education?

   i. Middle/JHS ( ).

   ii. Secondary or SSS

   iii. Tertiary

   iv. Any other ………………………………………………

78

8. Are you a male or female

      Male ( )

      Female ( )

9. If your child was unable to go to school does the teacher visit

    i. Yes   ( )

    ii. No ( )

10. What is your occupation? …………………………………………………

11. What work do you assign your child after school ?

    Private studies. (   )

    Selling. (   )

    Meet me and join me on the farm. (   )

    Play games. ( )

    Watch movies. (   )

    Visits relatives or neighbours. ( )

    Does no work. ( )

    Others. …………………………………..

12. Do you provide your children with enough text books ?

    i. Yes. ( )   No ( )

13. Does your child have a school uniform?

    Yes. ( )   No ( )

14. What are some of the activities you think mostly affect the performance of the

students in the school?………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………