

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION, KUMASI

**THE INFLUENCE OF PARENT'S DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES ON
THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION**



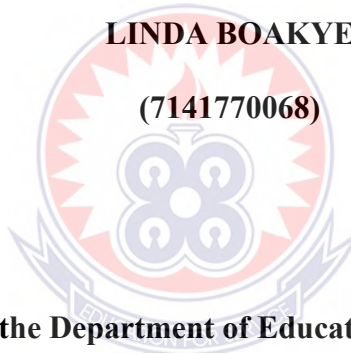
2016

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**THE INFLUENCE OF PARENT'S DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES ON
THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION**

LINDA BOAKYE

(7141770068)



**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 fulfillment of the
requirements for the award of Master of Arts Degree in Educational Leadership**

AUGUST, 2016

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, LINDA BOAKYE, declare that this Project Report, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have 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 in the University of Education, Winneba or elsewhere.

SIGNATURE:.....

DATE:.....



SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: **PROF. FREDERICK KWAKU SARFO**

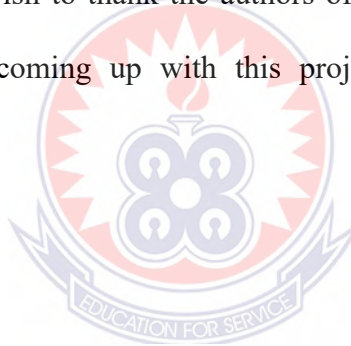
SIGNATURE:.....

DATE:.....

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my gratitude to all persons who worked tirelessly to ensure this research project is a success. I appreciate in a special way my supervisor Prof. Frederick Kwaku Sarfo for the technical support, guidance and advice while writing this report. I acknowledge my God father Prof. Ackam for instilling confidence in me through his inspirational words and providing me with invaluable comments and criticism on many issues. I will always be indebted to him for constantly rendering timely advice and spending valuable time as and when required. I also appreciate the support that I received from my class representative during our classes and discussions.

Finally and not least I wish to thank the authors of journals, books, research papers that I reviewed while coming up with this project that as added value to my knowledge.



DEDICATION

To my family for their support and to my head teacher Mr. Kofi Amoako who encouraged me to pursue this course.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENT	PAGE
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Dedication	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	ix
Abstract	x

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0	Background to the Study	1
1.1	Statement of the Problem	4
1.2	Purpose of the Study	5
1.3	Objectives of the Study	6
1.4	Research Questions	6
1.5	Assumptions	6
1.6	Significance of the Study	7
1.7	Delimitations of the Study	7
1.8	Limitation of the Study	8
1.9	Definition of Terms	8

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0	Introduction	9
2.1	Basic Education in Ghana	9
2.2	The Role of Parents in their Children's Education	12
2.3	Assistance Parents give to their Children in their Homework and other School Related Activities	13
2.3.1	Parental Involvement and Reading	15
2.3.2	Homework	16
2.3.3	Parent-School Communication	19
2.4	Parents Level of Education	24
2.5	The Socioeconomic Background of Parents	28
2.6	Theoretical Perspectives	31

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0	Introduction	37
3.1	Research Design	37
3.2	Population	38
3.3	Sample Size and Sampling Procedure	38
3.4	Instrument	39
3.5	Reliability of the Instruments	40
3.6	Data Collection Procedures	41
3.7	Data Analysis Techniques	41

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.0	Introduction	43
4.1	Demographic Characteristics of Respondents	43
4.2	Presentation and Discussion of Results on Research Question One	50
4.3	Presentation and Discussion of Results on Research Question Two	52
4.4	Presentation and Discussion of Results on Research Question Three	58

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0	Introduction	62
5.1	Summary of Study	62
5.2	Conclusion	64
5.3	Recommendations	64
5.4	Suggestions for Further Studies	65

REFERENCES	66
-------------------	-----------

APPENDICES	72
-------------------	-----------

A: Introductory Letter	72
------------------------	----

B: Questionnaire for Parents	73
------------------------------	----



LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
Table 4.1: Demography of Respondents	44
Table 4.2: Assistance of Parent's in their Children's Homework and School Activities	51
Table 4.3: Influence of Parents Educational Background on Children's Education	55
Table 4.4: Monthly Earnings of Parents and their Involvement in their Children's Education	60



LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
Figure 4.1: Sex of Respondents	45
Figure 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents	46
Figure 4.3: Educational Status of Respondents	47
Figure 4.4: Respondents level of monthly income	48
Figure 4.5: Professional Status	49
Figure 4.6: Assistance of Parents in their Children's Homework and School Related Activities	52
Figure 4.7: Educational Background	58
Figure 4.8: Monthly Income	61



ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the assistance parents give to their children in their homework and other school related activities, the role of parent's educational background and their socioeconomic status on their children's education in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly with a view of recommending on how to improve children's academic life. The study adopted a descriptive survey design which was to answer the research questions of the study. A questionnaire was distributed to 110 respondents and out of the sample of 110 parents, 100 usable responses were received. The application of descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation and frequencies were used and bar charts were used to graphically demonstrate the data distribution. Pearson Correlation analysis was used to analyse data obtained with a Likert scale designed questionnaire. The results of the study revealed that parents with higher level of education most often assist their children in their homework and other school related activities. Conclusion from this study indicated that parental involvement in children's education has a powerful impact on their academic success. Such work will not only further our understanding on how children will attain better education but will have important implications on parents with low level of education to provide quality educational resources which appears to impose the greatest impact on children's educational outcomes.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Parental participation in the education of their children is not a recent phenomenon. The introduction of compulsory education around the latter part of the 19th century in most western nations marked the significant shift of responsibility for the education of young people from the family to the state. As society modernized, government educational systems were established to provide a more unified approach to education. Therefore education is an essential right, which permits each person to receive instruction. It consists of a form of learning that is necessary for the development of one's personality and identity as well as his physical and intellectual capabilities. It also begins with the acquisition of elementary knowledge on the part of members of society.

Children learn to read and write through the primary instruction and parental oversight. The ultimate objective of education is to improve a person's quality of life and also permits the transmission of common principles to new generations and the conversation and perpetuation of social values. It is also an essential tool for the economic, social and cultural development of all populations around the world. The first learning institution of a child is their home. It is a place where children spend most of their time with their parents and learn the skills, attitudes and behaviour from them. The home is very useful and crucial to a child's well being and development in later life. A child's capability to succeed in school depends on how successfully the child is managed by his or her parents in the home environment. However, not every child comes from a home that could provide them with the requisite educational resources necessary for their academic success. As a child move from infant to toddler

and then to a preschooler, he learns how to speak, listen, write and read which later develop him to improve academically. Parents make the greatest difference to achieve through supporting their learning in the home rather than supporting activities in the school (Harris & Goodall, 2007).

The influence of parents on children school achievement is well documented in numerous studies. At home, good parenting is considered to be of most benefit to children's educational attainment and combined with sound links between the home and the school, is considered to be most effective. Research suggests that parents do not need to invest a significant amount of time or attain specific knowledge to support their children's learning but rather improved educational outcomes can result from a genuine interest and active engagement from parents.

Harderves (1998) indicated that family whose children are doing well in school exhibit the following characters:

- Establish a daily family routine by providing time and a quiet place to study with the children and assigning responsibility for household chores.
- Monitor out-of-school activities, for example setting limits on television watching, reduce time of playing, monitor the groups of friends the pupils they walk with.
- Encourage children's development and progress in school; that is maintaining a warm and supportive home, showing interest in children's progress at school, helping him or her with homework, discussing the value of a good education and future career with children.

At home, parental involvement clearly and consistently has significant effects on their children's achievement and adjustment which far outweigh other forms of involvement. Parental involvement in a child's education along with environmental

and economic factors may affect child development in areas such as cognition, language, and social skills.

Kafas (2009) suggested that if a parent fails to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing plus offering protection for the child from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment then that particular parent has neglected his or her duty. Chrispell and River, 2001 also suggested that a parent should be able to meet educational, emotional, psychological, physical, material, social and spiritual needs of the child under his or her care.

Parents therefore play a vital role in the education of their children. The role that parents play in their children's education and their school related activities has long been thought to be a centrally important one. Parental involvement takes many forms including good parenting in the home, including the provision of a secure and stable environment, intellectual stimulation, parent-child discussion, good models of constructive social and educational values and high aspirations relating to personal fulfillment and good citizenship; contact with schools to share information; participation in school events; participation in the work of the school; and participation in school governance (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Parents provide an environment that is safe for their children. Example is to keep the child free from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Parents provide the child with basic needs like shelter, medical care as needed, clothing that is appropriate for the weather conditions and so on.

Parents need to set expectations for their child that is realistic and age-appropriate, they should involve themselves in the child's education and make sure the child is completing his or her homework each night and assist the child to do the homework. As a parent, you need to get to know your child and spend quality time

with him or her. Ask questions from the child time to time and communicate with him or her always as we know that communication bridges gap. Specifically parental involvement with reading activities at home has significant positive influences not only on reading achievement, language comprehension and expressive language skills (Gest, Freeman, Domitrovich, and Welsh, 2004), but also on pupils' interest in reading, attitudes towards reading and attentiveness in the classroom (Rowe, 1991).

Children have better self-esteem, self disciplined, show higher aspirations and are motivated through education. If parents pay more attention to their children, they can make more academic achievements than those who are ignored. Parents who provide their children with a supportive environment at home will always have a good impact on the mind of the children. Positive attitude of the parents can be beneficial to their children in many cases and can be reflected in improvement in class performance, creating interest among children to learn, and higher achievement scores in reading and writing. The growing awareness regarding education makes many families value their children's education and act favourably towards schooling and education of their children. Therefore, it is imperative to assess the degree of favourableness of the influence of parent's demographic variables on their children's education.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Today's children are fundamental to society because they are our future; they hold the key to change and in turn a successful future in their hands. Therefore, it is society's duty to provide them with a complete education that teaches them how to work together successfully, how to question what is in front of them, and how to be mechanism of change. This education starts with what children learn from their

parents and from what they learn in the first few years of their lives. Children's education has always been a concern for parents, educators and the society at large. Most studies indicate that, poor performance of children rely on parent's ethnic and cultural backgrounds (Berthelsen & Walker, 2008), scales and test and the background of the child such as age and socioeconomic status (Reynolds, Weissberg & Kaspro, 1992).

Despite all guidance programmes and counseling strategies mounted in schools to improve the children's education, poor performances are still recorded yearly in Ghana and it has become necessary to find out the cause of such poor performance. Researchers also argues that, the performance of the child also depends on the environment within which children find themselves, the type of school the child attends, the ability of parents monitoring their children and the availability and quality of communication channels between parents and their children. The present study aims to examine whether parents demographic variables have influence on their children's education as a result of increasing awareness of values of education through government endeavours and initiatives. In accordance with that, a parent level of education, parent's socioeconomic status and plays an important role in providing these educational resources which appears to impose the greatest impact on the child's educational outcomes.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore the influence of parent's demographic variables on their children's education at the Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly in the Ashanti region. The study examined the influence of; parent's education level, parent's socioeconomic status and the assistance parents give to their children in their homework and school related activities in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study was to investigate:

1. The assistance parents give to their children in their homework and other school related activities.
2. The role of parent's educational background on their children's education.
3. The influence of parent's socioeconomic status and their involvement on their children's education.

1.4 Research Questions

1. To what extent do parents assist their children in their homework and their school related activities?
2. How do parent's educational backgrounds influence their children's education?
3. Do socioeconomic backgrounds of parents influence their involvement in children's school related activities?

1.5 Assumptions

It is assumed that while parents and educators all believe they have the best interest of children at heart; there is frequent disagreement on what is best. There is also disagreement about which methods are best to use in order to assist children in achieving their best. It is hoped that parents and educators would be in agreement about these issues, but it is assumed, based on current literature and research.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The main aim of the project is to produce a comprehensive literature review of reliable research evidence on the influence of parent's demographic variables on their children's school activities. This study is of importance to different individuals who include:

1. Parents in order to make them aware of the importance of family background in shaping their children education.
2. It will provide empirical evidence for parents about the nature of their educational level and how it affects the academic performance of their children.
3. The study will also benefit other future researchers in the same field with the literature to support their arguments and hence improved knowledge. These will have enriched available information on family background specific parent's demographic influence on their children's performance.
4. It will offer a reference for future research that might investigate the same variables.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

This indicates where the study was undertaken. The study was limited to only five towns in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality of Ashanti Region. These towns were selected for the study because of proximity and access to information. To achieve the objectives of the study, the study was limited to parents' demographic variables on their childrens education, although there are other areas that could be considered.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The major limitations of the study on parent's demographic variables on their children's education are that the quality of the estimates might have affected the reliability of the data. As a result, this research emphasized that the findings of the survey should not be generalized or made applicable to all parents from the municipal. The researcher also understands that the influence of parent's demographic variables on their children's education may differ from time to time and may differ from district to district. Mostly the respondents did not readily give the exact information without any assistance and this had caused a problem in the research work. Moreover, the scarcity of time and resources prevented the wider coverage of locality and sample, and the results, therefore, are not highly generalisable.

1.9 Definition of Terms

To more clearly understand this study, the following terms will be defined;

Parent: This term is not limited strictly to birth parents. It refers to any adult in a child's life who has accepted the responsibility of parent or caretaker.

Parent's background: This refers to circumstances and past events that help to explain how a child develops

Educational level: The rank of a person's formal education attainment.

Socioeconomic Status: A composite measure available in the data set, consisting of father's education, mother's education, father's occupational status, mother's educational status, and family income.

Homework: This has been defined simply as "tasks assigned to students by school teachers that are meant to be carried out during non-school hours" (Cooper, 1989).

School related activities: It refers to educational activities that fall outside the realm of the normal curriculum of school performed by students.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter review relevant literature with regards to the objectives of the study. These include a general overview of basic education in Ghana, the role of parents in their children's education; the assistance parent's give to their children in their homework and other school related activities, parent's educational level and the socioeconomic status of parents. The chapter also contains a theoretical review of the study.

2.1 Basic Education in Ghana

Education plays an important role in building of a nation and is instrumental in bringing about a change in the society as a whole. For quality improvement in education of mass, every citizen has to be covered, without any disparity between the haves and the have-nots, the rural and the urban, the linguistic & geographical regions and more importantly between the genders. It is universally accepted that one of the benefits of good education is that it enables individuals to contribute to development and improvement in the quality of life for themselves, their communities and the nation as a whole. It is on account of the belief in the benefits of good education that successive governments of the world have sought to use education as the vehicle for accelerating the implementation of their development policies and programmes.

However, it was realized, even before the attainment of political independence in Ghana, that the type and quality of education system inherited from the colonial era did not address the country's needs and critical problems of development and equity. Various education review committees emphasized this fact and proposed remedies.

Significant among them was the Dzobo Report of 1973 which set the pace for new thinking about Ghana's education system.

In 1987, a new structure and content of education for Ghana became operational with initial focus on the implementation of the Junior Secondary School (JSS) programme. The policy decision on the new structure was based on an earlier Government White Paper entitled *The New Structure and Content of Education* (MOE, 1974). Under the new structure, the 6-3-3-4 system was adopted. The country now has 6 years of primary-school education, 3 years of junior secondary-school education, 3 years of senior secondary-school education and a minimum of 4 years of tertiary education. The six years of primary-school and three years of junior secondary-school education constitute the basic education level which is supposed to be compulsory and free for every Ghanaian child of school-going age.

The reform was therefore launched. It was based on the principle that literacy is a basic right of every Ghanaian and that every Ghanaian needs a sense of cultural identity and dignity, needs to know his/her environment and how to protect it, and needs to participate in the development efforts of the nation using the most modern scientific and technological skills and tools.

The government's response to public criticism of the reform programme was to set up the Education Reform Review Committee of 1993/94. The work of the Committee culminated in the National Education Forum of 1994 with a focus on basic education to the year 2000. The forum, attended by 150 representatives of various stakeholder groups, received critical comments from participants and also provided an opportunity for discussion of problems of the sector which were identified by the Committee. Problems identified included the following:

- Poor quality of teaching and learning in schools as a result of ineffective teaching/learning and ineffective management practices.
- Lack of adequate parental involvement in their children's education.
- Poor language policy that makes English the medium of instruction after primary-school class 3.
- Lack of teacher motivation with the resultant lack of commitment and devotion to teaching.
- Disappointing growth in enrolment in schools.
- Persistent low regard for and poor attitude of the Ghanaian public towards technical and vocational education.

The outcome of the public discussion of these problems as well as the 1992 Constitutional Provision led to the formulation of a new basic education policy which is being implemented as Free Compulsory Universal Education (FCUBE). The 1992 Constitution provides that within two years after Parliament first met, the Government should draw up a programme for the provision and implementation of free, compulsory and universal basic education.

The FCUBE programme has a focus on primary education and seeks to improve upon the 1987 reform by addressing the shortcomings identified in the implementation process to ensure quality. The programme also aims at increasing the participation of primary school-going-age children so as to make it as close to one hundred per cent of the population as possible. Additionally, FCUBE seeks to address a particular policy focus of raising the enrolment of girls in basic education.

2.2 The Role of Parents in their Children's Education

Parents play an irreplaceable role in the lives of their children. The primary responsibility of parents is supervision which includes the activities parents undertake to ensure that their children's basic physical needs are met. For example, parents providing their children with basic needs like shelter, food, medical care as needed, clothing that is appropriate for the weather conditions and so on. The right of parents to maintain a strong involvement in their children's life has historically been one of unquestioned value, celebrated in cultures around the world. It is the responsibility of parents to direct the upbringing and education of their children. One of the most important factors in children's school success is how actively involved their parents are in their education.

Overwhelming evidence from decades of research shows that, the actions parents take with their children from reading to them, attending school meetings to help them with their homework can enhance their motivation to learn, raise their educational expectations and improve their performance as well. Many children use a combination of modalities to study and learn. Some learn visually through making and seeing pictures, others through tactile experiences, like building block towers and working with clay. Still others are auditory learners who pay most attention to what they hear. It is therefore the responsibility of parents to pay attention to how their children learn.

A parent role in children evolves as children grow, one thing remain constant. Parents are children's learning models and their attitude about education can inspire children and show them how to take charge of their own educational journey. Parents being their children's first teachers, there are many things that parents can do within their home to make it a good place for learning. For example, reading together with

the children and allowing them to explore nature. When a young child begins formal school, the parent's job is to show the child how school can extend the learning one can begin at home and how exciting and meaningful this learning can be. As preschoolers grow into school age kids, parents become their children's learning coaches. Through guidance and reminders, parents help their children organise their time and support their desires to learn new things in and out of school.

2.3 Assistance Parents give to their Children in their Homework and other School Related Activities

Homework can be defined as academic work assigned outside of the normal class period to extend the practice of academic skills to other environments (Cooper, 2001; Cosden, Morrison, Albanese, & Macias, 2001). Homework can assist children with developing good study habits and help them recognize that learning can occur beyond school. Researchers argue that parents should be somewhat, but not overly, involved in their children's homework. For example, parents should monitor homework; offer guidance, not answers, when asked for help; provide a quiet, well-lit place for their children to study; ensure that the required materials (books, paper, and pencils) are available; and help with time and workload management (Bempechat, 2004; Cooper & Gersten, 2002; Cromwell, 1998).

Homework can also give parents an opportunity to see what's going on in school, serving as a vital link between schools and families. Review of research on parental involvement in homework confirms its relationships to positive student attitude about homework and school learning, students' self-perceptions, and effective student work habits and self-regulation (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001).

Van Voorhis (2001) found that homework requiring parents to work with their child on hands on assignment will increase student success in science as well as other subjects. Most parents become involved in their child's education through homework (Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, Whetsel, Green, 2004). Xu and Corno's (1998) research reveals that homework, when mediated by parents, provides clear opportunities for children to develop important work habits and management strategies. When parents guide their children's homework with helpful and appropriate support, children perform better in the classroom (Walker et al, 2010).

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) indicated that, parents agree that they have an important role to play in home-based activities when it comes to children's learning. These home-based activities include, among others, monitoring their child's school work and progress, discussing school related issues with their child, and assisting with homework. Home-based involvement activities, such as reading to a child at home, providing a place for educational activities, and asking a child about school, evidenced the strongest relationships to later preschool classroom competencies.

Balli, Demo, & Wedman (1998) report that when teachers prompt parents to become involved with math homework, parent involvement significantly increases. Importantly, this study shows that two-parent families are more likely to help with homework than single-parent families. Home circumstances and family structures are therefore necessary considerations for schools aiming to increase the level of parental involvement with homework.

Furthermore, research also has shown that of all the different types of parental involvement, parents report that helping their children with homework is particularly effective for enhancing their academic achievement.

2.3.1 Parental Involvement and Reading

Research findings have demonstrated that there is an overwhelming connection between literary resources in the homes and children's reading skills (Sheldon, 2009; Sanders and Sheldon, 2009; Glasgow and Whitney, 2009). Children who come from reading oriented homes, where books are readily available to them and their parents are avid readers, have a tendency to score higher on reading achievement tests than children from less reading oriented homes. It also affects their literacy skills to have their parents read to them. Thus, parents can have positive effects on their children's reading skills and boost their reading comprehension by reading to them and making sure there are always books available. Most of the research on the effects of parental involvement on students' literacy skills and reading has been done with families of preschool children and children in the first grades of primary school (Sheldon, 2009; Sanders and Sheldon, 2009).

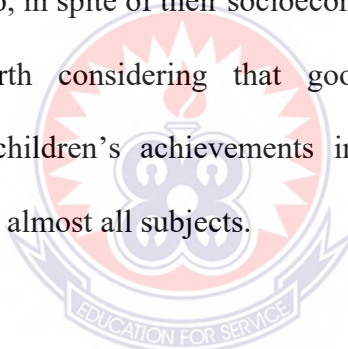
However, studies have been conducted with families of older students and it is evident that, although teachers and schools have significant influences on children's learning to read in the first grades, parents still remain very influential (Sheldon, 2009). Furthermore, studies have reported that parental involvement does not cease to affect reading achievements of students in the early years of schooling. Instead, it appears to continue to positively affect the reading achievement and academic development of students well into primary school, secondary school and even high school (Sanders and Sheldon, 2009).

Research among secondary school students shows that those students whose parents have high educational expectations for their children, discuss with their children their school and future plans and monitor their homework, have a tendency to

earn a higher grade in English and to score higher in reading achievement tests (Sanders and Sheldon, 2009).

According to Sheldon (2009), findings such as these, confirm that parents' support and interest for reading continues to be an important factor in young people's academic development through high school. These findings emphasized the importance for both parents and schools to establish and maintain a good strong relationship throughout our children's school years.

Especially in secondary schools where parents often lack confidence in their ability to assist their children with their school work. To read for their children in the early years and to continue to be involved with their schoolwork are all things that each of the parents can do, in spite of their socioeconomic status or level of education. Furthermore, it is worth considering that good reading skills and reading comprehension affects children's achievements in other subjects as well, since reading is fundamental in almost all subjects.



2.3.2 Homework

According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997), parents agree that they have an important role to play in home-based activities when it comes to children's learning. These home-based activities include, among others, monitoring their child's school work and progress, discussing school related issues with their child and assisting with homework.

Furthermore, research has shown that of all the different types of parental involvement, parents report that helping their children with homework is particularly effective for enhancing their academic achievement.

Children generally feel that when parents help, they do better at school. In a study by Balli (in Patall, Cooper and Robinson, 2008), 95% of students reported that they did better in school at least some of the time when they received help with homework from their parents. Williams et al. (in Desforges and Abouchar, 2003) carried out research in 2002, among English students between the ages of five and sixteen. Their findings show that 71% of parents of children in their first year in school considered themselves to be involved in their children's homework. This participation declined steadily with each grade, and by grade eleven, only 1% of parents considered themselves to be involved with their child's homework. Studies have shown marked improvement in students' academic achievement when their parents are involved with their homework (Keith and Keith, 1993).

For instance, a study of third and fifth grade students was conducted in an urban school district in the United States in 2001 (Sanders and Sheldon, 2009). After controlling for prior reading achievement, that study suggests that students who have teachers that more frequently involve families with learning activities at home gained higher in reading achievements from one year to the next, compared to students with teachers who less frequently involved the families.

Similarly, findings from a study that Sirvani (2007) carried out showed that students with involved parents reached higher mathematical achievement than other students. In this study parents were divided into two groups, a control group and an experimental group. Parents in the experimental group were asked to monitor their children's homework and twice a week they received statements on their child's homework and test grades. Parents in the control group did not receive statements on their children's progress, nor were they asked to specifically monitor their children's homework. This light parental involvement in the experimental group was enough to

increase their child's achievement in mathematics, compared to their own achievements the year before and compared to the achievement of the control group.

Finally, the findings of Van Voorhis' study (2001) show that families in the experimental group, who received weekly interactive homework in science, were considerably more involved with their children's science learning than the control group, which did not receive such homework. In addition, the students from the experimental group returned more homework assignments and earned higher grades in science compared to students from the control group.

Many studies have documented the importance of parental involvement in children's homework. Central to this success, however, is the school's development of training programs for parents which aim to provide parents with strategies for assisting and supporting their children at home. There is some indication in the research that diverse educational backgrounds influence the nature and frequency of parents helping their children with homework assignments.

Homework can have many benefits for young children. It can improve remembering and understanding of schoolwork. Homework can help students develop study skills that will be of value even after they leave school. It can teach them that learning takes place anywhere, not just in the classroom. It can foster positive character traits such as independence and responsibility. Homework can teach children how to manage time. Time spent on supervising and assisting children with homework is a crucial indicator of parental involvement as it provides a direct measure of the extent of parent's participation.

2.3.3 Parent–School Communication

In spite of much research on what affects parental involvement has on academic achievement, Epstein and Sanders (2006) claim that many teachers and administrators still see themselves as individual leaders of their classrooms and schools. Thus, little attention is paid to partnerships and collaborations with parents. In order to enhance educational achievement of children, educators need to scrutinize possibilities to develop and form partnerships with parents (Richardson, 2009). Such a partnership is, especially, essential in secondary schools, where parents often lack the confidence in their ability to assist their children with the curriculum (Sheldon, 2009). It depends largely on the school whether parents decide to participate in their child's education or not (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1997; Christenson and Sheridan, 2001). Whether parents perceive themselves to be invited to become active participants in the educational process has a major influence on their decisions.

Sanders and Sheldon (2009) agree with the notion that the school is the major influencing factor of parental participation. However, they mention that students and parents are also part of the factors influencing the quality of such a partnership. Factors such as parental role construction, time, energy and skills rest with families, while other factors, such as age, academic needs and temperament rest with students. Still other factors rest with schools, such as experience, professional knowledge and resources. In spite of their acknowledgement of multiplicity of factors affecting school, family and community partnership, they claim that studies have shown that when schools develop culture that supports partnership activities and programs, other factors can be minimized.

Research has suggested that the extent of parental participation depends, among other things, on how frequently the school approaches parents (Glasgow and Whitney, 2009). The more frequently the school reaches out, the more involved parents become.

An American study from 2001 carried out by Westat and Policy Studies Associates (in Henderson and Mapp, 2002) looked at the effect of family involvement on student achievement, by examining student achievement in 71 elementary schools. One of the factors they studied was outreach to parents. This they measured by how much teachers communicated with parents of low-achieving students through meeting with them face to face, sending materials home with the students to better equip parents to help their children at home, and telephoning routinely.

The study findings suggest that there was a positive relationship between teacher outreach to parents of low-achieving students and improved student achievement in both reading and math. Test scores grew at a rate of 40% higher in schools where teachers reported high levels of outreach to parents, compared to schools where teachers reported low levels of outreach. School leadership is instrumental in establishing and developing a partnership between homes and the school, for instance, by creating opportunities for joint activities for all concerned and thus led the efforts of the grassroots towards a partnership (Price-Mitchell, 2009).

Schussler (in Graham-Clay, 2005) claims that establishing and fostering a teacher-parent relationship has been recognized as essential to the development of schools as learning communities. School climate is closely connected with how involved parents are with their child's education (Glasgow and Whitney, 2009; Christenson and Sheridan, 2001). The more welcome parents feel at school and the easier the school makes it for them to be involved, the more likely the parents are to

be actively involved with their children's education. Thus, it is vital that the school should be instrumental in establishing a connection with families and in forming such a partnership.

Studies suggest that whether connections are formed, and sustained among schools, families and communities, is influenced by the quality of the relationship (Henderson and Mapp, 2002). One way to increase parental involvement is for the school to recruit volunteers (Sanders and Sheldon, 2009; Epstein, 2009). By volunteering, parents and the community can observe children in a school environment and that way learn how they can better assist them to achieve in school. Also, by volunteering, they express their value of education.

There are a number of benefits that are gained by volunteerism, such as increasing family participation, increasing families' awareness of school rules and processes, and creating opportunities for impromptu informal interactions between homes and schools. Among many of the different volunteer activities parents can participate in are language translations, monitoring attendance of students and phoning parents of absent students, conducting parent patrols, supporting extracurricular clubs, and enriching students' subject classes (Epstein, 2009).

In addition, schools can organize volunteers to become homeroom parents, neighbourhood representatives and contacts for other parents at school. Epstein (2009) also claims that in order to get parents involved, it is very important to include parents in developing, reviewing and improving school policies that affect students at the school. This will allow families to have some input in decisions that affect their children's education.

Finally, it is quite valuable in order to strengthen school programs, family practices and student learning, to include the cooperation of community businesses, cultural and religious organizations, senior citizen groups and colleges and universities. Some community activities are after school recreation, tutorial programs, health services, cultural events, summer programs and part-time jobs. Epstein claims that if this is well implemented, students, families and schools will increase their knowledge of community resources, and that will help students reach important goals for learning.

According to Epstein (1995) studies have shown that most teachers would like to have the families of their students involved. The problem is that few of them know how to go about getting the parents to participate and be involved. Baker et al. (in Ferrara and Ferrara, 2005), and Lawrence-Lightfoot (1999) say that teachers themselves freely admit their lack of training in working with parents, especially in the skills they need in order to have effective communication with parents. Since the practices of communication are so fundamental for schools in order to involve parents in their child's education.

According to Obeidat and Al-Hassan (2009) it is essential for teachers to contact the homes to notify parents of a job well done or their child's progress, not only when they are lacking in their performances, or when their behaviour is causing problems. This, in turn, will promote positive relationships with parents.

Although certain types of parent involvement such as discussions about homework and school-related topics have positive effects on homework completion, there is research that contradicts this finding. Cooper, Lindsay, and Nye (2000) suggest that parenting style plays a part in the effectiveness of parents' involvement in their children's homework. In their survey of over 700 parents of elementary, middle,

and high school students, two-thirds of parents reported helping their children with homework was negative or inappropriate. Specifically, in some cases parents helped their children with homework in order to have them finish it faster, and in other cases parents made homework completion more difficult for the student. These findings speak to the importance of school-home discussions that will encourage interactions that support student learning.

Greene, Tichener, and Mercedes (2003) offer specific strategies for parents to participate in schools. Suggestions include individual activities with children, setting up homework space and routine, discussing needed resources for home supervision with teachers, or reflecting on one's own assumptions about school. Volunteering in the school and the community are other positive ways that parents can become involved, and on their own terms.

In fact, in light of the host of ways that homework assignments can be construed and carried out, complex patterns of effects ought to be expected. The type of parental involvement that makes the most impact in terms of educational attainment is between parents and their children in the home and school related activities which are still considered important. There are other reasons for parents to be closely involved with the school that have more to do with the needs of schools and parents than of the direct benefit for children.

Also, achievement in learning is more likely to be fostered when both parents and schools work together to facilitate a supportive learning environment in both the home and the school. Although many researchers suggest that parental involvement in the school is most likely to benefit younger children, parents' involvement in the school community can still help adolescents as they transition through their school lives. While adolescents may not embrace the appearance of their parents in the

classroom, less visible activities such as involvement with school governance, continued support at home and, importantly, valuing the benefits of education have been seen to help teens from disengaging from the education system. The key to good in-school parental involvement is for schools to view parents as co-designers and partners in education.

2.4 Parents Level of Education

The educational background on the other hand basically means the type of education acquired by an individual. It can be western or religious depending on the environment and geographical location. Educational background may be the number of schools attended and the type of certificates obtained right from primary to tertiary level. Parents are one of the most important and influential elements on the lives of their children. They have the power, ability to shape, sustain and develop their children's who will be interested, creative and tolerant, through their positive involvement in the learning process and educational activities.

On the other hand parents who do not involve in their children's educational process are also considered to be capable of repressing and destroying the motivation and ability of their children through neglect and indifference to their achievements. A number of studies on parental involvement suggest that parent's education level is an important indicator in fostering parental involvement in their child's education.

Level of education of parents is the degree to which parents have acquired some knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of informal and formal education. The higher the standard of the parents' education level, the higher would be the academic aspirations for their child (Lockheed, et al., 1989). Thus, parents are highly involved in their children's education. Parents make the greatest difference to achievement

through supporting their learning in the home rather than supporting activities in the school (Harris and Goodall, 2007).

Research on parenting also has shown that parent education is related to a warm, social climate in the home. Gottfried et al. (2004) found that both mothers' education and family income were important predictors of the physical environment and learning experiences in the home but that mothers' education alone was predictive of parental warmth.

Likewise, Smith et al. (2007) found that the association of family income and parents' education with children's academic achievement was mediated by the home environment. The mediation effect was stronger for maternal education than for family income. Thus, these authors posited that education might be linked to specific achievement behaviours in the home.

According to Danielle C. Sclafani (2008) he illustrated that parents who have gone beyond a high school education are found to be more involved with their infants and children than those who did not finish high school many less educated parents simply have more unmanaged stress in their lives, and this stress interferes with ability and opportunity to interact with their child. Parents with higher education are more likely to be involved in their children's education. Research shows that pupils from families where parents have less education tend to systematically perform worse in schools than pupils whose parents have more education.

Parker et al., (1997) argued that, parents who evidenced high levels of school contact (volunteering in the classroom, participating in educational workshops, attending Policy Council meetings) had children who demonstrated greater social competency than children of parents with lower levels of school contact. This makes educated parents become more concern and more effective in helping their children in

academic work. In doing so, they are able to supervise and monitor their children's academic progress. And this can contribute to the academic progress of children. But parents with low educational attainment mostly do not care to supervise their children's performance due to lack of sufficient knowledge to face the challenge and this will discourage the children and may lead to their dropping out of school (Ramachandran et al 2003; Palmer 2005; Verpoor 2005).

In families where parents happen to experience difficulties in reading and writing continuously, there is a danger that low literacy is passed on to the next generation (Cooter, 2006). Consistent with the idea discussed, Balli, et al., (1998) in their study on students found that parents with a low level of education encounter difficulties in helping their child with homework. The parents need help from the schools to assist their children.

Baker and Stevenson (1986) on their interview with 41 mothers of eighth-graders from middle school found that well-educated mothers have more knowledge of their child's schooling than the less educated mothers and that these educated mothers are more aware of their child's education and his/her achievement. In addition, they take greater effort to use homework strategies and monitor their child's progress in education. Murray and Fairchild (2009) also found that maternal education had the most consistent direct influence on children's cognitive and behavioral outcomes with some indirect influence through a cognitively stimulating home environment. However, they examined only two, quite broad aspects of family mediators: learning stimulation and parental responsiveness.

In addition, Poston and Falbo's study (1990) also found that parents who are highly educated often communicate and interact with their children. Grissmer, (2003) submits that parent's level of education is the most important factor affecting

student's academic achievement. Parents become part of decision making process of school, and decide their children's future regarding higher education. In most studies, parental education has been identified as the single strongest correlate of children's success in school, the number of years they attend school, and their success later in life. Because parental education influences children's learning both directly and through the choice of a school.

Better educated parents are more likely to consider the quality of the local schools when selecting a neighborhood in which to live. Once their children enter a school, educated parents are also more likely to pay attention to the quality of their children's teachers and may attempt to ensure that their children are adequately served. By participating in parent-teacher conferences and volunteering at school, they may encourage staff to attend to their children's individual needs. In addition, highly educated parents are more likely than their less-educated counterparts to read to their children.

Educated parents enhance their children's development and human capital by drawing on their own advanced language skills in communicating with their children. They are more likely to pose questions instead of directives and employ a broader and more complex vocabulary. Estimates suggest that, by age three, children whose parents receive public assistance hear less than a third of the words encountered by their higher income peers. As a result, the children of highly educated parents are capable of more complex speech and have more extensive vocabularies before they even start school. Highly educated parents can also use their social capital to promote their children's development. A cohesive social network of well educated individuals socializes children to expect that they too will attain high levels of academic success. It can also transmit cultural capital by teaching children the specific behaviours,

patterns of speech, and cultural references that are valued by the educational and professional elite.

2.5 The Socioeconomic Background of Parents

Socioeconomic status has a relatively strong impact on parental involvement in their children's education compared to other factors. However, there is a question as to how far the strength of the parent's socioeconomic status could inspire a child to achieve academic success. Therefore, socioeconomic status is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position relative to others, based on income and education, and occupation (Marmot, Michael, 2004) indicates. When analyzing a family's social economic status, the household income, earners' education and occupation are examined, as well as combined income, versus with an individual, when their own attributes are assessed.

Lareau, (2003) observes that socioeconomic status is typically broken into three categories, high, middle, and low to describe the three areas a family or an individual may fall into when placing a family or individual into one of these categories any or all of the three variables income, education, and occupation can be assessed. Additionally, low income and little education have shown to be strong predictors of a range of physical and mental health problems due to environmental conditions may be the entire cause of that person's social predicament to begin with. These findings of the influence of socioeconomic status on parent involvement support the work of other social scientists, who contend that parent involvement in school activities is lower among low-income and minority families than other families due to feelings of alienation (Calabrese, 1990; Winters, 1993), distrust (Lightfoot,

1978), or a devaluation of their cultural resources (Lareau, 1989). Regardless of income, ethnicity or background, students with involved parents are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, have better attitudes, behaviour and attendance, and graduate and go onto additional education.

Higher parental involvement is associated with higher educational expectations, enrollment in gifted and talented programs, and positive perceptions of school (Henderson, 1988). Thus, it appears that socio-economic status correlates with academic achievement positively. Furthermore, scholars have demonstrated with their research that children who come from a low socio-economic background in their early school years experience more problems as they grow older. These children tend to drop out of school early and are less likely to seek college education (Caro, McDonald and Williams, 2009).

As Lamb-Parker et al (2001) points out that, parents who have a lower sense of efficacy may feel that their involvement would not have an impact on their children's success at school, thus resulting in minimal involvement. However, other studies have demonstrated that low- socioeconomic status parents are just as eager to help their children succeed in school as their higher-socioeconomic status counterparts (Lareau, 2000; Compton-Lilly, 2003).

In addition, low-income parents experience greater financial stress and health-related problems than other parents, and both of these may impede their ability to develop consistent routines. Children perform better in school when their learning is not compromised by hunger, distracting physical ailments, lack of adequate sleep, unattended visual limitations, or other health related problems. The income of the parents plays a strong determinant of children's education. Regarding father's labour market position, we expect fathers who are in salaried employment to be more aware

of the importance of education and hence to invest more in their children's education (Breen & Goldthorpe, 1997).

Again, Rouse and Barro (2006) in their study revealed that parental socioeconomic status had a causal effect on children's educational outcomes, but however, they stated that the current studies could not identify precisely how parents' education and income changes affected educational achievement of the students.

Becker (2001) revealed that family income also affected children's educational aspirations, their status among their peers, their neighbourhood quality, the stability of their lives, and insecurity within their family, any or all of which may influence child outcomes. Furthermore, the inability to exploit the work or home specialization afforded by two-parent families means that child care expenses are often greater for single mothers than they would be with a husband. Another benefit of specialization is that married parents may self-invest strategically in forms of human capital that, over time, magnify the gains from a work/home division of labor (Becker, 2001). Husbands and wives can exploit the comparative advantage each has in household and market production so that investment in children is greater than it would otherwise be in the absence of specialization.

As with parental socioeconomic status, family income may have a direct impact on a child's academic outcomes, or variations in achievement could simply be a function of the school the child attends. Income is by no means the only way to support consumption in old age, as financial assets can be run down and real assets can also be used to generate liquidity. Also, social and family support may be used to meet important requirements near the end of the life-cycle, such as nursing and long-term care. However, social scientists and economists have always shown a keen interest in income, for instance in their studies of economic inequality and poverty,

and in most health surveys containing questions on economic and social well-being, the only measure of access to economic resources is income. Indeed, income is an important (arguably, the most important) component of any measure of access to economic resources, thus deserving careful investigation on its own.

Parents with greater financial resources can identify communities with higher quality schools and choose more expensive neighbourhoods and the very places where good schools are likely to be. More affluent parents can also use their resources to ensure that their children have access to a full range of extracurricular activities at school and in the community but are not hard to imagine direct effects of income on children's achievement. Parents who are struggling economically simply don't have the time or the wherewithal to check homework, drive children to summer camp, organize museum trips, or help their kids plan for college. Working multiple jobs or inconvenient shifts makes it hard to dedicate time for family dinners, enforce a consistent bedtime, read to infants and toddlers, or invest in music lessons or sports clubs. Even small differences in access to the activities and experiences that are known to promote brain development can accumulate, resulting in a sizable gap between two groups of children defined by family circumstances.

2.6 Theoretical Perspectives

A theoretical framework is collection of interrelated concepts, like a theory but not necessarily so well worked out. A theoretical frame work guides your research, determining what things you will measure, and what statistical relationships you will look for.

Epstein's Framework is a framework containing six important factors with regards to parental involvement has been developed by Epstein and her co-workers at the Center on Family, School, and Community Partnership at John Hopkins University. This framework is based on findings from many studies of what factors are most effective when it comes to children's education (Epstein, 2009). Those six factors are parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaborating with the community. Parenting pertains to helping all families understand the development of both the child and the adolescent. It also helps establishing a supportive home environment for children as students. Communicating refers to how best to design and conduct an effective two-way communication that is school-to-home and home-to-school, about school programs and their children's progress. Volunteering applies to recruiting and organizing help and support from parents for school programs and students' activities.

Learning at home pertains to providing ideas and information to parents about how they can best assist their children with homework and curricular related decisions and activities. Decision-making refers to including parents in school decisions and to developing parent leaders and representatives.

Collaborating with the community pertains to identifying and integrating communities' services and resources to support and strengthen schools, students, and their families.

The effectiveness of these types of parental involvement has been substantiated by recent research. Parents are truly the first teacher of their children. Parents have been thought of as partners in the educational process of their children. Examples of this role are parents help children with homework, supporting in school activities, and working in partnership with teachers to enhance the learning

experiences. When parents are decision makers, they are actually involved in the running of school through site-based decision making committees.

A strong element of effective parental involvement is communication between parents and teachers. For this part, parents seem to prefer informal relationship with their children's teachers. That is why Epstein (2009) considers it to be important for each school to choose what factors are believed to be most likely to assist the school in reaching its goals for academic success and to develop a climate of alliance between homes and the school.

Even though the main focus of these six factors is to promote academic achievements, they also contribute to various results for both parents and teachers (Epstein, 2009). For instance, it may be presumed that parents will gain more self-confidence in their role as parents, they will show leadership with decision-making, they will have more effective and productive communication with their children with regards to school work and will have more communication with other parents at the school. Similarly, Epstein's (1992) model of overlapping spheres of influence emphasizes the combined influence of the family and educational institutions on the lives of children. Although the two systems sometimes operate as separate spheres of influence, each with its own beliefs and practices, at other times the separate spheres can be linked together to create an area of overlap.

This model recognizes that educational systems and families conduct many activities separately, but they conduct some activities jointly. Homework can be an example of a joint activity in that teachers develop and grade homework assignments, children are expected to complete them and parents or other family members may need to monitor, discuss, or help with the assignments.

The model also directs attention to reciprocal influences among teachers, children, and parents. Although research and theory have focused almost exclusively on the powerful influence of parents and teachers in children's development and wellbeing, children are active agents in their own education and in the lives of their parents and teachers. For example, teachers may solicit parent's involvement indirectly through prompting children, or they may directly prompt parents to become more involved. Children, in turn, can request parent involvement with (or without) the influence of teacher prompting. Parents may become involved with homework on their own or because their child's teacher has influenced them to become involved. Children's academic performance is also important, as parents of high-achieving students may feel less need to monitor and assist in homework than parents of average or below-average students. Of course, with or without prompts, competing influences (e.g., time constraints) may interfere with parent's involvement with homework.

Another theoretical perspective that is helpful in conceptualizing the influence and interface of the institution of Bronfenbrenner's (1979; 1989) ecological model of nested connections. Bronfenbrenner emphasized that human development must be studied in actual life settings, with each context consisting of a micro system, mesosystem, ecosystem, and macro system. The most immediate systems influencing the individual are the micro system, consisting of patterned face-to-face interactions (e.g., parent- child), and the mesosystem, defined as the linkages among microsystems (e.g., family and school).

Bronfenbrenner (1979) asserted that the manner in which the environment is experienced and perceived, or its phenomenological meaning, is critical, and that environmental influences (activities, roles, and relationships) acquire greater meaning to the degree that they are experienced and perceived similarly across multiple

contexts. Thus, the most important feature of his model for the current study is that it emphasizes the interrelationships among subsystems, such as the communication between teachers and parents.

Similarly, Epstein's (1992) model of overlapping spheres of influence emphasizes the combined influence of the family and educational institutions on the lives of children. Although the two systems sometimes operate as separate spheres of influence, each with its own beliefs and practices, at other times the separate spheres can be linked together to create an area of overlap. This model recognizes that educational systems and families conduct many activities separately, but they conduct some activities jointly. Homework can be an example of a joint activity in that teachers develop and grade homework assignments, students are expected to complete them, and parents or other family members may need to monitor, discuss, or help with the assignments.

The model also directs attention to reciprocal influences among teachers, children, and families. Although research and theory have focused almost exclusively on the powerful influence of parents and teachers in children's development and wellbeing, children are active agents in their own education and in the lives of their parents and teachers. For example, teachers may solicit family involvement indirectly through prompting children, or they may directly prompt family members to become more involved.

Children, in turn, can request family involvement with (or without) the influence of teacher prompting. Families may become involved with homework on their own or because their child or their child's teacher has influenced them to become involved. Children's academic performance is also important, as parents of high-achieving students may feel less need to monitor and assist in homework than parents

of average or below-average students. Of course, with or without prompts, competing influences (e.g., time constraints) may interfere with family involvement with homework.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is made up of four sections. The first section describes the research design, whereas the second part describes the population sampling and selection procedures. The third section also describes the data collection instruments and its administration. The fourth section describes the data collection procedures, method of data analysis and reliability of research used in the study and summary of the section.

3.1 Research Design

Research design refers to the logical structure of an enquiry (Cohen et al., 2011) rather than a logistical one. This study adopted a descriptive survey design to answer the research questions. The researcher selected a descriptive research design since it attempts to describe the characteristics of the variables of this study. According to Robson, (2002) asserts that descriptive research design studies have advantages in that they may be adopted to collect information that can be generalized from all population and that they provide relatively simple and straight forward approach to the study of values, attitudes, beliefs and motives.

The descriptive or survey design is mostly used by many researchers because of its tendencies to identify present condition and to point to current needs. It is used as needs assessment tool to provide information on which to base sound decision. The descriptive survey can also explore the existing variables at a given point in time. It is a best method of collecting data for describing a population which is too large.

Finally, it permits the researcher to summarize the characteristics of different groups toward some issues.

The current study utilized a quantitative method aimed at understanding and interpreting the outcomes of the influence of parent's demographic variables on their children's education at the Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly in the Ashanti region.

3.2 Population

Population refers to the full set of cases from which a sample is taken (Saunders et al, 2007). The 2010 Ghana population census put the population of the Ejisu-Juaben municipality at 143,762 comprising 68,648 males and 75,114 females. With an average 1984-2000 inter-censal growth rate of 2.5%, the Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly will by 2013 have an estimated population of 189,744. The population of the study was focused on parents in the district. The target population (N=4,431) comprised all parents in the seven selected towns in the district. This population is made up of 2,030 males representing (45.8%) and 2,401 females also representing (54.2%).

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Sampling means that a data is collected from smaller group rather than from a large population (Creswell J.W., 2014). Creswell J.W., (2014) noted different sampling techniques which can be divided into two main groups known as probability or representative and non-probability or judgmental sampling. The present study was confined to the influence of parental demographic variables on their children's education.

Purposive sampling is using knowledge of the study and the population to choose participants (Cohen et al., 2011). It is not a random sampling that looks at the whole population. Purposive sampling is also called judgmental sampling and selective sampling. The sampling design is based on purposive convenient method. The sample for the study consisted of residents at Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly. A purposive sampling size was used to select seven (7) towns out of twenty-six (26) towns in the Municipal Assembly. The total sample consisted of 110 parents from the 7 selected towns. The researcher administered a questionnaire to collect demographic information from the target parents. In all, a total of 110 copies of questionnaires were administered to parents in the seven selected towns, out of which 100 of the questionnaires were properly filled. The total number of the male respondents was 40 and that of female were 60. The respondents were parents who had one or more than one school going children. They belonged to the age range of 25-65 years.

3.4 Instrument

Questionnaires were used as the main source through which data was gathered from the selected parents. In this study, the questionnaire consisted of 2 Sections. These include; Section (A) participant demographic variables such as this; parent level of education and their socioeconomic status. The section (B) also includes items that determine parent's variables that measure what parents generated from the literature. The total item were ten (10), example to what extent do you monitor your child's homework. Refer to appendix two (2) for details of instruments.

The first part of the questionnaire contained close-ended questions which were related to the parent's educational background and socioeconomic activities such as gender, age, education status, profession and income. The second part of the

questionnaire was related to the questions on the assistance parents give to their children in their homework and their school related activities. There were ten questions in this section which was generated from the literature.

These were put on five points Likert scale ranging from strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagreed, none. Example, 5 'Always', 4 'Most often', 3 'Often', 2 'Hardly' and 1 'Not at all' for each item regarding the parents' participation in their children's education. Refer to appendix two (2) for details of instrument.

The item included parents monitoring, teaching, guiding, assisting, directing, mark, sign their children's homework. Attending of P.T.A meetings and Open Day events in their children's school and parents calling to find out about their children's progress were also part of the items. These 15 statements in the questionnaire were finalized after a thorough review of literature and all the statements reflected the influence of parent's demographic variables on their children's education. These questions were asked to help the research better understand the support parents give to their children in their education.

3.6 Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability gives us the accuracy of what we measure Chan and Doran (2009), i.e. how good our methods are measuring what we intend to. Bryman and Cramer (2006) noted that the reliability of a measure refers to its consistency. Reliability of a research study therefore, is about another researcher reaching the same findings, when the same tools and methods that were used by the earlier investigator are employed. In order to ensure a high reliability, there were thoroughly description of the procedure for this study, thus all the data and information gathered were described throughout this report. Again, the used of well research instrument may have increased the reliability.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

A pilot study of ten questionnaires was conducted. However, the researcher modified the structure of the questions according to the objective of the current study. The researcher went to discuss few issues that were arising during the pilot study. The researcher informed and explained the purpose and nature of the study to the respondents through their native language (Twi). After consent was obtained at the field work, each house was numbered and rapport was established with the respondents. All the respondents were informed that the purpose of the study was for scientific means only and all information provided by them will remain confidential. The researcher guarantees anonymity and emphasized the need for sincere responses on the part of all participants. After collecting the data from the respondents, they were thanked for generating honest responses and the entire data base was processed by the researcher herself. After the data was systematized, classified and tabulated, the researcher proceeded to analyze and interpret it. The data for this study was collected from the Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly in the Ashanti region.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was basically the use of both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Firstly, the data was tabulated according to the variables measuring. This helped to give an overall picture of what the data look like so that patterns can be seen whether or not the data match the research questions. Spreadsheet was used to tabulate and discuss the data gathered to check data validity and accuracy. Descriptive statistics which are basic calculations that describes the main characteristics of the data like frequency, percentages and averages were calculated with the help of SPSS (Bryman and Cramer, 2005).

The application of inferential statistics method was also used. The Pearson product moment correlation test (Pallant, 2007) was performed through the application of statistical program Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to find out if there is an influence of parents education background and their socioeconomic status and the assistance parents give to their children in their homework and school related activities, what the nature of these relationship is and if there are significant differences (Norman, 2003).

SPSS was adopted for the analysis because it was able to generate tables, charts and reports. The results were then represented in pictorial form by the use of bar charts to assist in identifying any patterns that may exist. The results were compared and interpreted against the theoretical background pertaining to the influence of parent's demographic variables on their children's education and were referenced to the literature in each case. The inferences made followed a deductive reasoning approach. The data collected was edited and analyzed by use of SPSS package version 21. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data and the findings were presented in Tables and figures.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the results generated from data gathered are presented and discussed on the research questions. The presentation of the findings is done according to the objectives of the study objectives. Initially in the chapter, the demographic variables of the respondents in the study are presented. The results of research question one is presented. The results of research question two are presented and the results of research question three are also presented.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The main groups of sampled respondents who participated in this study were parents of different categories of socioeconomic status. These respondents' provided information relevant on the objective areas of the study. The import of this section was to give an overview of the types and categories of respondents in terms of age, sex, income, educational and professional status. The socioeconomic status characteristics of survey, participants are summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Demography of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Gender			1.60	.492
Male	40	40%		
Female	60	60%		
Age			2.05	.783
26 – 35	25	25%		
36 – 45	48	48%		
46 – 55	24	24%		
56 – 65	3	3%		
Level of education			2.66	1.130
Masters	9	9%		
1 st degree	49	49%		
Diploma	19	19%		
Secondary	13	13%		
Others	10	10%		
Monthly income			2.23	.827
¢100 – ¢500	25	25%		
¢600 - ¢1000	27	27%		
¢1100 - ¢1500	48	48%		
Profession			2.63	.991
Teaching	63	63%		
Businessman	22	22%		
Farming	4	4%		
Others	11	11%		
N = 100				

The main groups of sampled respondents who participated in this study were parents of different categories of socio-economic status. These respondents' provided information relevant on the objective areas of the study. The import of this section was to give an overview of the types and categories of respondents in terms of age, sex, income educational and professional status. The socio economic status characteristics of survey, participants are summarized in Figure 4.1.

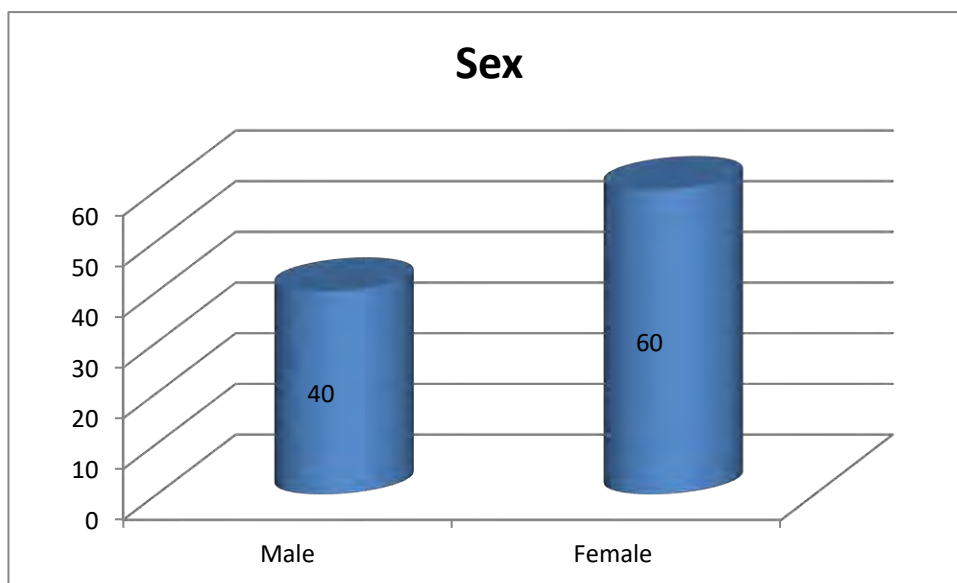


Figure 4.1: Sex of Respondents

Sex of respondents was a socio-demographic characteristic of the respondents who participated in the study. The reason for assessing this variable as a relevant background characteristic was to establish gender representation of respondents who participated in the study during the data collection. It was hoped that at the close of the study, the representativeness of the results reflected the views of varied sexes. This means that sex was underscored as a very relevant background feature that could influence the pattern of responses and hence the outcomes of the study. Results on the sex distribution of respondents are also presented in Figure 4.1.

As shown in Figure 4.1, the respondents of the study were male and females. The results on sex distribution of respondents shows that forty (40) respondents representing 40% were males whereas sixty (60) of them representing 60% were females. Results indicated that the mean difference that the attitude of the male and female respondents regarding education differ significantly (Figure 1). Unlike earlier times, the females enjoy almost equal status as male in households in terms of income and decision- making. Previously, females were confined to the four walls of the house and were not aware of the value of education. Results showed that the mothers

were more in favour of education of their children than the fathers. These results imply that there was gender representation of respondents and the females contribute a lot in their children's education rather than the men. The views that formed the findings on the study objectives reflect the views of the male and female respondents.

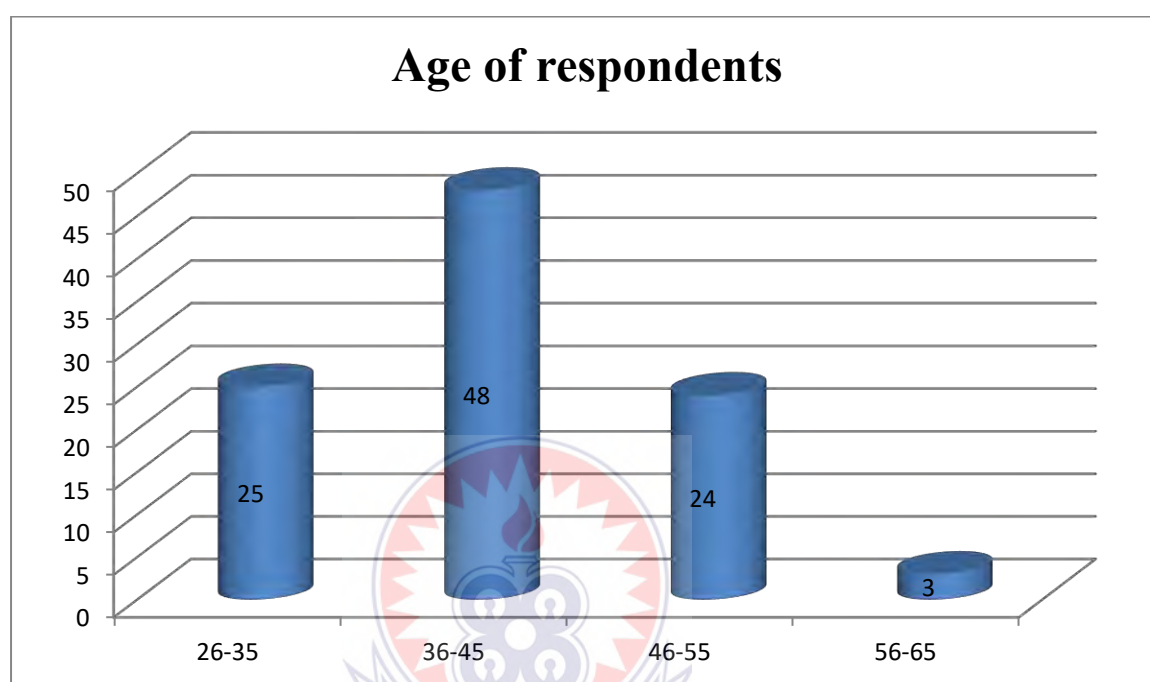


Figure 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age distribution of respondents was assessed as a socio-demographic characteristic of the respondents in the study. Age is a physiological characteristic that influences the behavior of people in a given situation. In view of the fact that age of people has the tendency of influencing the pattern of people's views and opinions, it became necessary for it to be assessed. The import of assessing the age distribution was to understand the categories of age groups who participated in the study and hence diversity of opinions in terms of age. Presented in Figure 4.2 (Bar Chart) above are details on the age distribution of respondents who participated in the study. Figure 4.1.2 is a bar chart showing the age distribution of respondents. The heights of the bars of the chart depict the proportion of age categories of respondents who

participated in the study. The age of respondents were distributed over an age ranges of 26-35years, 36-45years, 46-55years and 56-65years. The distribution of the ages of respondents as presented in Figure 4.1.2 above shows that majority of the respondents who participated in the study were within the age range of 36-45years. Another category of age group constituted the second highest that participated in the study is those who were within the ages of 26-35years. This age group category of respondents who participated in the study was the third highest 46-55 years. The last category of respondents was within the ages of 56-65years.

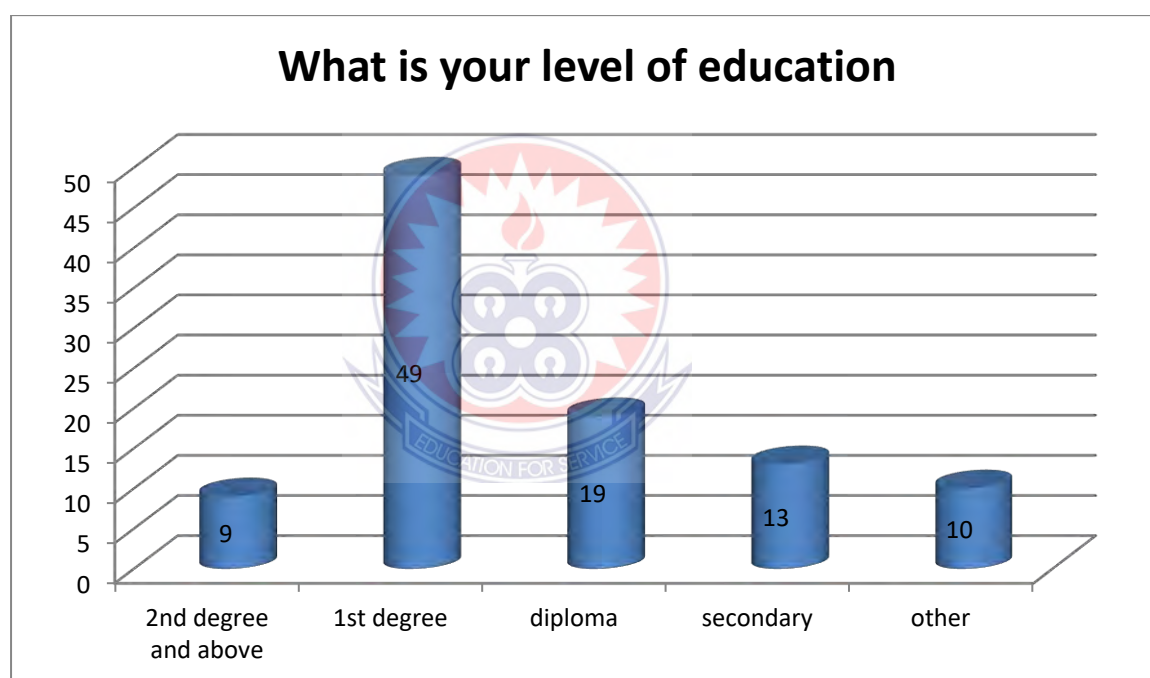


Figure 4.3: Educational Status of Respondents

Educational status is another background feature of the respondents who participated in the study. This assessment was targeted at describing the educational status of the parents using options such as; 2nd degree and above, 1st degree, diploma, secondary and other. The results on educational status of respondents who participated in the study showed that about 9% of them had 2nd degree and above and 49% of the respondents were identified as 1st degree holders. Also the remaining 19 %

were diploma holders, 13% were secondary and other category representing junior high school and those who had no formal education. This means that respondents with various educational backgrounds participated in the study and that their views contributed to the findings on the study objectives.

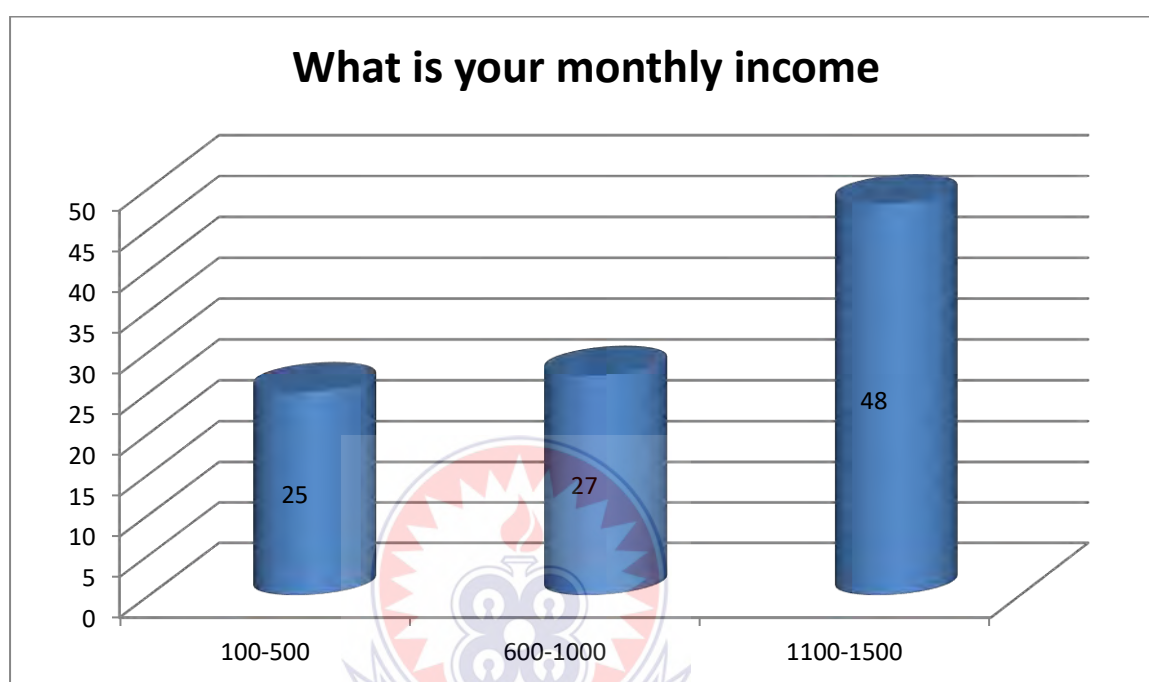


Figure 4.4: Respondents level of monthly income

In the effort to address monthly income as yet another background characteristic of sampled respondents. The import of this assessment was to indicate the types of respondents in terms of their income status. The results on assessment of income status of the respondents are presented in Figure 4.4 above. As contained in Figure 4.4 the study results on income status of the respondents were presented against status variables such as; sex, age, educational status and income levels. Out of the total 100 respondents who participated in the study, twenty-five (25%) of them received salary range of between 100-500 and twenty-seven (27) of them earned monthly salary between 600-1000. Those respondents who received highest monthly salary were between 1100-1500 representing forty-eight (48%). This result gives an

impression that various categories of respondents participated in the study and hence varied views contributed to the findings on each of the objectives of the study.

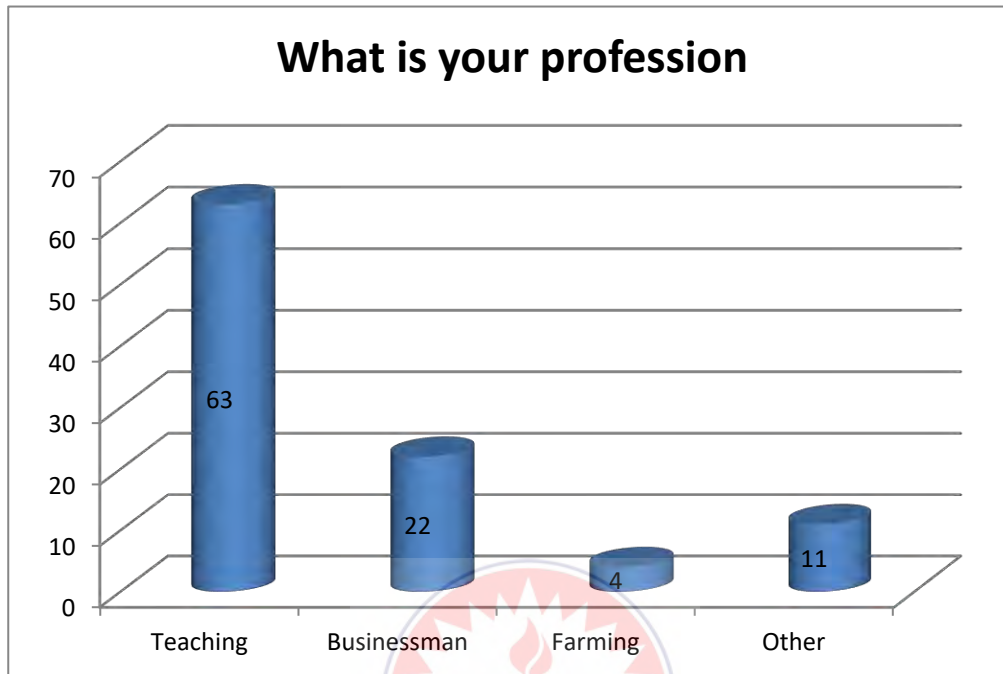


Figure 4.5: Professional Status

In the effort to address professional status as yet another background characteristic of sampled respondents, data was gathered on the professional status. The import of this assessment was to indicate the types of respondents in terms of their professional status. The results on assessment of professional status of the respondents are presented in Figure 4.5. Out of the total 100 respondents who participated in the study; sixty-three (63) of them were teachers representing 63% of the entire respondents. Also, twenty-two (22) of the respondents were businessman representing 22% of the total respondents. In terms of respondents who were farmers, four (4) representing 4% of the total respondents were into farming.

4.2 Presentation and Discussion of Results on Research Question One

Table 4.2 and figure 4.6 shows respondents' responses on the magnitude to which parents assist children in their homework and school related activities. With a mean score of 3.97 and standard deviation of 1.010, respondents indicated that they monitor their children's homework more often. The mean score and standard deviation for whether parents' guide their children to do their homework was 3.81 and 1.161 showing that parents did that most often. Moreover, parents assist their children to do their homework most often with a mean score of 3.62 and standard deviation of 1.108.

On the contrary, parent's responses were on whether they mark their children's homework with a mean score of 2.70 and standard deviation of 1.158. On the other hand, parents teach their children most often at home with a mean response rate of 3.57 and standard deviation 1.257. Parents also indicated that they direct their children's homework most often on a mean score of 3.57 and standard deviation 1.066. Again, the mean response rate for whether parents call to find out their children's progress was 3.55 and standard deviation of 1.192 indicating that parents did that often. The mean response was similar to parents view on whether they attend open day event of children with a mean score of 3.43 and standard deviation 1.239. Parents however, did sign their children's homework often with a mean score of 2.66 and standard deviation of 1.499. That notwithstanding, with a mean score of 3.83 and 1.181 standard deviation, parents indicated that they attend PTA meetings most often. Bronfenbrenner (1979) ecological model emphasize that human development should not only happen in the school but real life settings like the home.

Table 4.2: Assistance of Parent's in their Children's Homework and School Activities

	Percentage scoring of parents					Mean	SD
	Always f (%)	Most often f (%)	Often f (%)	Hardly f (%)	Not at all f (%)		
I Monitor my child's home work	39 (39%)	27(27%)	28(28%)	4(4%)	2(2%)	3.97	1.010
I guide my child to do his home work	36(36%)	27(27%)	24(24%)	8(8%)	5(5%)	3.81	1.161
I assist my child to do his home work	24(24%)	36(36%)	21(21%)	16(16%)	3(3%)	3.62	1.108
I mark my child's home work	16(16%)	21(21%)	16(16%)	11(11%)	36(36%)	2.70	1.528
I teach my child at home	28 (28%)	30(30%)	22(22%)	11(11%)	9(9%)	3.57	1.257
I direct my child in his home work	22(22%)	32(32%)	30(30%)	13(13%)	3(3%)	3.57	1.066
I call to find out my child's progress	24(24%)	34(34%)	22(22%)	13(13%)	7(7%)	3.55	1.192
I attend open day event of my child	25(25%)	27(27%)	23(23%)	18(18%)	7(7%)	3.43	1.239
I sign my child home work	20(20%)	10(10%)	16(16%)	24(24%)	30(30%)	2.66	1.499
I attend PTA meetings	40(40%)	21(21%)	25(25%)	10(10%)	4(4%)	3.83	1.181
Total average mean						3.50	

5= always, 4=most often, 3=often, 2=hardly, 1=not at all

In summary, most of the respondents responded that, they most often assist their children in their homework and other school related activities with a mean score of 3.97. Majority of the parents expressed their assistance in their children's home work and other school related activities because parents have been investing dearly in their children's education which was the best legacy a parent can give a child. Therefore to yield a fruitful investment, they tend to assist their wards so to get the best results.

This finding relates to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) who argues that parents agree that they have an important role to play in home-based activities when it comes to children's learning. These home-based activities include; monitoring their child's school work and progress, discussing school related issues with their child and assisting with homework. Parents think if they do not help their children to do their homework, it will affect the children's educational aspirations.

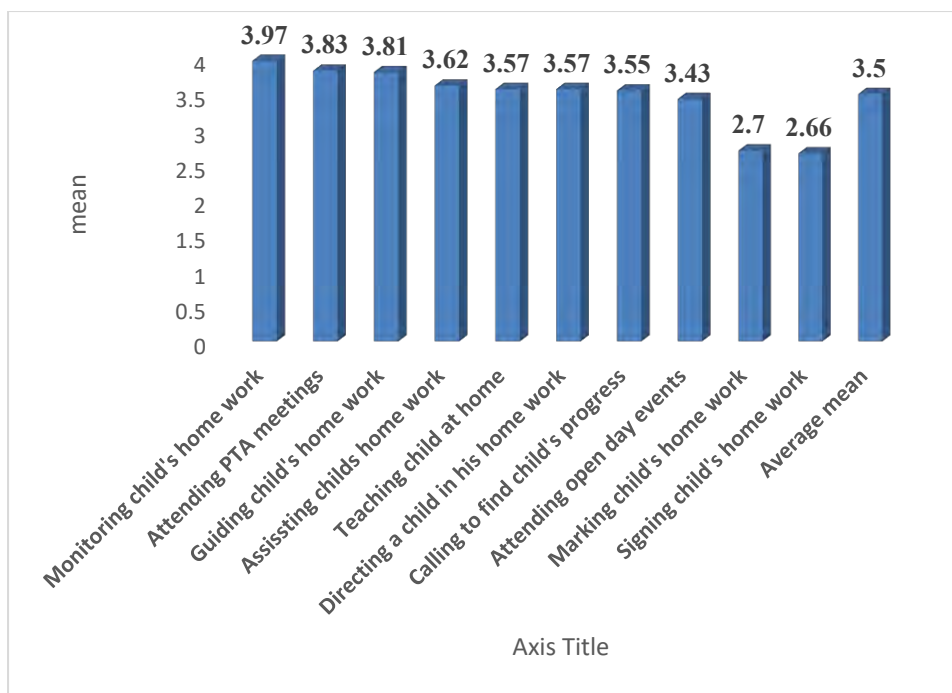


Figure 4.6: Assistance of Parents in their Children's Homework and School

Related Activities

4.3 Presentation and Discussion of Results on Research Question Two

The information in Table 4.3 shows that, educational background of parents affects children's education. However, parents had different dimension in dealing with all the underlined school activities.

For instance, parents with educational background from secondary to master's level of education, most often monitor their children's home work. However, parents with masters ($M = 4.44$) were the ones who monitor children's home work frequently. Parents with first degree certificate ($M = 4.06$) also reported to most often monitor their wards home work.

Moreover, the parent's respondents reported to teach their wards to do their homework. They reported to either often or most often teach their children in doing their homework. With respect to teaching a child to his or her homework, parents with first degree certificates ($M = 3.90$) were most likely to fulfill that activity. This

was because, first degree holders might not have busily schedule at job places or might not be working at all and therefore had enough time for their children. Parents with first degree level of education reported to be much concerned at guiding their wards to do their homework ($M = 4.06$) than level of educational backgrounds.

Furthermore, the respondent's responses showed a mean value of 4.22 for master's degree holders indicating that parents with master's degree most often marked their children's homework. The first degree holders followed with a mean value of 2.88 indicating that, they often marked their children's homework. However, secondary education certificate holder parents and parents with other level of education reported to hardly mark their children's homework after completion with a mean value of 1.85 and 1.70 respectively. This confirms Taiwo (1993) who argues that parent's educational background influences the academic achievement of students.

Again Table 4.2 reveals that, parents often sign their children's homework after completion. This was evident from the fact that all the level of educational background recorded a mean value of 3 or below. Parents with master's degree recorded a mean value of 3.22 while those with first degree recorded a mean value of 2.98 and 2.84 for those with diploma. This suggests that, even though parents were concerned about signing their children's homework after completion, it was influenced by the level of education of parents and those with higher level of education were the most concerned.

Lastly, the information in Table 4.2 shows that respondents with secondary level of education ($M = 2.85$) often direct their children to their homework. Again parents with master's degree (4.00), and parents with first degree ($M = 3.62$) reported to most often direct their wards to do their homework while parents with diploma

(M=3.38) often direct their children to their homework. This was because, parents with higher educational background understands the educational process very well and therefore wants their children to follows suite. Hence their involvement in their children's education through directing them to do their homework.

This confirms Frimpong (2012) assertion that parent's educational background influences the academic performance of children. However, this finding contradicts Manu (2001) who argues that, children have individual IQ levels which determines their level of understanding when taught. Therefore a parent level of education cannot influence a child's education. According to Manu (2001) there were parents with low educational background yet their children have risen to the top level of education. He cited former president Rawlings as having an O' level certificate yet his daughter holds a PhD.



Table 4.3: Influence of Parents Educational Background on Children's**Education**

	Percentage scoring of parents (%)					Sig -value
	Masters F (%)	1 st degree F (%)	Diploma F (%)	Secondary F (%)	Others F (%)	
Monitoring my child's home work						
5 Always	70 (77.8)	21(42.9)	6(31.6)	4(30.8)	1(10.0)	.003
4Most often	1(11.1)	15(30.6)	3(15.8)	3(23.1)	5(50.0)	
3 Often	0(0.0)	9(18.4)	10(52.6)	5(38.5)	4(40.0)	
2Hardly	0(0.0)	3(6.1)	0(0.0)	1 (7.7)	0(0.0)	
1 Not at all	1(11.1)	1 (2.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0)	
Mean	4.44	4.06	3.79	3.77	1.40	
I teach my child to do his home work						
5 Always	2(22.2)	17(34.7)	4(21.1)	2(15.4)	3(30.0)	.002
4 Most often	4(44.4)	18(36.7)	5(26.3)	3(23.1)	0(0.0)	
3 Often	2(22.2)	8(16.3)	8(42.1)	2(15.4)	2(20.0)	
2 Hardly	0(0.0)	4(8.2)	2(10.5)	3(23.1)	2(20.0)	
1 Not at all	1(11.1)	2(4.1)	0(0.0)	3(23.1)	3(30.0)	
Mean	3.67	3.90	3.58	2.85	1.80	
Guiding my child to do his/her homework						
5 Always	4(44.4)	19(38.8)	8(42.1)	3(23.1)	2(20.0)	.010
4Most often	3(33.3)	16(32.7)	5(26.3)	2(15.4)	1(10.0)	
3 Often	1(11.1)	12(24.5)	4(21.1))	4(30.8)	3(30.0)	
2 Hardly	0(0.0)	2(4.1)	1(5.3)	4(30.8)	1(10.0)	
1Not at all	1(11.1)	0(0.0)	1(5.3)	0(0.0)	3(30.0)	
Mean	4.00	4.06	3.95	3.31	2.00	
I mark my child's home work after completion						
5 Always	2(22.2)	17(34.7)	4(21.1)	2(15.4)	3(30.0)	.000
4 Most often	4(44.4)	18(36.7)	5(26.3)	3(23.1)	0(0.0)	
3 Often	2(22.2)	8(16.3)	8(42.1)	2(15.4)	2(20.0)	
2Hardly	0(0.0)	4(8.2)	2(10.5)	3(23.1)	2(20.0)	
1Not at all	1(11.1)	2(4.1)	0(0.0)	3(23.1)	3(3.0)	
Mean	4.22	2.88	2.63	1.85	1.70	
I sign my child's home after completion						
5Always	2(22.2)	14(28.6)	4(21.1)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	.021
4Most often	2(22.2)	4(8.2)	2(10.5)	0(0.0)	2(20.0)	
3Often	1(11.1)	8(16.3)	5(26.3)	1(7.7)	1(10.0)	
2Hardly	4(44.4)	13(26.5)	3(15.8)	3(23.1)	1(10.0)	
1Not at all	0(0.0)	10(20.4)	5(26.3)	9(69.2)	6(60.0)	
Mean	3.22	2.98	2.84	1.38	1.90	
I direct my child to do his/her home work						
5Always	3(33.3)	13(26.5)	3(15.8)	2(15.4)	1(10.0)	.001
4 Most often	4(44.4)	18(36.7)	8(42.1)	1(7.7)	1(10.0)	
3 Often	1(11.1)	16(32.7)	6(31.6)	3(23.1)	4(40.0)	
2Hardly	1(11.1)	2(4.1)	0(0.0)	7(53.8)	3(30.0)	
1Not at all	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(10.5)	0(0.0)	1(10.0)	
Mean	4.00	3.86	3.53	2.85	2.30	
Average mean	4.00	3.62	3.38	2.66	1.85	.001

Always =5, most often = 4, often=3, hardly=2, not at all =1

Table 4.3 shows the effects of educational background of parents on children's education. Respondents' responses showed a mean of 4.44 with Master's Degree respondents indicating that parents with Master's Degree most often monitored their children's homework. This was followed closely by parents with 1st degree with mean score of 4.04. In addition, parents with 1st Degree teach their children to do their homework most often with mean score of 3.90 followed by parents with Master's Degree. Parents with first degree also guide children to do their homework most often with a mean response rate of 4.06 followed closely by parents who have Master's Degree with mean value of 4.00. Parents who had Diploma also guide children to their homework most often as well with a mean score of 3.95.

To continue with, parents who had Master's Degree marked their children's homework after completion most often with a mean score of 4.22 which was in stark contrast to parents with 1st degree with a mean score of 2.88. In similar vein, parents with Master's Degree often sign their children's homework with mean score of 3.22 followed closely by parents with 1st Degree with a mean score of 2.98. This was similar to responses of parents with Diploma who had a mean score of 2.84.

Moreover, parents with Master's Degree direct their children's homework most often with mean score of 4.00 followed by parents with 1st Degree (3.86) and parents with Diploma (3.53). The average means for all the responses were 4.00 for parents with Master's Degree, 3.62 for parents with 1st Degree and 3.38 for parents with Diploma. This indicated that parents with Master's Degree and 1st Degree most often monitored, teach, guide, marked and signed their children's homework most often.

The presentation from Table 4.2 has shown that a parent's level of education has influence on a child's education. Parents with highest level of education with average mean of 4.00 influences their children's education the most. This was because parents with highest level of education have passed through all the education processes and knows the benefits of education. Hence their involvement in their wards education for them to achieve the best of education. On the other hand parents with low educational qualification with an average mean of 1.85 hardly influence their wards education because they lack the benefits of education and therefore don't see the reason why they should involve themselves in their wards education. After all they could not climb to higher height of the educational ladder.

In summary, the total average mean for the respondents were 4.00 for parents with Master's Degree, 3.62 for parents with 1st Degree and 3.38 for parents with Diploma. This initiates that parents with Master's Degree and 1st Degree most often monitored, teach, guide, marked and signed their children's homework most often.

This finding is in line with Danielle Sclafani (2008) who illustrated that parents who have gone beyond a high school education are found to be more involved with their infants and children than those who did not finish high school many less educated parents simply have more unmanaged stress in their lives, and this stress interferes with ability and opportunity to interact with their child. However, this finding contradicts Manu (2001) who argues that, children have individual IQ levels which determines their level of understanding when taught. Therefore a parent level of education cannot influence a child's education. According to Manu (2001) there were parents with low educational background yet their children have risen to the top level of education. Parents think if they do not further their education, they will not value their children's education.

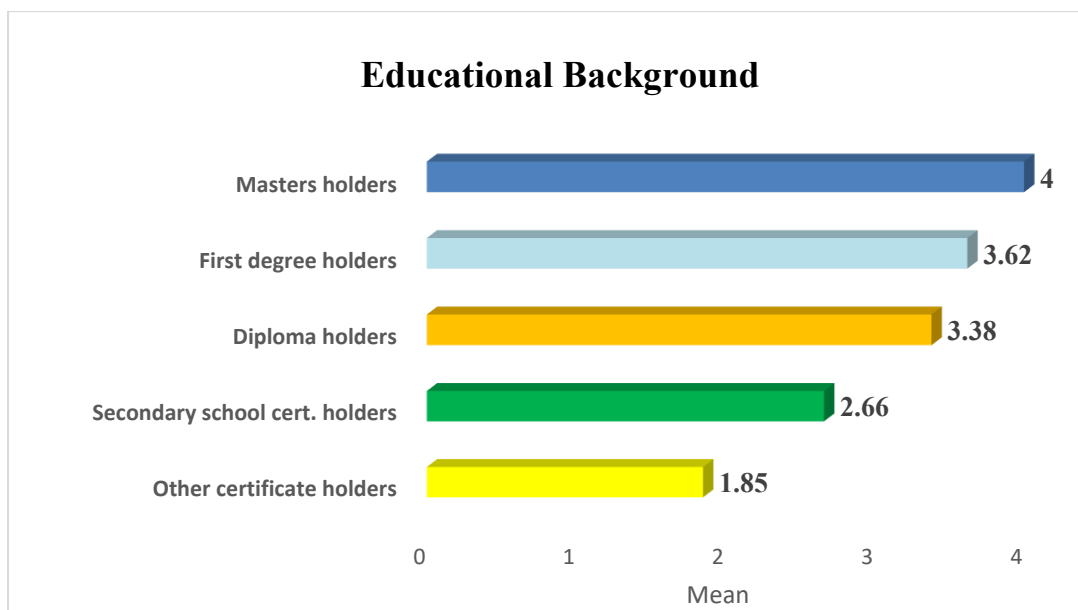


Figure 4.7: Educational Background

4.4 Presentation and Discussion of Results on Research Question Three

Table 4.4 shows the correlation between monthly income and parents' involvement in their children's activities. The outcome from Table 4.4 shows that, the monthly income earned by prospective parents actually had a positive relationship to their involvement in the various school activities of their wards. This was because most of the mean values were rated above 3 in each of the monthly earning category.

In spite of their positive involvement, parents involved themselves in some activities than others depending on the income they earned. For instance, parents most often monitor their children's homework. However, parents who earned between 1100 and 1500 were parents who mostly monitor their children's homework. This was because they spent much on their children's education, so they mostly monitor to ensure that the right thing was done and the money spent has yielded result. This confirms Lamb-Parker et al (2001) notion parents and guardians who earned respectable amount of income would always monitor their children's assignments.

Furthermore, respondents reported that parents who earned between 600 and 1000 were most likely to teach their children to do their homework ($M = 3.89$) or guide their children to do homework (4.11). Even though parents who earned better than ₵600 and ₵1000 most often teach or guide their wards in doing their homework it was those who earned between ₵600 and ₵1000 were the most likely to involved themselves in those activities. This however, deviates from Copper (2001) who opined that better earned income parents were the most likely to teach their wards at home. This was because; highly earned income parents were busy workers and hardly have time for school activities.

Apart from the middle earned income parents' highly involvement in about three of the understudied school activities, the information in Table 4.4 revealed that, parents who earned ₵1000 - ₵1500 were highly involved in their wards school. This was because they earned enough money which could cater for the needs of their wards as far as education was concerned. According to Calabrese (1990) and Winters (1993), parental involvement in school activities is lower among low-income and minority families than other families due to feelings of alienation. As Henderson (1988) puts it higher income among parents implies enrolment of children in gifted and talented programs as well positive perceptions about school.

Table 4.4: Monthly Earnings of Parents and their Involvement in their Children's Education

Parents involvement in school activities	Mean score		
	100– 500 GH¢	600– 1000 GH¢	1100–1500 GH¢
Monitoring my child to his or her homework	3.76	4.04	4.09
I teach my child at home	2.84	3.89	3.85
I guide my child to do his or her homework	3.16	4.11	3.98
I assist my child to do his or her homework	2.88	3.93	3.83
I mark my child's homework after completion	1.76	3.22	3.20
I direct my child's in his or her homework	2.88	3.78	3.81
I sign my child's homework after completion	1.80	2.70	4.03
I attend P.T.A meetings	3.76	3.78	4.15
I call my child's teacher to find out about his or her progress	3.32	3.52	3.69
I attend open day event in my child's school	3.36	3.46	3.50
Average mean	3.00	3.64	3.81

Always =5, most often = 4, often=3, hardly=2, not at all =1

In summary, most parents involved themselves in the school activities of the children. However, parents who earned better income were the most often likely to involve in their ward's school activities. This was proven by the outcome of Figure 4.3 which explains the average mean distribution of income earned by prospective parents and their involvement in their ward's school activities.

This finding is in line with Henderson (1988) notion that higher income among parents ensure that parents involved themselves in most school activities where decision making was essential. It therefore contradicts with Rouse and Barroe (2006) who revealed that parental socioeconomic status had a causal effect on children's educational outcomes, but however, they stated that the current studies could not identify precisely how parents' education and income changes affected educational achievement of the students.

Parents think that their income level has a great impact on their children's future if they do not support their children fully in their education.

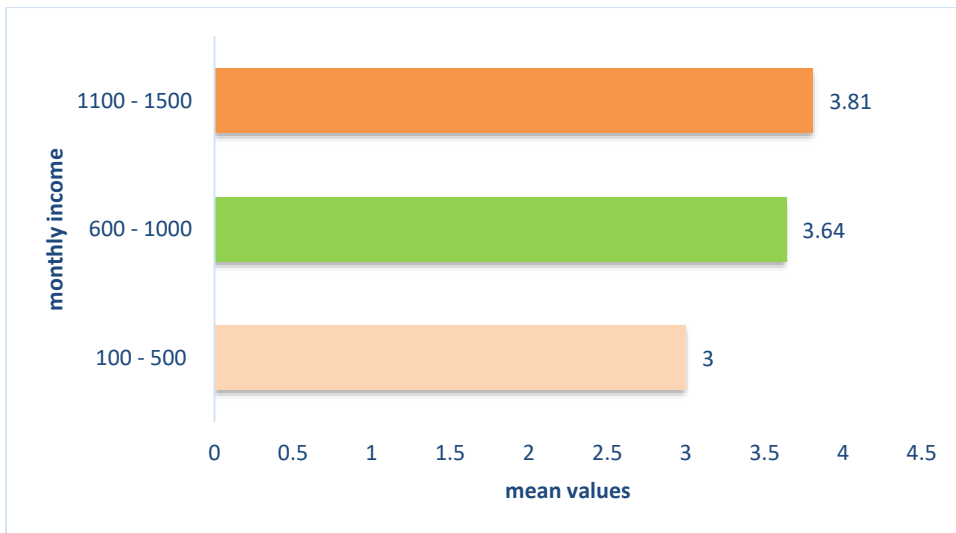


Figure 4.8: Monthly Income



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This final chapter presents the conclusions made based upon the research objectives of the study. Summary of the major study, review of objectives, recommendations and implications for research management are outlined. Finally, suggestions for further research are made.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The objectives set by the researcher were generally achieved. Individual objectives have been explained below how the assessment of the achievement was done. The results of the survey have supported or rejected the previous literature on parent's income level. The results of the study has great important to both parents and educators shows that the overall objectives set has been achieved.

The main objective of the study was to investigate the role parent's educational background has an influence on their children's education. The discussion above in summary of findings indicates that parents with high level of education spend most of their time on their children's education and other school related activities. On this basis the main objective of the study has been achieved. The specific objective two which also was to determine whether parent's socioeconomic status and their involvement has an influence on their children's education. The survey concluded that there was no significant correlation found between the income level of parents and their involvement in their children's school related activities. The findings show how important parent's demographic variables have an influence on their children's education. On this basis specific objective two of the study was achieved.

With regards to specific objective three which was to assess the literature in order to identify the assistance parents give to their children in their homework and other school related activities. The extensive literature review conducted helped identified the most important factors. The findings of the literature review were the bases for the survey. Again, the findings from the primary data were compared with the findings of the literature review which assisted the researcher to make meaningful and objective conclusion. This can be concluded that objective three has been achieved.

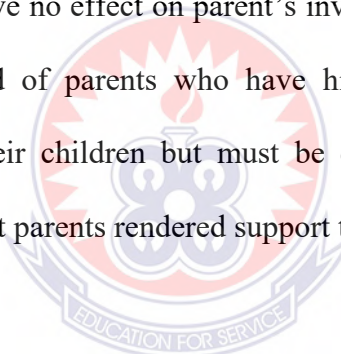
Parents involvement in their children's education has been found by this study to play significant role in the life of their children therefore, parents must take necessary measures to improve the assistance they give to their children in their homework and other school related activities to ensure the success of their children. With reference to the review of the literature and the analysis of the questionnaire, the following recommendations are made to maximize the assistant parents give to their children in their homework and other school related activities, the influence of parent's educational background on their children's education and the influence of parent's socioeconomic status and their involvement in their children's education.

Findings from the study revealed that parents with Master's Degree most often monitored, teach, guide, marked and signed their children's homework most often on a mean score of 4.00 followed suits by parents with 1st Degree with a mean score of 3.62 and parents with Diploma with a mean score of 3.38. There was however a weak correlation between parents' monthly income and their involvement in school activities with r values of 0.271, 0.256, 0.621, 0.317, 0.263 and 0.331 between monthly income and parents monitoring, guidance, teaching, marking, and signing of homework. With a mean score of 3.97 and standard deviation of 1.010, the study

indicated that parents monitor their children's homework more often. The mean score and standard deviation for whether parents' guide their children to do their homework was 3.81 and 1.161 showing that parents did that most often.

5.2 Conclusion

Parents play a vital role in the education of their children. The role that parents play in the school related activities of their children has long been thought to be a centrally important one. The researcher drew the following conclusions from the study; that parents with higher earnings are bound to provide adequate assistance to their children in terms of their educational activities even though the study revealed that monthly earnings have no effect on parent's involvement in children's education. The same could be said of parents who have higher educational status. Parents provide assistance to their children but must be done on a frequent basis as the researcher recognized that parents rendered support to children often but not always.



5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings from a careful systematic analysis of the study, the researcher recommends that;

1. Parents with low level of educational background can enroll in adult education to improve their education so that they will be able to assist their children in their educational achievement.
2. The Ministry of Education in consultation schools should set up specific days and hours for parents to pay visits to schools to monitor the progress of their children.
3. Parents should be insistent on helping their children with their homework after school to enable children feel the presence of the parents in their education.

4. The Government should assist parents in attaining higher socioeconomic status for parents to generate funds to support their children in terms of resource provision.
5. Schools administrators should put in place appropriate monitoring systems to monitor the progress of the teachers when it comes to teaching and learning activities in the school.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

The study has identified areas which were not covered extensively during the survey which must be considered in future research.

1. The study made used of small sample size which is a major limitation for generalisation of the results. Therefore in future research a larger sample size must be considered in order to generalise the findings.
2. In future research the data must be collected in different times in order to establish the pattern over long period of time as a result of changes in perceptions and attitudes.
3. In future research quantitative and quality method must be combined to take advantages of the two methods in order to capture more detailed answers which were omitted with only quantitative studies.

REFERENCES

- Baker, D. P. & Stevenson, D. L. (1986). Mothers' strategies for children's school achievement: Managing the transition to high school. *Sociology of Education*, 59, 155-166.
- Balli, S. J., Demo, D. H. & Wedman, J. F. (1998). Family involvement with children's homework: An intervention in the middle grades. *Family Relations*, 47, 149-57.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. *Developmental Psychology*, 22(6), 723-742.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Brophy, J. E. (1970). Mothers as teachers of their own preschool children: The influence of socioeconomic status and task structure on teaching specificity. *Child Development* 41, 79-94.
- Calabrese, R.L, The public school: A source of alienation for minority parents. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 59 (2), 148-154. (1990).
- Caro, D. H., McDonald, J. T. & Williams, J. D. (2009). Socio-economic status and academic achievement trajectories from childhood to adolescence. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 32, 558-590.
- Chrispell, J. H. and River, F. (2001). Engaging Latin Families for Student success: How parent Education can reshape parents sense of place in the education of their children. *Peabody Journal of education*, 76(2) 119-169.
- Christenson, S. L., & Sheridan, S. M. (2001). *Schools and families: Creating essential connections for learning*. New York: Guilford Press.

- Cooper, H., Lindsay, J. J., & Nye, B. (2000). Homework in the home: How student, family, and parenting-style differences relate to the homework process. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25, 464-487.
- Cromwell, S. (1998). The Homework Dilemma: How Much Should Parents Get Involved? Education World. Retrieved on February 20, 2015 from http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/curr053.shtml
- Davis-Kean, P.E. (2005). The influence of parent education and family income on child achievement: The indirect role of parental expectations and the home environment. *Journal of Family Psychology*;19:294–304. [PubMed: 15982107.
- Desforges, C., & Abouchar, A. (2003). *The Impact of Parental Involvement, Parental Support and Family Education on Pupil Achievements and Adjustment: A Literature Review*. Department for Education and Skills, Research Report RR433, UK. Downloaded 18 November 2009 from <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR433.pdf>
- Driessen, G., Smit., Slegers, P. (2004). Parental involvement and educational achievement. *British Educational Research Journal*, 509-532.
- Drummond, K. V. & Stipek, D. (2004). Low-income parents' beliefs about their role in children's academic learning. *The Elementary School Journal*. 197- 213.
- Epstein, J.L. (2009). *In School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action* (3rd ed.). USA: Corwin Press.
- Epstein, J. L. & Sanders, M. G. (2006). Prospects for change: Preparing educators for school, family, and community partnerships. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 81(2), 81-120.

- Epstein, J. (1992). School and family partnerships. In M. Alkin (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, 6th ed.:1139-1151. New York: Macmillan.
- Ferrara, M. M., & Ferrara, P. J. (2005). Parents as partners: Raising awareness as a teacher preparation program. *The Clearing House*, 79(2), 77-82.
- Finn, J. D. "Parental Engagement that makes a difference," *Educational Leadership* (May 1998): 20-24.
- Gest, S.D., Freeman, N.R., Domitrovich, C.E. & Welsh, J.A. (2004). Shared book reading and children's language comprehension skills: the moderating role of parental discipline practices. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 19, 319-336.
- Glasgow, N. A., & Whitney, P. J. (2009). *What successful schools do to involve families: 55 partnership strategies*. Corwin Press: A SAGE Company.
- Greene, P. K., & Tichenor, M. S. (2003). Parents and schools: No stopping the involvement. *Childhood Education*, 79(4), 242-243.
- Gutman, L. M. & McLoyd, V. C. (2000). Parents' management of their children's education within the home, at school, and in the community: An examination of African-American families living in poverty. *The Urban Review*, 32(1), 1-24.
- Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement*. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, National Center for Family and Community.
- Hoover-Dempsey, K.V. & Sandler, H.M. (1995). Parental Involvement in Children's Education: Why Does It Make a Difference? *Teachers College Record* Vol. 97, No. 2, pp. 310-331.

- Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. & Sandler, H. M. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? *Review of Educational Research*, 67(1), 3-42.
- Jacobs, N., & Harvey, D. (2005). Do parents make a difference to children's academic achievement? Differences between parents of higher and lower achieving students. *Educational Studies*, 431-448.
- Kafas, P. (2009). Child Neglect. A Review; *The Internet Journal of Forensic Science*.
- Keith, T. Z., et al. "Parent involvement, homework, and TV time: Direct and indirect effects on achievement." *Journal of Educational Psychology*.
- Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family life*. University of California Press, Berkley (accessed via Ebook Library).
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (1999). Building bridges from school to home. *Instructor*, 114(1), 24-29.
- Lisa, B. & Cecilis, R. (2006). How family background affects educational attainment. *Journal of opportunities in America*. 120-130.
- Lockheed, M.E., Fuller, B. & Nyirogo, R. (1989). "Family Effects on Students Achievement in Thailand and Malawi." *Sociology of Education*, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp. 239-256.
- Obeidat, O. M., & Al-Hassan, S. M. (2009). School-parent-community partnerships: The experience of teachers who received the queen Rania award for excellence in education in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. *The School Community Journal*, 19(1), 119-136.
- Poston, D. L., & Falbo, T. (1990). Academic Performance and Personality Traits of Chinese Children: Onlies versus others. *American Journal of Sociology*, 96(2) (September), 433-451.

- Price-Mitchell, M. (2009). Boundary dynamics: Implications for building parent-school partnerships. *The School Community Journal*, 19(2), 9-26.
- Revicki, D. A. (1981). *The relationship among Socioeconomic Status, Home Environment, Parent Involvement, Child Self-Concept, and Child Achievement*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No ED 206 645).
- Richardson, S. A. (2009). Principal's perceptions of parental involvement in the "big 8" urban districts of Ohio. *Research in the Schools*, 16(1), 1-12.
- Rowe, K. (1991). The influence of reading activity at home on students' attitudes towards reading, classroom attentiveness and reading achievement: An application of structural equation modelling. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 61, 19-35.
- Ruthanne, K. S. & Jen, G.(2006). Educational Studies 268: *Saving Our Nation, Saving Our Schools: Public Education for Public Good*.
- Sanders, M. G. and Sheldon, S. B. (2009). *Principals matter: A guide to school, family, and community partnerships*. Corwin: A SAGE Company.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2007). *Research Methods for Business Students* (4th ed.), Harlow: FT Prentice Hall
- Sheldon, S. B. (2009). *In School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action* (3rd ed.). USA: Corwin Press.
- Sirin, S. R. (2005). Socioeconomic status and academic achievement: A meta-analytic review of research. *Review of Educational Research*, 75, 417-453.
- Sirvani, H. (2007). The effect of teacher communication with parents on student's mathematics achievement. *American Secondary Education*, 36(1), 31-57.
- Van Voorhis, F.L. (2001). Interactive science homework: An experiment in home and school connections. *NASSP Bulletin*, 85(627), 20-32.

- Van, V. F. L. (2003). Interactive homework in middle school: Effects on family involvement and science achievement. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 96, 323-338.
- Vellymalay, S.K. (2010). Parental involvement in children's education: does parents' education level really matters? *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 16(3), 439-448.
- Walker, J.M.T., Hoover-Dempsey, K.V., Whetsel, D.R., & Green, C.L. (2004). Parental Involvement in Homework: A Review of Current Research and Its Implications for Teachers, After School Program Staff, and Parent Leaders. Retrieved from <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/research/homework.html>
- Walker, J.M., Sheneker, S.S. & Hoover-Oempsey, K.V. (2010 October). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? Implications for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, 14(1), 27-41.
- Xu, J. & Corno, L. (1998). Case studies of families doing third-grade homework. *Teachers College Record*, 100(2), 402-436.

APPENDIX I

INTRODUCTORY LETTER



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION, KUMASI

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

P. O. Box 1277
Kumasi

20th December, 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: LINDA BOAKYE
INDEX NO: 7141770068

This is to confirm that Linda Boakye is an MA student pursuing a programme in Educational Leadership at the Department.

Linda is currently engaged in a research on "*The Influence of Parents' Demographic Variables on their Children's Education*" as part of the requirements for the award of the Master of Arts Degree.

We should appreciate any courtesies that you could extend to her as she gathers data for writing the Project Work.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philip Oti-Agyen'.

DR. PHILIP OTI-AGYEN
Head of Department

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
DEPT. OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
COLLEGE OF TECH. EDUCATION- KSI,
UNIV. OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

Demographic Variables

Kindly respond to each question by ticking the appropriate answer. Use the spaces provided to specify what was not included in the answers.

Respondents are to be informed that all information provided by you will remain confidential.

1. What is your sex?

Male Female

2. What is your age?

26-35 36-45 46-55 56-65

3. What is your highest level of education you have completed?

2nd Degree and above 1st Degree Diploma

Secondary Other. Please specify _____

4. Which of these categories best describes your monthly income?

100.00-500.00 600.00-1000.00 1,100.00-1,500.00

Other. Please specify _____

5. What is your profession?

Lecturer Teaching Businessman Farming

Other. Please specify _____

SECTION B: HOMEWORK AND SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITIES

To what extent do you participate in your child or children's education?

6. I monitor my child to do his/her homework.

Always 5 Most often 4 Often 3 Hardly 2 Not at all 1

7. I teach my child at home.

Always 5 Most often 4 Often 3 Hardly 2 Not at all 1

8. I guide my child to do his or her homework.

Always 5 Most often 4 Often 3 Hardly 2 Not at all 1

9. I assist my child to do his or her homework.

Always 5 Most often 4 Often 3 Hardly 2 Not at all 1

10. I mark my child's homework after completion.

Always 5 Most often 4 Often 3 Hardly 2 Not at all 1

11. I direct my child in his or her homework.

Always 5 Most often 4 Often 3 Hardly 2 Not at all 1

12. I sign my child's homework after completion.

Always 5 Most often 4 Often 3 Hardly 2 Not at all 1

13. I attend P.T.A meetings.

Always 5 Most often 4 Often 3 Hardly 2 Not at all 1

14. I call my child's teacher to find out about his or her progress.

Always 5 Most often 4 Often 3 Hardly 2 Not at all 1

15. I attend Open Day event in my child's school.

Always 5 Most often 4 Often 3 Hardly 2 Not at all 1

Thank you very much for your co-operation in completing this questionnaire.